October 23, 2008 meeting minutes Cambridge GLBT Commission

I. Call to Order

Toni Snow recorded these minutes.

Commissioners Present: John Gintell, Sarav Chithambaram, Neal Minahan, Bob Parlin, Monika Dargin, Chris Mason, Richard Juang, Lesley Phillips, Priscilla Lee, Mal Malme, Richard Scalli, Toni Snow, Jeff Walker, Tony Wieczorek.

Attending from Public: Mike McKenzie and Nathan West

- II. Motion to Accept Agenda: Passed with one addition re HIV education and testing.
- III. Motion to Accept Minutes from July 2008 meeting: Passed.

IV. Subcommittee Reports:

A. Police Subcommittee – Summary of October 1st Meeting

- CPD Commissioner Haas attended along with legal advisor Kelly Downs and Lieutenant. Stephen Ahern.
- CPD encouraging a stronger focus on sensitivity to victims.
- Changes implemented for case management; week-end detective coverage added to address gaps in service that may aid CPD follow-up after an incident.
- Homelessness is a growing problem in Cambridge; arrest of repeat homeless offenders is non-productive, as offenders are quickly returned to street no quick stats on number of Queer homeless youth.
- Transgendered individuals housed in separate cells.
- Sensitivity toward immigrants is reliably strong in Cambridge and among CPD.
 - a. Next steps: Determine status of Hate Crimes Policy; obtain update of CPD training schedule and GLBT inclusion in curriculum; determine if Police Review Advisory Board is operative and consider their training needs; schedule tour of new police department facility in December/January.

B. Education

- (Kathy Keegan was unable to attend.)
- Discussion of education needed in schools re use of "Queer" to describe GLBT folks.
 - a. Next steps: Submit budget request to School Committee for Welcoming Schools; determine how Commission can be involved in search for new school superintendent.

C. Elders/Housing

- John G. will meet with Susan Pacheco (Council on Aging) and Rebecca Levine to discuss Seniors Health and Housing project.
 - a. Next steps:

D. Publicity

- Working on enhanced Web presence for Commission
 - a. Next steps: Tony W. and John G. will meet with Cambridge MIS Dept.

V. Review of October 22nd Town Hall Meeting

- Agreement that meeting went well nearly 100 people attended
- Mayor and a few Councilors present
- Groups focused mostly on social, school, and elder issues
- Minimal discussion of HIV

a. Next steps: Toni S. will organize bullet points by topic; send Executive Summary to City Council soon; send press release; Commission representatives will meet with Mayor on November 4th to determine how to get City Council and City Manager more involved; perhaps use bullet points as foundation for Retreat?

VI. Public Comment: Nathan West

- Commission has an opportunity to set an example by taking a significant lead in spreading safe sex message
- HIV cases have increased state-wide
- Need to assess current availability of HIV education and testing
- West coast communities have implemented a Rapid Test

Group Discussion:

- Cambridge needs more social spaces
- Sensitivity training needed for bouncers and servers
- Commission needs a Public Health subcommittee
 - a. Next steps: Form a Public Health subcommittee to address HIV and other GLBT health issues.

VII. Announcements

- Commission member Christopher Mason handed out brochures describing his 85 day "Driving Equality" trek across America (May-August 2009) to highlight discrimination faced by LGBT community members. Donations welcome.
- Commission member Sarav Chithambaram's documentary, "It's My Life: A South Asian Queer Story in America" will be shown on Thursday, December 4th at 6:00 pm at MIT's Kresge Auditorium tickets \$10
- BAGLY is holding an "over 21" fund raising dance on November 9th
- "Vote No on Question 1" phone bank seeks callers.

Meeting adjourned at 7:30 p.m.