



CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

Richfield, Minnesota

City Council Work Session

June 8, 2021

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Regan Gonzalez at 6:15 p.m. in the Bartholomew Room.

Council Members Present: Maria Regan Gonzalez, Mayor; Ben Whalen; Mary Supple; Simon Trautmann; and Sean Hayford O'leary

Staff Present: Katie Rodriguez, City Manager; Blanca Martinez Gavina, Equity Administrator; and Kelly Wynn, Administrative Assistant

Others Present: Mara Glubka, Human Rights Commission Chair; and Tasha Ostendorf, Human Rights Commission

Item #1	CHAIR MARA GLUBKA OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION WILL PRESENT ON A PROPOSED CONVERSION THERAPY BAN FOR THE CITY.
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City Manager Rodriguez introduced the item and stated staff is asking if Council would like to see this added to the work plan.

Chair Glubka presented on a proposal to ban the practice of conversion therapy on minors and vulnerable adults within Richfield city limits.

Commissioner Ostendorf briefly described what conversion therapy is and terms associated.

Chair Glubka spoke of Dr. Robert Spitzer as he is considered by many to be the father of modern psychiatry. He practiced 'reparative therapy' beginning in 2003 but renounced his findings in 2012.

Commissioner Ostendorf described the harm it has caused.

Chair Glubka spoke on the prevalence of conversion therapy. Council then listened to a story shared by a Minnesota resident.

Commissioner Ostendorf spoke on the need for a global ban on conversion therapy that has been discussed by the United Nations- Independent Expert on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity.

Chair Glubka discussed the 20 states that have already passed bans on conversion therapy. A bill was passed by the House of Representatives in Minnesota in 2019 but failed in the Senate.

Commissioner Ostendorf spoke on the urgency to pass a ban on conversion therapy as the practices can be extremely harmful. She also referred to letters and statements of support the commission has collected.

Chair Glubka then spoke of the recommendation requested by the Human Rights Commission (HRC).

Council Member Supple expressed support for moving forward with the work on putting a ban in place.

Council Member Whalen thanked the HRC for the presentation and letters of support. He expressed disappointment to see the bill not pass at the state level and asked about an outright ban.

Chair Glubka explained the religious aspect as pastors and priests council their followers and this ban is to target licensed professionals who are practicing and not the religious sector.

Commissioner Ostendorf stated it gets difficult when adults are involved in the practice as it is more voluntary and their requested ban is to protect minors and vulnerable adults.

Council Member Hayford Oleary expressed support for banning the therapy and would like to eventually see it at state level. He then asked about an attempt to limit some religious practices.

Chair Glubka provided the ordinance passed in Duluth as an example to follow and would just like to add language regarding vulnerable adults.

Commissioner Ostendorf stated the HRC would like information from Council on how to move forward.

Council Member Trautmann thanked the HRC for their work and recognized hate crimes against the LGBTQIA+ community. He expressed strong support in moving forward with this work.

Mayor Regan Gonzalez she would support working on passing this ban.

City Manager Rodriguez summarized Council's comments, spoke on some research that will need to be completed and suggested putting it on the 2022 work plan.

Chair Glubka offered assistance to get this done quickly.

Mayor Regan Gonzalez asked staff of a projected timeline.

City Manager Rodriguez stated a need to get an estimate on staff hours required, research needing to be completed and an implementation process all need to be assessed before presenting a timeline.

Equity Administrator Martinez Gavina spoke of being in touch with other cities to move forward and will update the HRC when additional information becomes available.

Council Member Hayford Oleary stated he would like to have it publically known that it is a pending item.

Council Member Whalen asked about putting out a proclamation while completing the work and placing the item into the work plan.

City Manager Rodriguez stated a proclamation would be great idea.

ADJOURNMENT

The work session was adjourned by unanimous consent at 6:54 p.m.

Date Approved: June 22, 2021



Maria Regan Gonzalez
Mayor



Kelly Wynn
Administrative Assistant



Katie Rodriguez
City Manager