

**May 23, 2013 meeting minutes  
Cambridge GLBT Commission**

**THE NEXT MEETING WILL BE HELD ON THURSDAY, JUNE 27, 2013**

Call to Order.

Kevin Shpritzer recorded these minutes.

The minutes of the April 25 meeting were approved.

Agenda for the May 23 meeting was accepted.

**Commissioners Present:** Kevin Shpritzer, Aren Stone, Mike McKenna, Bob Parlin, Caitlin Drechsler, Kristina Mastropasqua, Rachel Oppenheimer, Neil Scannell, John Gintell, Lesley Phillips, Mal Malme, Gregory Grays-Thomas, Maggie Giles

**Commissioners Absent:** (excused) – Danny Venezia, Steven Lee, Kara Smith, Bill Barnert – (unexcused) - Neil MacInnes-Barker

**Commissioners On Leave:** Dana Zircher

**Guests:** Chris Burke (Supt. of Police), Melody Brazo (Cambridge Public Schools – School Climate Coordinator & School Dept. LGBT Family Liaison)

**I. Welcome and Introductions**

**II. Melody Brazo**

- a. Melody explained the history of her role with CPS and the creation of a program called “Welcoming Schools Cambridge”.
- b. Three components of her work
  - i. Connecting with families who identify as LGBT or who have LGBT family members
  - ii. Connecting with employees
  - iii. Often serves as the public face of LGBT issues for the Cambridge School Department.
- c. Melody presents to families of incoming students and meets with families going through Kindergarten registration.
- d. Melody does not have concerns about sending LGBT families to any of the Cambridge schools.
- e. She is also connected to the bullying prevention program in CPS.
- f. Works with LGBT students at the high school who are having a tough time with their families
- g. She has worked to build a rapport with the principals of CPS to enable them to comfortably call her with questions and/or concerns.
- h. Works with teachers to infuse their classroom practices with more welcoming materials and concepts.
  - i. Tries to donate books with LGBT themes to different classrooms and/or libraries each year.

- ii. At this point, there are books in every grade level in every classroom with books from Welcoming Schools Cambridge.
- iii. GSAs will be starting in all CPS middle schools next year.
- i. Melody has found the Superintendent to be supportive of her needs and her mission.
- j. Does not work with Cambridge's charter schools
- k. Gives training to new teachers about how to handle LGBT issues that may arise
- l. [welcomingschools.org](http://welcomingschools.org) has a bibliography for literature supporting LGBT issues that can be used in classrooms among many other useful resources
- m. In the late fall, Melody said it would be nice to have a gathering of some sort celebrating LGBT teachers and allies.
  - i. **The Commission agreed to partner with her to put on this event.**
- n. Melody can be reached by email at [mbrazo@cpsd.us](mailto:mbrazo@cpsd.us)

### III. **Police Department Report**

- a. In the process of finalizing attendants at the Lowell Police Academy – first week of June
- b. GOAL New England training will be offered to that class
- c. Cambridge Police will be escorting the group “Dykes on Bikes” to the Boston Pride March from the Fresh Pond Mall.

### IV. **Budget Report**

- a. Pens and totebags have been purchased.
- b. Mike has them in his possession.
- c. Muna says all invoices need to be in by May 31.
- d. The process for purchasing has been a bit cumbersome.
- e. We will talk more in June about how to better streamline the process.
- f. Aren will look into buying a cart.
- g. Bob suggested adding a pin-maker to the budget for next year.

### V. **May Fair**

- a. The commission had a table across from the Brattle Theater.
- b. We had good visibility and all groups met with many fairgoers.

### VI. **LGBT Film Festival**

- a. Vice Mayor Simmons introduced the film *Stud Life*.
- b. There was a good turnout for the movie.

### VII. **Youth Pride**

- a. We had a table at this event and had many visitors.
- b. Homeschool GSA would like to meet with the commission.
  - i. We may try to set them up with the new GSAs from the middle school.

### VIII. **River Festival – June 1 – 12pm to 6pm**

- a. Commissioner table schedule
  - 12 – 2 – Bill, Maggie and Caitlin (with give-aways)
  - 2 – 4 – Aren and Mal

**IX. Anti-Defamation League dinner – JFK Museum Library – June 6 @ 6pm**

- a. The Commission was invited and Mal and John will attend.
- b. Rachel is interested in attending as well.

**X. LGBTQ Seniors Information Fair – Citywide Senior Center in Central Square**

- a. Cambridge Council on Aging and the Commission are co-sponsoring this event.
- b. Planning meeting – June 11 @ 3pm
- c. Event – July 29 @ 6pm – information fair

**XI. Youth on Fire**

- a. Gregory reported that some staff/leaders from YOF will speak at our June meeting.
- b. That will be a good time to figure out how to partner with YOF.

**XII. Pride Brunch – June 8 – 9:30 – 11:00**

- a. John reports the event is coming together well.
- b. Mayor will be in attendance.
- c. Mal and Bill will co-emcee the event
- d. Recognition Awards – Chris Burke and GLAD (organization)
- e. Arthur Lipkin is working with Ed Byrne to identify a recipient for the Rose Lipkin award.

**XIII. Cambridge Camping**

- a. Cambridge Camping is partnering with Camp Lightbulb to send LGBT youth from Cambridge to their camp in Provincetown.

**XIV. City Meetings Report**

- a. John has had a series of meetings.
  - i. Met with Brian Murphy, Assistant City Manager for Community Development
    - 1. John briefed Brian about the current Commission projects.
    - 2. They discussed the need for outreach to promote the creation/conversion of gender neutral bathrooms in new construction and major renovations as recommended in the Policy adopted in March 2012.
  - ii. City Council has asked the City Manager to consider the budget of various city commissions, including the Cambridge GLBT Commission, in particular how to fund projects.
  - iii. He is meeting with Richard Rossi on June 6 @ 2pm to talk about the Senior and Youth projects. Mike may join John at the meeting.

Meeting was adjourned at 7:20pm