

Advisory Committee of Racial Equity, Inclusion, and Human Rights Minutes for the Wednesday, May 6th, 2026 Meeting 6PM | Council Chambers

Members Present: Katie Robinson, Adam Baker, Suzette Furrow, Shane Boyes, Rheyln Burke, Mark Roth, Theresa Fallon and Katie Brydon

Non Voting Members:

Members not present: Sharron Webber

City of Bangor staff present: Assistant City Manager, Courtney O'Donnell and City Solicitor, David Szewczyk

Call to Order

- Call to order 6PM
- Roll Call

Committee Business

The primary focus is a referral from the City Council regarding a proposed amendment to the sidewalk ordinance (Section 257-4), specifically removing the phrase "for construction purposes" to make it a general prohibition against obstructing sidewalks with materials.

The proposed change would allow the city to enforce sidewalk accessibility by prohibiting anyone from blocking pathways with materials. While originally for construction, it was determined that the ordinance needs general applicability to enforce sidewalk accessibility. [source: 05:39]

Representatives from the Bangor Public Library and Downtown Bangor Partnership reported that encampments and personal belongings are making sidewalks impassable and the library inaccessible. [source: 20:09, 51:11]

Committee members and public speakers expressed concern of criminalizing homelessness. A recurring point was that clearing sidewalks simply displaces the issue to other public spaces because the city currently lacks a designated allowed place for encampments. [source: 12:26, 83:32]

Concerns were also raised regarding the \$50–\$250 fines potentially leading to accrued debt and or incarceration [source: 13:27, 92:34]

City Solicitor provided an alternative standalone ordinance (Section 257-7) that includes specific enforcement protocols. The committee was advised that subsections may be added to address the

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committee concerns and ultimately achieve a better balance between accessibility and human rights.

[source: 37:51]

The committee did not reach a final vote on the ordinance but scheduled a workshop for Wednesday, May 6, at 6PM to draft a more nuanced recommendation.

Meeting Adjourned

- Vice Chair Boyes motions to adjourn, Member Baker 2nds - all in favor