

ORDINANCE 4-2026

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 2, ARTICLE V, OF THE OWENSBORO MUNICIPAL CODE RELATING TO THE OWENSBORO HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION.

WHEREAS, the Owensboro Human Relations Commission (OHRC) was created by ordinance in 1972 and last updated in 2001; and

WHEREAS, proposed amendments will ensure the OHRC remains compliant with state law, updates membership qualifications and terms, and defines current operating procedures.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY OF OWENSBORO, AS FOLLOWS:

Section 1. That Chapter 2, Article V, of the Owensboro Municipal Code be, and the same is hereby amended, to read as follows:

Sec. 2-196. [~~Commission~~] Board established; composition.

There is hereby established a "City of Owensboro Human Relations Commission," hereafter referred to as the "~~commission~~board," to be composed of no more than twelve (12) [~~fifteen (15)~~] members.

Sec. 2-197. Appointment, qualifications, terms of members.

(a) The members of the board[~~commission~~] shall be appointed by the mayor with the approval of the board of commissioners. The members shall be representative of several social, economic, religious, cultural, ethnic and racial groups; and no member shall be either an elected or appointed official of the city.

(b) Members must be residents of Owensboro-Daviess County for a minimum of one (1) year prior to appointment and remain a resident within Owensboro-Daviess County for the duration of their term.

(c)[~~(b)~~] The length of the terms for members appointed shall be as follows: Four (4) [~~Five (5)~~] members shall be appointed to serve for a term of one

(1) year, four (4) [~~five~~ (5)] members shall be appointed to serve for a term of two (2) years, and four (4) [~~five~~ (5)] members shall be appointed to serve for a term of three (3) years. Thereafter, and upon the expiration of the term of each member, the term for all subsequent members shall be for a three-year period.

~~(d)~~ ~~(e)~~ The current terms of board members [~~on the commission~~] are hereby deemed expired, and all [~~current and vacant~~] memberships shall be appointed in accordance with [~~subsection (b) of~~] this section.

Sec. 2-198. Organization of board[~~commission~~]; compensation of members; adoption of bylaws and policies; meetings.

(a) The board[~~commission~~] shall elect from among the members thereof a chairperson, secretary, treasurer and such other officers as it shall deem necessary and appropriate. The board[~~commission~~] is further authorized to adopt bylaws, policies and procedures reasonable and necessary to govern its proceedings, personnel, and carry out its responsibilities and functions set forth in this division of the Code. All members of the board[~~commission~~] shall serve without compensation. The chairperson of the board [~~commission~~] shall appoint such committees as the bylaws of the board [~~commission~~] shall provide, and such other special committees from time to time as the board[~~commission~~] may deem necessary in order to carry out the purposes of this division.

(b) Meetings: The board[~~commission~~] shall meet on a monthly basis and as deemed necessary and appropriate to carry out its functions and responsibilities. All meetings of the board[~~commission~~] shall be conducted in accordance with the Kentucky Open Meetings Act.

Sec. 2-199. Duty to endeavor to promote understanding and respect.

The board[~~commission~~] shall endeavor to promote and secure mutual understanding and respect among all economic, social, religious, ethnic and racial groups in the city and shall act as conciliator in controversies involving intergroup and interracial relations. The board[~~commission~~] shall cooperate with federal, state and city agencies in an effort to develop harmonious intergroup and interracial relations and shall endeavor to enlist the support of civic, religious, labor, industrial and commercial groups and civic leaders dedicated to the improvement of intergroup and interracial relations and the elimination of discriminatory practices.

Sec. 2-200. Authority to receive complaints, conduct investigations, hold hearings, make studies.

The ~~board~~[~~commission~~] shall receive complaints and make referrals to appropriate authorities and agencies with respect to allegations of discrimination based on race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age over 40, disability, and familial status. The board may, but is not required to, conduct investigations or studies and hold hearings with respect to such allegations[~~of discrimination based on race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age (between 70), disability, and familial status (in housing)~~].

Sec. 2-201. Submission of annual report.

The ~~board~~[~~commission~~] shall submit an annual report summarizing its activities for the preceding year on or before July 1 of each year to the board of commissioners. The report may be submitted in conjunction with its annual request for funding from the city.

Sec. 2-202. Personnel.

The ~~board~~[~~commission~~] may appoint an executive director and other employees to assist the ~~board~~[~~commission~~] in carrying out its responsibilities and functions as defined in this division of the Code.

Sec. 2-203. Authority to accept grants and donations.

The ~~board~~[~~commission, on behalf of the city,~~] may accept grants and donations from foundations, businesses, corporations, governments, or individuals for the purpose of carrying out its functions.

Sec. 2-204. Expenditures; financial/activity reports.

All expenditures shall be authorized by the ~~board~~[~~commission~~] and approved by the treasurer. The ~~board~~[~~commission~~] shall submit monthly financial statements and periodic activity reports upon request to the board of commissioners.

Sec. 2-205. Duty of city departments to cooperate with board[commission].

In order to assist the ~~board~~[~~commission~~] in carrying out its functions, the various departments of the city may furnish to the ~~board~~[~~commission~~] such information or services as the departments can provide.

INTRODUCED AND PUBLICLY READ ON THE FIRST READING, this the 17th day of February, 2026.

PUBLICLY READ AND FINALLY APPROVED ON SECOND READING, this the
3rd day of March, 2026.

Thomas H. Watson, Mayor

ATTEST:

Beth Davis, City Clerk