## November 18, 2010 meeting minutes Cambridge GLBT Commission

## **NEXT MEETING WILL BE HELD ON THURSDAY, January 27, 2011**

Call to Order

Priscilla Lee recorded these minutes.

<u>Commissioners Present:</u> Sarav Chidambaram, John Gintell, Priscilla Lee, Mal Malme, Bob Parlin

<u>Commissioners Absent:</u> Colby Berger, Steven Lee, Leslie Phillips, Kevin Shpritzer, Toni Snow, Jeff Walker, Tony Wieczorek

Guests: Supt. Chris Burke, Lee Gianetti, Mike McKenna, Maryanne (sp?)

- Minutes from the Oct 2010 meeting were approved with two revisions: Priscilla Lee had an excused absence that evening, and the date of the vigil in memory of transgender victims of violence was changed from Thursday, November 18th to Saturday, November 20.
- I. **Social Gatherings:** We talked about collaborating on social events (potlucks, movies, clubbing) with other community organizations (including the Cambridge Mens' Group, P10 East, Asian, Haitian, other community groups of color...) and other commissions (including Womens', Peace, and Human Rights.) We noted the lack of time/energy to plan such events (hence collaborations,) the dependability and desirability of a recurring (monthly?) social event and the intention to balance social events with activities that contribute to the welfare of the community. Lee G. suggested we reach out to area businesses/corporations such as Draper Labs or Google (companies that are already beginning to structure groups/events that involve connection to the wider community).

<u>Next Steps:</u> Bob will investigate food pantry volunteer opportunities, Sarav will work on "movie nights," Lee G. and Chris B. both offered printing services for flyers advertising future events, Lee also suggested the possibility of our commission being assigned a code (as well as a specific allotment of copies to access) for the downstairs copier at City Hall. This led to a segue into the commission's other "copy needs"... (segue into next item)

II. Copying Needs: Imminent copy needs include printouts that we are now required to sign regarding the new Ethics Law (Sarav has posted this 6-page document on our Yahoo Group site) and information relating to our anticipated compliance with the "Open Meeting" Law (see below) Sarav has also uploaded info about this law to the Yahoo site- thanks, S! Other copies on our "list" include generic commissioner business cards and a multi-language commission "brochure" that spells out our existence and community role.

<u>Next Steps:</u> Chris will check with the Human Rights Commission to see what languages their information is made available in, and Bob will check with Chris Saheed regarding the same at CRLS. We will tap Tony W. to see if he is willing to design a commissioner business card. Lee says, "Send it to me, I'll get it printed!"

III. **Open Meeting Law**: The MA legislature recently changed some rules regarding Open Meetings- here are some of them:

Notices must be posted publicly 24 hours in advance in a location accessible 24 hours/day. If a document is passed out at a meeting, a copy of such must be placed in a "repository" (not simply online,) and if an opinion is expressed (even in an e-mail!) this must also be made accessible to the public. We acknowledge that our commission supports and has no issue with the <u>spirit</u> of this law (to make meetings and policy discussions more open, less secret,) though we also note that to keep in full compliance with this law will be cumbersome. As stated above, the OML information is available via the commission Yahoo group and commissioners are expected to read it prior to signing the Ethics Law statement (that says we understand and will comply) by a December 14<sup>th</sup> deadline. (Where should we send these affidavits once we sign them?)

IV. Update on Senior Health and Housing project: Lee reports that Mayor Maher has put a Silver Ribbon Commission in place to examine what needs to be done for seniors in order to allow them to "age in place." Commission members are knowledgeable folks including professionals from Fenway Health and the Gerontology Dept at USF. The Mayor's Office has budgeted for a Jan-May 2011 paid internship position, with recruitment to be floated at area graduate schools (focus on public health or social work.) The intern will receive guidance from the aforementioned "Silver Ribbon Commission." Once hired, the intern would develop and implement a needs assessment survey of focus groups to get a sense of "where we are," "where we need to go," and "what resources we will need to have in place" for the future well-being of seniors. Survey participants would include health care providers, health facilities administrators and other staff, and, naturally, seniors themselves (aged 50+, including GLBT folks.) Another desired outcome of the internship project would be the development of a tool for trainings of senior facilities staff (maybe a boilerplate that could be replicated elsewhere. Hopefully the value of this internship can be established during this period of Mayor Maher's term so that the funding might be secured in subsequent budgets (beyond Mayor Maher's stewardship) and that progress made in this area can be further built upon, used and shared.

<u>Next Steps:</u> Lee will bring the intern (once hired) to a commission meeting (likely in Jan or Feb 2011) and we can pitch some ideas around!

- V. Review of procedures to recruit new members: Resumes have trickled in and we wonder about the possibility of extending the official deadline. At least three prospective applicants have attended commission meetings and this seems to be a good way for prospective commissioners to check out what we actually do. We discussed having informal telephone or coffee interviews and agreed that face-to-face meetings are preferable.
- VI. Hopes for 2011: John would like the Cambridge Fire Department and local EMT personnel to bring GLBT Sensitivity Training into their repertoire. Lee floated the idea of the commission initiating a GLBT History Month for Cambridge. All of us hope for greater visibility in and outreach to our community.

## VII.

**Public Comment - Chris Burke**: The Cambridge Police Department GLBT Sensitivity Trainings are scheduled for Dec 6<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup>! There will be two three-hour sessions (9-1PM, 1-4PM) per day, and officers who have not yet participated are signed up to do so. Bob Aldridge is committed to holding these trainings and it seems there is also some commitment from the MIT and Harvard Police forces to participate. Thanks, Chris!

The meeting was adjourned early, at 6:30 p.m.