

Cambridge LGBTQ+ Commission
Commission Meeting Minutes
January 28, 2021 | 6:00-7:30 p.m. ET | Zoom

Commissioners in Attendance: Bill Barnert; Susan Bernstein; Jessica Daniels; John Gintell; Kate Grams; Linden Huhmann; Steven Lee; Gregory MacDonough; Nefyn Meissner; Rebecca Oppenheimer; Aren Stone

Commission Staff in Attendance: Amelia Joselow

Commissioners Absent: Noe Kamelamela; Lesley Phillips

Commissioners Elect in Attendance: Bob Bordone; Soltan Bryce; Katy Harrison; Lauryn McNair; Cameron Van Fossen

Commissioners Elect Absent: Warner Santiago

Guests: Branville Bard (Cambridge Police Department), Mary Kowalczyk (Public Health Department), Annie (*no last name given*)

These minutes reflect overall themes. Effort was made to record direct comments as carefully as possible to preserve the voices of the Commissioners making them.

- **Opening** Co-Chair John Gintell facilitated the meeting with Co-Chair Nefyn Meissner recording meeting minutes.
- **Commissioner and Guest Introductions** Current Commissioners, Guests, and new Commissioners Elect introduced themselves to one another.
- **Approved November Meetings** The Commission approved the November Meeting minutes.
- **Approved Agenda** John asked for input and approval of the agenda. Aren added one item to the end of the agenda. The Commission approved the updated Agenda.
- **Police Department Relationship**
 - Approval of latest revision of statement
 - Jessica Daniels read the Revised Police Statement to the group.
 - John Gintell asked that Bill Barnert post this Statement on our website once approved and ready for publication.
 - Commissioner Bard spoke and:
 - thanked the Commission for committing to maintaining our relationship for the residents of the City of Cambridge;

- noted that CPD has moved away from GOAL Training and is looking into alternative training modules;
- noted that SOGI training is also available to City staff;
- Hate Crime report
 - 15 hate crimes in 2020 (v. 19 in 2019)
 - race = highest category (10)
 - two of the four is from a community member who has filed a report before
 - one was from a local shelter
 - one was from another isolated incident
 - sexual orientation (4)
 - religion (3)
 - *racial and religious (2)
 - Five Year Average: 16 a year
 - Comm. Bard will forward the PowerPoint and Report to Jessica and the entire Commission
- Police Academy Updates
 - 24 members, with half from Cambridge (12)
 - demographics
 - LGBTQ+
 - 1 openly identifies as LGBTQ+
 - 1 is closeted
 - race
 - 4 African American
 - 4 Latinx
 - several female-identified
 - cadets are currently going through virtual trainings due to the COVID-19 pandemic
 - two cadets has successfully entered the police academy (one Black female; one Latino male) and force
 - cadet recruitment is moving in the direction of reaching more local folks and diversifying the force
 - Questions from the Group:
 - Jessica clarified if/how the Report and PowerPoints will be available
 - Rachel asked for more background and detail on Hate Crimes report (Family & Social Justice Section of CPD and Detectives investigate)--they encourage folks to report everything, investigate, and then issue summons when appropriate which is then reviewed by a coordinator who proofs it before passing it along to Commissioner Bard
 - Steven asked for more info on the new trainings

- Comm. Bard says that we are all welcome to attend and experience it (notes Amelia and Bill were the only folks who could attend last time there was a demo training)
 - two-hour video will be passed along to the Commission
 - Nefyn asked a follow-up question re: reporting
 - John, Comm. Bard, and others named potential future partners for the Commission to work with, including: the Cambridge Fire Department; Harvard Police, MIT Police; Lesley Police; EMTs.
 - Comm. Bard noted that Harvard Police does the same training that CPD does--not inclusive of SOGI.
 - Commissioner Bard presented a discussion of LGBTQ+ trainings for CPD.
- **City Request about Gender ID on forms**
 - They City contacted us about gender markers, etc., on questionnaires and other forms.
 - Amelia, Aren, Soltan, Lauryn, and Katy have volunteered to engage with the City on this matter.
- **Working Group Reports**
 - Diversity Working Group
 - Rachel moved that we revive the Diversity Working Group.
 - Rachel will lead the group and has invited all Commissioners to help determine the direction of the group.
 - New Members: Aren, Jessica, Rachel, Nefyn, Cameron, Susan, Bob, Katy
 - Open call to new Commissioners Elect and current Commissioners to join at any time
 - Prior members: Kimm, Aren, Mal, Susan, Bob, Silas, Noe, Maya, Rachel, and Nefyn
 - Rachel will email the entire Commission and then convene a meeting to kick off the Working Group.
 - Steven asked that we consider renaming the Working Group once we have better determined its scope and purpose; Rachel agreed.
 - **Domestic Partnership Ordinance**
 - John shared updates from the latest Ordinance meeting.
 - John will coordinate the Working Group to ensure that the Working Group contacts the Ordinance group/City Council before the Ordinance moves forward.
 - Next meeting is Monday at 5:30 p.m. ET -- anyone can sign up to speak for three minutes; we have a few non-Commissioners who may speak.
 - Aren, John, Linden, and Nefyn discussed the various potential paths forward and outcomes.
 - Aren, Rachel, and others moved that the Commission grants full autonomy to the Working Group to carry this forward.

- **Events**
 - Amelia shared about the New Year Reflection event we have organized to be shown on CCTV. The event features local LGBTQ+ faith and community leaders and focuses on reflecting and setting new intentions for 2021.
 - Kate and Bill are working with Porter Square Books to do an event focused on queer writers--queer YA literature project in the works for April 1st.
- **All Gender Restrooms**
 - Amelia noted that she will follow up with Cameron re: restrooms in shelters, etc.
 - Amelia is trying to make inroads with local businesses re: all-gender restrooms.
- **Community Center**
 - Stalled due to COVID-19 and related issues.
 - Amelia is doing what she can and will continue to update the Commission.
- **Aren's Agenda Addition**
 - Aren noted that Nancy Schlacter from the Human Rights Commission is retiring; Nancy has also served to supervise Amelia's work on behalf of the Commission.
 - Law Dept will supervise Amelia in the interim until a successor is identified.
- **Public Comments & Announcements**
 - Rachel thanked Mary for attending.
 - Mary said she and the Health Department are eager to partner together.
- **Closing** The meeting was adjourned.
- **Next Commission Meeting** Thursday, February 25, 2021