

LGBTQ+ Commission Minutes – January 23, 2020 6:00 - 7:30 p.m.

Commissioners Attending: Leo Austin-Spooner, Bill Barnert, Susan Bernstein, Jessica Daniels, Britt Huhmann, Noe Kamelamela, Steven Lee, Greg MacDonough, Mal Malme, Nefyn Meissner, Rachel Oppenheimer, Aren Stone, Kimm Topping, Meesh Zucker

Commission Research Associate: Amelia Joselow

Commissioners Absent: Maya Escobar, John Gintell, Kate Grams, Lesley Phillips, Silas Weiner, Bob Parlin (on leave)

Approved Minutes from November 2019 Meeting

Approved January Agenda

Quick questions/announcements before starting the formal agenda:

- Rachel asked about whether there are further police trainings planned and Kimm said they are in touch with Commissioner Bard about this.
- Aren announced that a new SOGI training will be offered for Cambridge employees.
- Aren asked about emails and whether everyone is receiving them. Bill had noticed a problem and is working on solving it.
- Mal noted that the Diversity Committee held a training more than a year ago, led by a former Commissioner and another trainer. Mal asked whether a second facilitated training could be planned for 2020. Aren suggested putting it on the agenda for further discussion in February.
- Aren announced two opportunities:
 1. A program will be offered for children at the Cambridge Public Library on the theme of “Imagine Your Story.” Several sessions will be offered in February, June, and in the summer. In February, The Pineapple Project will be participating. Mal described the Pineapple Project, a show that they developed with a fellow performer. Their first performance will be on Saturday, February 8 at the Central Square and the O’Connell Branches. The Commission has been invited to table at these programs.
 2. Cambridge Health Alliance is forming a youth board around mental health issues and would like the Commission to be involved. Leo will try to engage fellow CRLS students.

Strategic Planning Committee Report

The committee developed processes for selection of Co-chairs and for leaves of absence for Commissioners.

Selecting Co-chairs: The Commission has not gone through a process of electing Co-chairs in many years. The committee suggests maintaining three Co-chair seats and holding an election for all three every other year, starting in 2020. The elections would be held in November, with candidates asked to nominate themselves in the prior September. All Commissioners would be encouraged to vote, including those who cannot attend the November meeting. A process for a special election, should a Co-chair leave in the middle of the two-year term, was also proposed.

Removing a Co-chair: The committee also suggested a policy for a no-confidence vote to remove a Co-chair if Commissioners feel the Co-chair isn’t adequately fulfilling the Co-chair role.

Commissioners were asked to think about the proposed policies until the February meeting, when a vote will be taken.

Leave of Absence Policy: The committee presented a draft of a policy for requesting a leave of absence. The committee will refine the policy based on feedback received and will propose another draft, as well as an Attendance Policy, at the February meeting.

Report from Amelia, Commission Research Associate

- The Department of Public Works has confirmed that the sign conversion process to create All-Gender bathrooms in city buildings is well underway. City Hall will be undergoing a renovation that will include the creation of all-gender bathrooms on each floor.
- The Senior Housing Project Report draft will be complete tomorrow. John, Aren, and Kimm are meeting with Amelia next week to go over the draft. Other Commissioners are welcome to attend.
- Meesh and Amelia went this morning to the Museum of Science for a meeting of LGBTQ+ group representatives. The museum is committed to drawing a more diverse audience to their activities and to more LGBTQ+ inclusive exhibits. The museum welcomes our input on their programming.
- Human Rights Campaign does a yearly evaluation of cities around the country of the atmosphere for the LGBTQ+ community. They're pushing that every city have liaisons to the community from city offices.

Community Center Committee

Mal, Steven, Amelia, Meesh, Bill, Nefyn, Kimm, and Leo have volunteered to form a Community Center Committee to discuss the idea of an LGBTQ+ Community Center. Meesh will take the lead.

Youth Sub-Committee

The committee will meet again soon to reignite the committee's work, starting with meeting with school youth groups.

Police Sub-Committee

On February 4, Kimm will meet with Commissioner Bard to discuss GOAL training. Other Commissioners are welcome to attend. Commissioner Bard will next join the full Commission at the March meeting.

Rainbow Room

A committee to organize the Rainbow Room will meet tonight to get the planning started.

Purchasing/Flags and swag

Bill and Jessica are working on placing an order for Commission swag (small gifts) that would last through the fall event season.

Kimm was asked to look into purchasing a "Philadelphia" flag with brown and black stripes that we can use alongside the traditional rainbow flag. Kimm had already purchased a trans flag for the Commission to use at the Pride Brunch and future events.

Possible Logo change

Possible meeting time/date change

These two topics will be discussed at the February meeting.

Announcements

Aren noted that Sumbul Siddiqi is the new mayor.

Commissioners discussed proposing that the city add a "trans sidewalk" to the painted sidewalks for Pride Month.

Next Meeting: February 27, 2020, 6:00-7:30