

City of Pittsburgh
Gender Equity Commission (GEC)
August 6, 2026 Regular Meeting
Virtual Meeting • 4:00 PM - 5:00 PM

Minutes

I. Roll Call

- Nikkole Terney
- Devon Taliaferro
- Rachel Shepherd
- Julian McClain
- Councilperson Deb Gross
- Talia O'Brien, Mayor's Office GEC Staff Liaison

II. Approval of June & July 2026 Minutes

- No quorum present, June and July minutes were not voted on.
- June, July, and August minutes will be voted on at the September meeting.

III. Acknowledgement of Public Comment

- No Public Comment.

IV. Report of Special Committees

a. 5-Year Action Plan

- i. Survey: As of the meeting date, 12 departments have responded to the survey, with 6 outstanding (Fire, Law, I&P, Public Safety, OCHS, PLI). An internal deadline of August 5 was set for remaining departments to complete the survey; however, continued individual outreach is underway and an extension is needed into next week, with results being hopefully ready for commission review next month.
- ii. HR Report: Commissioner Devon Taliaferro helped coordinate with HR to complete the demographic report. Staff is working to distill and align the data with survey response categories for commission review at an upcoming meeting.

V. Unfinished Business

a. Collaboration with the LGBTQIA+ Commission:

- i. **Internal Policy: Pregnancy Loss Leave**

- Talia and Corey Buckner (LGBTQIA+ Commission staffer) plan to schedule a meeting with HR to review the initial policy draft (previously reviewed by GEC) before sharing it with the LGBTQIA+ Commission.
- *Outstanding questions:*
 - Structure of policy: Whether the leave should be structured as additional PTO or as an eligible use category within employees' existing PTO bank.
 - Number of days: The current policy provides 3 days. The GEC Commission previously discussed expanding to 5 days. A final determination on the appropriate number of days is still needed.
 - Per-Event vs. Annual Pool: Whether each qualifying event (e.g., reproductive loss, an endometriosis flare) triggers its own allotment of days, or whether there is a single annual pool of days that employees draw from, consecutively or non-consecutively.
- *Next steps:*
 - Talia and Corey Buckner (LGBTQIA+ Commission staffer) plan to schedule a meeting with HR to review the initial policy draft (previously reviewed by GEC) before sharing it with the LGBTQIA+ Commission.
 - LGBTQIA+ Commission will provide the GEC Commission feedback on the policy language. Staffers will then compile both commissions' edits into one consolidated draft.
 - The consolidated draft will be brought back to the Gender Equity Commission for final review.
 - Once language is finalized by both commissions, another meeting with HR, Commissioner Taliaferro and Staffers O'Brien and Buckner will be scheduled to assess viability, determine day limits, and evaluate budgetary and administrative impacts. HR's feedback will be shared with both the Commissions to determine where to go from there.

ii. **Free Menstrual Products and Contraceptives in All City Owned Facilities with Restrooms**

- Summer intern, Hannah, created a policy memo that includes research on comparable city legislation, funding models, and is beginning cost modeling. Talia will share the policy memo with the commission to continue to build off and to act as a foundation for upcoming funding conversations and implementation of the program. Commissioner Julian McClain asked for clarification of who the policy memo will be shared with. Talia answers that as it is developed it will provide details for making a case to the Mayor's Office leadership as well as a foundation for educational material.
- Restroom inventory data is still needed to model rollout costs; the ADA Transition Plan restroom inventory remains delayed. In the interim, staff have created a short survey for Parks & Recreation directors covering facility usage (Q1–Q4 2025 data), stall counts, and single-stall/family restroom counts to help prioritize rollout.
- It was confirmed that the existing legislation from 2017 does not need to be amended by Council to include contraceptive products, so once we get the operational plan and funding in place, we should be able to roll out the program without formal legislation. Educational outreach should still take place to build consensus, get buy in for future funding, and also help promote the work of both commissions. Commissioner Julian McClain inquired about the language used in the legislation and the value of utilizing inclusive language for this program and its legislation. Talia highlights that the legislation doesn't specify bathrooms based on gender but does use the term "feminine products". Discussion of amending the language down the line to include more inclusive language (ex. "hygiene products" instead of "feminine products"), specific mention of contraceptive products, and other things from the survey and Commissioner Devon Taliaferro's work. Councilwoman Deb Gross mentions that she can assist with amending the language of the legislation if necessary.
- Talia & Corey are continuing the ongoing funding conversations, including meetings with Global Links and the Allegheny County Health Department. They have met with the Central Outreach, Planned Parenthood, and more to discuss.

Further discussion with the County as well as the universities was introduced as a possibility for collaboration on purchasing.

- ☐ Commissioner Nikkole Terney mentions reaching out to different larger organizations such as Plan B, Honey Pot, Always, Tampax for possible corporate sponsorships, donations, or partnership in some capacity.
- ☐ Commissioner Julian McClain mentioned that there are dispensers already in some restrooms from previous city programming and suggested utilizing them for distribution. He suggests partnering with the Allegheny Health Department through the lens that these supplies provide necessary means of avoiding negative health outcomes to residents. He also suggested getting the perspective of Allies for Health as an example of an organization that already does contraceptive distribution.

iii. Single Stall Restrooms

- ☐ Collaboration with the LGBTQIA+ Commission on single stall restrooms will be pursued in parallel with the menstrual and contraceptive products initiative.
- ☐ Commissioner Julian McClain brings up SOGIE trainings which would be trainings for City employees on gender and identity respect and inclusivity. Talia and Corey will connect to discuss the specific details and logistics of implementing the training and will report back to commissioners on what it could look like.

b. GEC Website & Bylaws

- Website edits from June have mostly been made with a few outstanding items mainly on the *Reports and Policy Recommendations* page as well as the *Resources* page. Talia suggests that commissioners compile a list of relevant resources to advertise and be added by the website development team. Commissioner Julian McClain mentioned the importance of not endorsing for-profit businesses and keeping that in mind when publishing a resources list.
- Headshots for commissioners have been approved. Commissioners can send their information as well as their photo to be added to the website.

- Talia tells commissioners to explore the website and make note of any other changes to be made.
- Mission and vision statement drafting is still in progress; Audra will share a draft with the Commission soon.
- Commissioner Julian McClain inquired about Commissioners getting emails. Talia confirmed that as of now the City does not have capacity to create emails for the commissioners on Outlook but there is a Microsoft 365 group with everyone's personal emails as well as an email account for the commission as a whole which Talia has access to. Better solutions can be discussed in the future.
- Talia reported contact from Marsha Bandies (CEDAW - Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women), who connected her with former Commissioner Jessie Ramey regarding the Commission's existing but outdated bylaws. Talia met with them to discuss the bylaws and the future direction of the Commission, and will share findings, the old bylaws, and new CEDAW Cities resources with the Commission in August. Previous resources were shared on how to engage with departments further after initial survey responses/baseline for each department are established.

VI. New Business

- None.

VII. Announcements

- Commissioner Rachel Shepherd:
 - 12th annual Pittsburgh Human Rights Council Cookout on August 30, 2026 from 1-4pm at the Forbes and Braddock shelter at Frick Park. Flier circulated.
- Commissioner Nikkole Terney:
 - Film screening of the movie 'Unpregnant' on August 6, 2026 at 7pm at Soft Spot.
- Talia reminded Commissioners to keep tabs on anything policy related in line with the Gender Equity Commissions' efforts that the Commission could help advance and move forward.

VIII. Adjournment

- a. The Commission lacked a quorum to adjourn the meeting.