

**February 27, 2014 meeting minutes
Cambridge GLBT Commission**

THE NEXT MEETING WILL BE HELD ON THURSDAY, MARCH 27, 2014

Call to Order.

Kevin Shpritzer recorded these minutes.

Agenda for the February 27 meeting was accepted.

The minutes of the January 23 meeting were approved.

Commissioners Present: Kevin Shpritzer, Aren Stone, Mal Malme, Gregory Grays-Thomas, Kristina Mastropasqua, John Gintell, Neil Scannell, Paul Miller, Anna Weick, Bill Barnert, Caitlin Drechsler, Mike McKenna, Rachel Oppenheimer, Lesley Phillips, Kara Smith,

Commissioners Absent: (excused) – Steven Lee, Bob Parlin, Danny Venezia, Neil MacInnes-Barker, Maggie Giles

Guests: Matthew J. Shochat

I. Welcome

II. Police Department Report

- a. Superintendent Chris Burke was unable to attend tonight's meeting.
- b. Via email, he reported that the Police Auxiliary received training by GOAL (Gay Officer's Action League) and it went well.
- c. Pro Ambulance is interested in the GOAL training and is in communication with Chris.

III. Budget

- a. We need to order more give-away items soon.
- b. May 4 will be our first event (MayFair).

IV. Possible Endorsement

- a. Lesley reported on a Lawyers for Transgender Rights fundraiser
- b. The event will be at ZuZu in early April.
- c. The Commission agreed to endorse this fundraiser.

V. Reports

a. Gender Neutral Bathrooms

- i. We would like the city to make more progress on this – the policy has two aspects: bathrooms in city buildings and working with commercial establishments. We will work with city management.

b. Homeless Shelters

- i. Rachel and Greg have an upcoming meeting with the Human Rights Commission on March 24 to talk about transgender guests in local homeless shelters.

c. Youth on Fire

- i. How can we support them next?
- ii. We should continue getting them socks and underwear.
- iii. YOF has a list of items of which they are always in need.
- iv. YOF is always looking for places that want them to come speak, particularly those that can provide an honorarium.
- v. Caitlin emailed Ayala about helping them construct a website and will follow up with a phone call.
- vi. YOF is developing a program for subsidized one bedroom apartments for formerly homeless young people. They might need help furnishing these apartments.
- vii. The YOF documentary “No Place Like Home”, produced by Neil M-B., will be screened on March 6 in the House Member’s Lounge in the State House from 1-2:30.
- viii. YOF is working on opening an overnight shelter for homeless young people. Representatives from the group working on the shelter will be at our March meeting. We will find out from them how we can best support this effort.
- ix. Several Commission members have been supporting YOF by collecting donations of goods and by providing food through Community Cooks.

d. HBASIS Group

- i. Harvard BGLTQ & Allied Students in the Sciences is a recently formed group.
- ii. John met with them after they reached out to us in January.
- iii. This group wants to work with seniors and youth on a variety of different projects (theater, companionship, tutoring, etc.)
- iv. John gave them contact information for the Cambridge Senior Center and Cambridge Commission on Aging. Aren suggested we put them in touch with Kate Thomas (Somerville/Cambridge Elder Services).

e. Youth Advisory Committee

- i. This group has met once.
- ii. They would like the Commission to make a connection with GSAs that are forming or currently exist in Cambridge’s schools.
- iii. John has been connecting with the Cambridge middle/upper schools.
- iv. Bill is working with Project 10 East, the CRLS GSA. He went to their first meeting and is planning to attend their second.
- v. Caitlin has been connecting with some private schools. She is unable to attend their meetings, but Mal volunteered to go.
- vi. Melody Brazo, Cambridge School Dept. LGBT Family Liaison, can help the committee with this project.

VI. Cambridge LGBT Senior Meals Program

- a. Cadbury Commons, an assisted living facility in Cambridge, has been hosting the monthly meal for 4 years. They have decided that they can no longer serve as the host site. There will be one more monthly (4th Wednesday) dinner held at Cadbury Commons before it is relocated.

- b. The dinners are sponsored by Somerville Cambridge Elder Services and the Cambridge Council on Aging. They are finding a new venue.

VII. **Upcoming Events**

a. **LGBT Teachers Gathering**

- i. Kara has been in touch with Melody Brazo about this.
- ii. Wednesday, April 16, 4-5:30pm, at Grendel's Den, is the suggested time for this.
- iii. Kara will talk with Melody to clarify the criteria to decide who gets invited to the event.
- iv. She will also talk to Grendel's about possible food donations.
- v. Caitlin will take on connecting with private schools once the criteria has been decided.

b. **Boston LGBT Film Festival**

- i. Bob agreed to take this on, but he was unable to attend tonight's meeting.
- ii. We will check in with him to see if we are still going to sponsor this event and if there will be a showing in Cambridge.

c. **Marriage Equality Ten Year Anniversary – Friday-Saturday, May 16-17**

- i. John met with Mayor David Maher and his Chief of Staff, Jefferson Smith.
- ii. They support the Commission's idea to have an event to mark this historic anniversary.
- iii. They will talk to Rich Rossi, the City Manager, to make sure he is on board with having the event.
- iv. The Mayor's office will likely help to organize the event.
- v. Another meeting with Mayor Maher, Jefferson and interested Commissioners should happen before the end of March. John will contact Jefferson to set this up.
- vi. We will ask MassEquality and GLAD to take part.

d. **Pride Brunch – Saturday, June 14**

- i. John, Aren, and Neil S. will be the Brunch organizing committee.
- ii. Gregory and Paul will be on the Bayard Rustin Service Award committee.
- iii. We set a deadline of May 15 to accept award nominations.
- iv. Caitlin volunteered to get a nomination form online.
- v. Gregory will ask Denise Simmons and Brian Corr to join the award committee.

VIII. **Cambridge Employee Standards of Conduct**

- a. The Commission reviewed language in the standards.
- b. Gregory felt there could be firmer language regarding specific LGBTQ issues.
- c. In general, we would like to see terms such as "Obscene or Abusive Language" more clearly defined.
- d. We suggest broadening the definition of harassment to include any act of harassment based on gender identity, gender expression or sexual orientation.
- e. We would also suggest that any act of harassment be moved up to the "Violations Which May Result in Dismissal" section from the "Other Violations Which May Result in Disciplinary Action".

- f. Aren will contact Chris Burke (Supt. of Police) and Nancy Schlacter, Ex. Dir., Human Rights Commission, for their opinions of these changes.
- g. Lesley will look into who to contact in the city.
- h. Neil S. suggested that, if successful, we contact other cities and towns and urge them to review their employee standards of conduct.

IX. Other Meetings

- a. Aren and John recently met with Lisa Peterson, Deputy City Manager.
- b. She understood the Commission's need for easier access to funding for specific projects and will work on establishing an easier process. A likely outcome is some funding for an intern.
- c. She is also interested in figuring out a way to coordinate information access between the different Cambridge commissions and in getting funding for an intern.
- d. John met with Mayor Maher and his chief of staff, Jefferson Smith to get them up-to-speed on Commission activities. The Mayor will be assigning a person to work directly with us.

X. Communications

a. Website

- i. Bill suggested that the website committee needs to reconvene.
- ii. We need to figure out how to get in and be able to make changes.
- iii. Caitlin will try to make changes to the website from her PC. Other committee members were unable to easily make changes from their Macs.

b. Newsletter/Mailing List

- i. Commissioners should complete their bios and send them to Bill.

XI. Announcements

- a. The Cambridge Men's Group celebrated its 7th anniversary in February.

Public Comments

Meeting was adjourned at 7:30pm