

**January 27, 2011 meeting minutes  
Cambridge GLBT Commission**

**DUE TO SCHOOL VACATION WEEK, THE NEXT MEETING WILL BE HELD ON  
THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 17, 2011**

Call to Order

Toni Snow recorded these minutes. The minutes of the November meeting were approved.

**Commissioners Present:** John Gintell, Sarav Chidambaram, Toni Snow, Steven Lee, Mal Malme, Bob Parlin, Jeff Walker, Kevin Shpritzer, Priscilla Lee, Lesley Phillips

**Commissioners Absent:** (excused) –Tony W.

**Guests:** Mike McKenna, Stephanie Skiers, and student/guest.

- I. Pride Brunch Planning and the Bayard Rustin Award.** In August 2010, the City Council ordered that an annual award in honor of Bayard Rustin be created and that it be given at the Pride Brunch. Bayard Rustin (March 17, 1912 – August 24, 1987) was the openly gay, African American civil rights leader who helped organize the 1963 March on Washington where Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. delivered his "I Have A Dream Speech." Rustin was relegated to a behind-the-scenes role in the civil rights movement after opponents attempted to use his sexual orientation to discredit the movement.

Each year at Cambridge's Pride celebration, the planning committee presents recognition awards to community members for their contribution to GLBT rights. To address the lack of representation of people of color at Pride, and to honor the work of Bayard Rustin, this new award was created. We can hopefully attract more people of color in the GLBT community through this effort. A committee of 5 people (2 from the Commission) will be established to review nominations which will be solicited with an April 15th deadline. Jeff W. drafted a description of the process and an application form. John G. will alert Ini Tomeu to this to get help in the publicity. The process was unanimously adopted.

- II. Update on Policy Orders.** Both orders were adopted at January 10<sup>th</sup> City Council meeting: 1) Request the City Manager to create a working group including Commissioners to consider creating a policy for Gender Neutral Bathrooms in City Buildings and public places, and 2) Cambridge taking a stand against federal tax code and the discriminatory impact on same-sex married couples that occurs when a City employee gets spousal medical insurance. Because the Federal government doesn't recognize same sex marriage this benefit is treated as taxable income; the proposal would be to adjust their salary in some manner as many companies have done. Follow up from City Manager expected soon.

- III. New Commissioner Appointments.** The five Commissioners with expiring terms will be reappointed. Four candidates have been interviewed and references have been

checked. Names were submitted to the City Manager this week and approval of appointments is expected soon.

**IV. LGBTQ Rights Conference, Spring 2011.** “Join the Impact” is organizing this year’s conference, to be held first or second week in April. This conference has replaced the GLSEN conference. (Last year was the first conference under a new partnership and 400 people attended.) Cambridge Commission members should consider participating in the planning of this conference because there are important connections to be made

**V. Sponsorship of Boston LGBT Film Festival.** Cambridge GLBT Commission has been asked to co-sponsor this year’s LGBT film festival. According to Harvard Square News at harvardsquare.com, “From May 6th to the 16th **The Boston LGBT Film Festival** will celebrate its 26th anniversary with a selection of films that showcases the best in LGBT cinema from around the world. These exciting, groundbreaking films will be screened at the **The Brattle Theatre in Harvard Square**, Cambridge, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, and at the new Fenway Community Health Center on Boylston Street.”

The opportunity was unanimously approved and Sarav C. will confirm our co-sponsorship with the festival organizers. We discussed publicity and a possible Council proclamation.

**VI. Opportunity to Co-Sponsor Documentary Film on Queer History.** Jeff W. was contacted by a co-producer of a documentary, “Left on Pearl: Women Take Over 888 Memorial Drive, Cambridge” regarding an opportunity for the Commission to be a sponsor. The documentary will be screened at the Brattle Theater on Sunday, March 6, 2011 at 2pm. The film includes material about the lesbians in the women’s movement during the early 1970s. Other sponsors include the Cambridge Historical Commission, The History Project, The Cambridge Women’s Commission, Welcoming Schools Cambridge and various local women’s and gender studies programs at local universities. Co-sponsorship of “Left on Pearl” was unanimously approved.

**VII. IMPACT Boston Request for Workshop Space.** The group is having trouble finding space to hold a self defense workshop in Cambridge in March or April. Director Meg Stone is asking commission for help in locating a venue. Commission can also be a sponsor and have 2-3 free slots at the workshop. Suggestions included West Cambridge Youth Center, YMCA, Windsor Street Health Center, CRLS, War Memorial Rec. Ctr. Commission unanimously agreed to sponsor and to help find workshop location. Mal M. will determine the date and will contact Ed Byrne of Project 10East and Jeff W. will speak to Paul Ryder, recreation director for Cambridge about possible space.

**VIII. Miscellaneous Items.**

1) A Silver Ribbon Committee has been created with Vice Mayor Henrietta Davis leading it – it’s mission is to develop plans to enhance the possibilities for seniors living in Cambridge. John G. was appointed to this committee and will among other things make sure that GLBT issues are included. ▾

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2) John G. met with Rich Rossi to look for some staff support for some of Commission's projects – Rich will speak to Brian Corr (Peace Commission) and Colleen Johnston (Human Rights Commission).

3) There has been some discussion with Councilor Simmons and the Mayor's office about holding another GLBT Town Meeting this year – date and plans to be explored.

4) The city web site changed to a new Content Management system and for the moment we don't have direct access to change the Commission pages but we are getting good response from the MIS department when needed.

5) No new status about the Seniors health and housing project taken on by the Mayor's office.

IX. **Martin Luther King Breakfast(s) – Boston and Cambridge.** Sarav C. attended the Boston event (held at the Boston Convention center) with City Councilor Simmons -- 4000 people attended. Then on to a Cambridge meeting to honor Dr. King, sponsored by the Cambridge Episcopal church – 200 people attended.

X. **Work Plan for 2011.** What do we want to accomplish in coming year? We agreed to hold this discussion for the February meeting when all commissioners can be present. In the meantime, Toni S. will look back at minutes over past 3 years to review our accomplishments and to get a sense of what worked and what didn't. Toni will prepare list for February meeting.

**Announcements:**

Mal M. attended Trans Rights Bill lobbying event at state house (Jan. 27<sup>th</sup>) and reminded us to contact legislators to sponsor the pending transgender rights bill.

In support of Mass Equality's February 19<sup>th</sup> dance party fundraiser (The Red Party), Priscilla L. offered to subsidize 50 percent of the cost for an interested commissioner. Event will be held at 7pm at The Estate in Boston. Please contact Priscilla via email if you are interested.

Due to February school vacation week, the next meeting will be February 17<sup>th</sup>.

**Meeting adjourned at 7:30 p.m.**