

# Cambridge LGBTQ+ Commission

Minutes: Thursday, July 28, 2022 6pm

Location: <https://cambridgema.zoom.us/j/89723365868>

Tonight's Chair: Bill Barnert

Attendance (X = Here, LOA = Leave of Absence, Blank = Absent):

| COMMISSIONERS      | Pre-sent? | COMMISSIONERS      | Pre-sent? | STAFF                            | Pre-sent? |
|--------------------|-----------|--------------------|-----------|----------------------------------|-----------|
| Badriyyah Alsabah  |           | Lauryn McNair      |           | Jennifer Mathews                 |           |
| Bill Barnert       | X         | Lesley Phillips    | X         | Amelia Joselow                   | X         |
| Bob Bordone        |           | Linden Huhmann     | X         |                                  |           |
| Cameron Van Fossen |           | Noelani Kamelamela | X         | <b>GUESTS</b>                    |           |
| Frank Arce         | X         | Olivia Sevey       | X         | Sean Hanke, Longfellow House     |           |
| Gregory MacDonough | X         | Soltan Bryce       |           | Joan Ilaqua, The History Project |           |
| Kat Long           | X         | Warner Santiago    |           |                                  |           |
| Kate Grams         | X         |                    |           |                                  |           |

**Agenda** (to be updated 48 hours or more before meeting)

- **Welcome & Introductions**
- **Assign Minute Taker**

Frank Arce is the minute taker.

- **Approve / Modify Agenda**

There are no additions to tonight's agenda.

- **Approve June 23 Minutes**

June minutes are approved unanimously.

- **Presentation from Longfellow House, re: Potential Partnership** – Sean Hanke (they/them), Community Volunteer Ambassador

- **Presentation Focus:**
  - At Longfellow House—Washington's Headquarters, the site's LGBTQ history began long before its preservation as a historic site. There have been LGBTQ members of the Longfellow family as long as there have been Longfellows. Harry Dana, the grandson of the poet Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, preserved many of his families' important documents — as well as his own. As a gay man and a public figure in his own right, Harry Dana was not only preserving queer history, he was creating it at the same time.
  - The site's archives hold the rich family history that Harry Dana worked to preserve. The personal papers of Longfellow family members held in the **archives** give insight into the intimate relationships of Samuel Longfellow (1819-1892), Alice Longfellow (1850-1928), and Harry Dana (1881-1950).
  - <https://www.nps.gov/long/learn/historyculture/lgbtq.htm>
- **Programming and Partnership:**
  - Highlighted current Queer History Programming
    - Lunch & Learn every Saturday at 12:30pm in the Garden
    - Tour every Sunday at 2:30pm
  - Communicated October Event: **Queer Arts and Parks**
    - Celebration of history and community and kick-off of LGBTQI+ History Month
    - Saturday, October 1, 2022 from 12pm-5pm
      - Open to ALL
    - Games, music, tabling by varying organizations and resources, etc.
  - Officially invited LGBTQ+ Commission to the event and requested for commission to participate via tabling at event.
- **Next Steps:**
  - Commission will help with promoting and marketing the event.
  - Topic will be added to the next Commission meeting agenda to request volunteers for tabling and email will be sent out to recruit.
  - Frank will connect Sean with Cambridge Public School Contacts.
  - Joan Ilaqua, The History Project, will be volunteering for tabling and connecting Sean with additional contacts and resources.
- **Project Updates** (current actions, and plans) including reports from Jennifer & Amelia
  - **LGBTQ+ Programming Leader**
    - Job posting closes on Thursday, 7/28. Have received many applications (15 as of 7/25). Jennifer is working with other departments to set up a diverse interview team. Aim to start interviews week of 8/8 (depending on availability) and hire by Labor Day. Anticipate new staff person attending September Commission meeting.
    - Amelia is compiling list

- **All-Gender Bathrooms:**
  - Both the License Commission and the Community Development Department distributed the City Manager's Letter encouraging businesses to convert single-occupancy restrooms to all-gender. Letter is posted on the Commission website. Received a call from Harvard Art Museums to talk through – sounds like they are working on this with their facilities team.
- **Senior Housing Report:**
  - Amelia is scheduling meetings with housing leadership at all the senior housing properties in Cambridge. Will present the research findings through a Story Map and highlight strategies for making properties more inclusive and supportive for GLBT residents.
- **Town Hall Meeting for New Research Focus:**
  - Goal is to schedule a town hall-style meeting wherein members of the LGBTQ+ community and allies can share ideas and help build consensus on the focus area of Commission's next major research project.
  - Anticipate hosting in Sullivan Chamber. Would like to have in-person.
  - We are looking for potential meeting dates in early/mid-October.
- **PRIDE Swag for Commissioners!**
  - The Mayor's Office sent each Commissioner a tote bag and water bottle as a thank you after the Pride Brunch. Bill has his, because he stopped by 51 Inman recently. Please feel free to come by 51 Inman, 2<sup>nd</sup> floor anytime and grab yours.
  
- **Working Group Reports**
  - All-Gender Bathrooms- Update documented above.
  - Budget
  - City Forms
  - Communications
    - Lauryn reviewed the [City's Social Media Policy](#). Lauryn will send an email if she has any findings to report.
    - Purchasing new swag - for WG to discuss. WG will be meeting at 4pm, July 29, 2022.
    - For inclusion in next newsletter: Monkeypox vaccine eligibility and appointments info: <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/monkeypox-vaccination>
  - Community Center
    - Amelia provided an update on LGBTQ Programming Lead job opening. Documented above.
  - Diversity
  - Events

- Comm. Kate Grams was part of the LGBTQ+ SciFi and Fantasy Recommendation Panel June 29th - [Porter Square Panel - LGBTQ+ Sci-fi and Fantasy Recommendations](#). You can watch the whole video at <https://www.crowdcast.io/e/lgbtqsff> .
- Kate shared it was a fun event and lots of great books were recommended.
- **Upcoming Event: Starlight Square: *Night of Queer Comedy, Music, and Dance Together Under the Stars***
  - Saturday, September 10, 2022
  - Cambridge Zoning Board meeting to discuss the future of Starlight Square and hopefully everything will go well and the event to continue.
- Handbook
  - Kat Long will conduct the first pass of reviewing and proposing updates to the current handbook and will share findings and/or recommendations to Bill and Greg, who was part of the original working group, to provide historical knowledge and perspective.
- Housing:
  - Report from Linden re: meetings and information gathered to date.
    - The Housing Working group has met 3 times since May.
    - So far, meetings have been informational:
      - a presentation from CDD's Director of Zoning on current zoning restrictions and the definition of family;
      - perspective from resident Chris Schmidt, who has previously brought a zoning petition to change the definition of family;
      - insights from Inspectional Services Department (ISD) on the difference between restrictions in local zoning and potential restrictions in state building code (which is still ambiguous and would benefit from further discussion with ISD).
  - In all, we've learned that amending zoning's definition of family appears to be one avenue for removing restrictions on co-ops and intentional living communities that create fear of penalties or eviction, housing insecurity, or other barriers to equitable housing.
  - Thoughts on moving forward:
    - Plan to meet again in August, and invite ISD staff to attend and answer questions about state building code v. zoning, enforcement, and related topics.
    - Commission survey to residents:
      - Gather thoughts and feedback from co-op/intentional living community
      - What are your current concerns?
      - What changes would you like to see at the local level?



The exact details & dates are still up in the air, but we envision one that has a broad audience including allies and prospective allies among the Cambridge Public Schools community), and one more focused, for LGBTQ+ teens and possibly slightly younger middle school kids, and potentially their parents.

It occurs to me that people on this list might be interested in helping out, either in the planning, or even just the logistics. Let me know if you're interested, & I'll get you plugged in.

- **New Business**

- New Co-Chair Election (to replace Noelani Gabriel Holt)
  - Bill proposed Frank Arce to be voted as new co-chair.
  - Vote passed unanimously.
- Cambridge Carnival taking place on Sunday, Sept. 11, from 11 - 5.
  - Bill, Frank, and Kat are interested in tabling. Bill and Frank will send email to recruit additional volunteers.
- Sat. Aug. 7th, 10-4, **Danehy Park: "Let Trans Athletes Play"**.
  - Last year, we helped publicize, and we sponsored \$700.
  - The Commission will help publicize the event, and the Commission voted unanimously to sponsor \$500 for a specific item, e.g. t-shirts, marketing, etc. If the Commission sponsors the Commission logo must be on everything.
    - Bill will communicate with Sawyer Julian.
- Sat., Aug. 20th, 1-5pm, there will be a **Celebrating Women's Suffrage Parade & Conclave** on the (Cambridge) Common.
  - Commission will not be partaking in the parade due to limited volunteers/schedule conflict.
- Do we want to have a pot-luck gathering on the 4th Thursday of August (25th)?
  - Bill will host a potluck social at his place.

- **Report from Rainbows Across Communities**

- **Rainbows Across Communities** now has representatives from 9 towns & 7 other groups:

|   |  |
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Arlington</li> <li>● Belmont</li> <li>● Bridgewater</li> <li>● Lexington</li> <li>● Quincy</li> <li>● Sharon</li> <li>● Somerville</li> <li>● Watertown</li> <li>● Woburn</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Greater Boston PFLAG</li> <li>● LGBT Elders of Color</li> <li>● MA Commission on LGBTQ Youth</li> <li>● Network for Social Justice</li> <li>● Old Cambridge Baptist Church</li> <li>● OUT MetroWest</li> <li>● <b>Trans Emergency Fund (new)</b></li> </ul> |
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- **Public Comments / Announcements**
  - **Next Commission Meeting:** Thursday, September 22, 2022, 6-7:30pm. Probably over Zoom - to be confirmed.
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*To view the meeting or to participate in public comment, email  
Amelia Joselow <AJoselow@CambridgeMA.gov>.*