Bloomington/Monroe County
Human Rights Commission

October 19, 2026 Meeting Minutes
Hooker Conference Room, City Hall
5:00 p.m.

The Bloomington/Monroe County Human Rights Commission met at 5:00 p.m. on Monday, September 21, 2026, in the Hooker Conference Room of Showers City Hall.

Commissioners Attending: Sharon Baker, Kathleen Bensberg, Stephen Coover, Lauren Henderson, Amy Jackson (on Zoom), Emma Williams, Lilliana Young.
Staff Attending: BMCHRC Liaison Michael Shermis, BMCHRC Assistant Annabelle Vosmeier, Senior Assistant City Attorney Anna Holmes (on Zoom).
Public Attending: None.

Call to Order

1. Chair Emma Williams brought the meeting to order at 5:00 PM.

Approval of Minutes of September 21, 2026 Meeting

1. Baker moved to approve the minutes from September 21, 2026. Henderson seconded. Approved by roll call vote, 7-0.

Report from Staff

1. **United Against Hate:** The Office of the Mayor created a social media video for United Against Hate Week featuring Commissioner Coover and the Bloomington Police Department's LGBTQ+ Liaison. The video highlights resources for community members who feel they have experienced hate or discrimination.
2. **Third Quarter Report:** Coover moved, and Young seconded, to accept the third quarter report as presented. Approved by roll call vote, 7-0.
3. **Contact from Emma Gilligan:** Emma Gilligan, a professor in IU's School of International Studies, reached out to share information about a book she has published on human rights. Extended an invitation for her to speak with commissioners at a future meeting.

Reports from Commissioners

1. **Young** reported that the Front Door, in cooperation with Bloomington DSA's Stonewall Committee, will be holding a Trans Day of Remembrance vigil on November 20.
2. **Young** also reported that the Bloomington DSA's Stonewall Committee has submitted a resolution to City Council and has connected with a potential sponsor. A version of this resolution, which declares Bloomington a home for LGBTQ+ people, was previously

supported by the Human Rights Commission but not approved by the Legal Department to submit to the City Council.

3. **Bensberg** recalled the Bloomington Trinity Haven presentation by Susan Williams at the Commission's July meeting. Bensberg recently visited the Trinity Haven house in Indianapolis to offer a Know Your Rights presentation and was impressed by the program and young people there.
4. **Henderson** shared information about the new Heading Home project, Streets to Stability, which has housed over 50 families so far and offers one year of subsidized rent.

Open Cases

1. Baker's pregnancy discrimination in employment case. The respondent has hired an attorney, and interviews are being scheduled.
2. Bensberg's race discrimination in public accommodations case. After being nonresponsive, the respondent has hired a lawyer. The case will progress once the lawyer has caught up on the materials.
3. Henderson's disability discrimination in housing case. The respondent offered a settlement that includes the majority of, although not all, what the complainants were seeking. The complainants have decided to accept the settlement and will sign later this week.
4. Jackson's race discrimination in public accommodations case. No probable cause was found in June 2026, but a voluntary in-person mediation took place in September. Jackson reported that this was successful and a good experience for everyone. The complainant received what she was seeking: namely, a genuine apology, an acknowledgment of her negative experience, and a commitment for change.

Assignment of New Cases

1. None.

Unfinished Business

1. None.

New Business

1. None.

Public Input

1. None.

Adjournment

1. Chair Emma Williams adjourned the meeting at 5:22 p.m.