June 27, 2013 meeting minutes Cambridge GLBT Commission

THE NEXT MEETING WILL BE HELD ON THURSDAY, JULY 25, 2013

Call to Order.

Kevin Shpritzer recorded these minutes.

The minutes of the May 23 meeting were approved.

Agenda for the June 27 meeting was accepted.

<u>Commissioners Present:</u> Kevin Shpritzer, Aren Stone, Mike McKenna, Caitlin Drechsler, Neil Scannell, John Gintell, Mal Malme, Gregory Grays-Thomas, Maggie Giles, Danny Venezia, Steven Lee, Kara Smith, Bill Barnert, Neil MacInnes-Barker

<u>Commissioners Absent:</u> (excused) – Kristina Mastropasqua, Rachel Oppenheimer, Bob Parlin, Lesley Phillips

Commissioners On Leave: Dana Zircher

<u>Guests:</u> Chris Burke (Supt. of Police), Staff and members from Youth on Fire, Matthew J. Shochat

I. Welcome and Introductions

II. Youth on Fire

- a. Members and staff presented to the Commission about their lives and their YOF experiences.
- b. YOF is a drop-in center, located in Harvard Square, for homeless youth up to their 25th birthday.
- c. 30% of members identify at LGBT or Q.
- d. Mal asked about their "typical" day and we heard about the different services and activities (movies, sexual and mental health classes, meals, showers, medical referrals, etc.) they do.
- e. We heard how many of them found out about and became a part of YOF.
 - i. Word of mouth from travelers are typically how people find out about YOF.
- f. Many of them have found experiences at homeless shelters to be very negative and unsafe.
- g. They feel like they have outgrown their space.
 - i. There are over 60 people in the program as well as their pets (YOF is pet-friendly), so maintaining safety and getting work done becomes a challenge.
- h. Funding is a constant concern.
 - i. Primary sources are AIDS Action, Dept. of Public Health (AIDS prevention program)
 - ii. Safe Spaces and small private donations contribute as well.
 - iii. With more funding, YOF would like to add an additional full-time staff member, which would allow the addition of more programming.
 - iv. Also, YOF may be able to stay open an additional day (Tuesday) each week.
- i. YOF does have a core group of volunteers but are always looking for more.

- j. Finding publically-accessible bathrooms is a challenge for YOF members.
 - i. John G. reported that the City of Cambridge is looking to add more public bathrooms.
- k. YOF really likes working with the two outreach officers from Cambridge Police.
- 1. The Commission would like to plan an event with YOF. Possibly showing a movie about Sylvia's Place in New York City.

III. Police Report

- a. Supt. Burke has been researching transgender police policies.
- b. With some help form Boston PD, he has put together a draft policy for CPD!

IV. Budget/Spending

- a. Aren and Steven have met with Deborah Copeland and Muna Kangsen from the city.
- b. We used almost all of our budget this year, which is great.
- c. Deborah would like a maximum of two commissioners as contacts.
- d. She would also like a heads-up about upcoming expenses.
- e. Bill suggested purchasing a large rainbow flag for the Commission.
- f. He also offered to let the Commission borrow a tent that he purchased for any future events.
- g. At the next meeting, Steven will talk further about the budget and protocol for commissioners spending money.

V. Recent Events

- a. Cambridge River Festival June 1
 - i. It was really hot out, but we had a lot of visitors.
 - ii. A few email addresses were collected.
- b. Pride Brunch June 8
 - i. The event went very smoothly, and turnout was strong.
 - ii. Mal and Bill were great emcees.
 - iii. All speeches were well received.

VI. Upcoming Events

- a. Seniors Information Fair: Mon, July 29 6pm-7:30pm
 - i. This will be held at the Citywide Senior Center in Central Square across from City Hall.
- b. Danehy Park Family Day: Sat, September 21 –11am-4:30pm
 - i. Kevin will set this up over the summer at some point.
- c. Future Film Event with YOF
 - i. Most commissioners were interested in helping with this project.
 - ii. Neil and Aren will co-chair the committee.
 - iii. He will reach out to the commission when it is time to get going with the planning.

VII. Long Term Projects

- a. John reported on a meeting he and Mike had with Rich Rossi (new City Manager) and Lisa Peterson (new Deputy City Manager)
 - i. John gave Rich and Lisa an update on what the Commission has been doing.

- ii. He told them we need help on our two long-term projects (Youth After School Project and Seniors Project).
- iii. Both were very supportive of our projects.
- iv. Gender neutral bathrooms were brought up.
 - 1. City buildings undergoing renovations should have gender neutral bathrooms.
 - 2. State plumbing code may need to be changed to help fully implement the gender neutral bathrooms.
- v. John also brought up our desire to establish our own website, independent of our city website.

VIII. Communications

- a. Public
 - i. Facebook posts have been frequent.
 - ii. Commissioners are reminded to stay active on the Facebook page.
- b. PSA planning
 - i. Committee will be meeting shortly.

IX. Public Comment

- a. Matthew is happy to help promote GLBT-related items
- b. mjshochat723.wordpress.com is his blog
- c. mjshochat is his Twitter feed
- d. Matthew will keep in touch with Neil M.

Meeting was adjourned at 7:32pm