

LGBTQ+ Commission Minutes June 22, 2017

Attending: Linda Daniels, John Gintell, Silas Weiner, Greg MacDonough, Bill Barnert, Lesley Phillips, Aren Stone, Rachel Oppenheimer, Bob Parlin, Anna Weick

Absent: Susan Bernstein, Maya Escobar, Jessica Daniels, Steven Lee, Noelani Kamelamela, Catherine Grams, Mal Malme, Kimm Topping

On Leave: Devontae Freeland, Abby Duker

Guests: Olivia D'Ambrosio, Community Member and City Council Candidate, Rachel Scanlon, Community Member

Commissioner Abby Duker will be taking a leave of absence for the summer.

Modified Agenda/Approved Agenda Approved Minutes from May Meeting

Police Report

Detective Brian O'Connor, the Commission's Police Dept. liaison, was unable to attend. He reported by email that

- As of the meeting date, the Police Dept. is still at 0 reported hate crime incidents based on sexual orientation for this year.
- He is scheduling the LGBTQ training from GOAL (Gay Officer's Action League) for the current recruit class at Lowell Police Academy for the fall.
- In July he will be attending the meeting of Boston area police about GLBT issues and will report at the next Commission meeting.

Past Event Participation

- River Festival June 3 Greg and Kimm tabled. Greg reported that many people came to the table for information and that it was a good opportunity for him, as a new Commissioner, to practice talking about the Commission's work.
- Pride Brunch June 10 All of the feedback from attendees was very positive. Positives from Commissioners in attendance: Having a printed program was helpful, having music at the beginning was great, the performance by the CRLS students was a highlight and broke up the schedule nicely. The hats given by the Mayor were a nice touch. It worked very well to have the awardees given their awards without giving speeches. Noe did a great job as MC, Silas gave a wonderful speech. Suggestions for next time: The perennial questions—how can we get more attendees and more diversity in age and race, is Pride morning the best time to have an event? Other feedback: Not enough food, variety of food, no water, were introductions of awardees too long? Longer bios of awardees in program instead? Work on the written program closer to the beginning of the process and have

someone volunteer to get it done. But all in all a great success. **Action Item:** The Diversity Committee will think about the issues about attendance and come up with some suggestions, perhaps with the help of mayor Simmons and former Bayard Rustin Awardees. **Who:** Linda will arrange a committee meeting before the September Commission meeting.

Future Event Participation

- Oktoberfest October 8 Jessica will coordinate. It was noted that this is a holiday weekend.
- LGBTQ+ Asylum Seekers and Immigrants event Nov. 9, Cambridge Public Library This will likely be a film and speaker's panel. Planning meeting 6pm June 27 at the Au Bon Pain in Central Square The event committee is Bill, Linda, Aren, Susan, Greg, Abby, Noe, Kimm, Priscilla Lee (former Commissioner and current Mayoral staff member), John Longjones Wambere (asylee), and members of the Cambridge Commission on Immigrant Rights and Citizenship.

Out of the Margins Town Meeting

We sponsored this Town Meeting with Mayor Simmons on April 13th. Take-aways from attending, reading the minutes and watching the video:

- One of the main concerns was that too many residents don't know about the services and organizations that exist in the city.
- Housing costs came up as an extreme concern for each of the discussion groups.
- Many people mentioned that they were grateful the city was welcoming to LGBTQ+ people.

We discussed whether there was any way the Commission can help to make sure that the housing that exists in the city is LGBTQ-friendly. Several Commissioners and Elysia Chandler (the Commission's researcher) have participated in city discussions about having LGBTQ-friendly senior housing and our senior housing project addresses concerns about LGBTQ supports in senior housing, though not the broader concern of affordability.

Youth On Fire

This daytime drop-in center for homeless youth will lose its funding as of November. It is a project of AIDS Action Committee and shares space with Y2Y, the overnight youth shelter in Harvard Square. Carl Sciortino, Executive Director of AIDS Action, has met with the City Manager and other city officials and the city is considering how to help. **Action Item:** Some Commissioners can meet with the City Manager and/or Assistant City Manager to discuss avenues of support. **Who:** John to set up meeting, John, Rachel, Aren and others interested in attending.

Legal Department Request

The city's Legal Department asked if the Commission would be in favor of

Cambridge filing an amicus brief in the case of Fultcher v. Secretary of Veterans Services. This case challenges the denial of funds for a Transgender service person to have gender reassignment surgery through the Veteran's Administration. The Commission enthusiastically supported Cambridge in filing an amicus brief.

Youth After School Activity Policies and Practices Survey

Elysia Chandler, Commission Researcher, continues to contact youth organizations and to collect data. Kimm continues to help her and Aren, John, Nancy Schlacter (Human Rights Commission Executive Director), and Taha Jennings (aide to the City Manager) continue with supervision and support. Elysia's hours increase to 20/week on July 1st and she will then have time to again work on the Senior Housing Project.

Gender Neutral Bathrooms

Kimm has been working with the Human Rights Commission and City Manager's office to create a flyer that will encourage Cambridge businesses to establish gender neutral, or all gender, bathrooms. They reported by email that there will be a draft of the flyer by mid-July. After it's vetted by the city's legal department it will come to us to review. Kimm will let the Commission know the time of the next meeting of the working group. It was noted that the flyer idea came from our Commission a few years ago and that we appreciate that a working group is bringing it to fruition. **Action Item:** The Gender Neutral Bathroom committee will meet and make plans to work with this group.

Status on 'Conversion Therapy Ban Bill'

SB62/HB1190-An Act relative to abusive practices to change sexual orientation and gender identity in minors
The bill is currently being redrafted.

Next Meeting: Thursday July 27 6:00-7:30