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Carolina Almonte
Executive Director

LGBTQ+ Commission Meeting Minutes
Thursday, June 27, 2024, at 6:00 P.M.
Location: Hybrid on Zoom and In-person at 51 Inman St.

Present: Chairs Bill Barnert and Zachary Dresser, Commissioners Gregory MacDonough, Kat Long, Linden Huhmann, Noelani Kamelamela, Bob Bordone, Caitlin Egleson, Finley Foster, Evan Mackay, Mary Gardner, Frank Arce, Cindy Telingator

Staff: Executive Director Carolina Almonte, Director of Operations Sarah Binney, LGBTQ+ Research Associate Amelia Joselow

Absent: Commissioners Emmy Howe, Sukia Akiba, Vincent Monrreal, LGBTQ+ Program Leader Phoebe Hallahan

1. **Call to order**
 - Chair Barnert called this meeting to order at 6:12pm.
2. **Review and approval of agenda**
 - No Commissioners had any additions to the agenda.
3. **Review and approval of May 2024 minutes**
 - Commissioner Mackay moved to approve the April 2024 minutes. Commissioner Arce seconded.
4. **Staff Reports**
 - ED Almonte
 - Pride Brunch Debrief – Chair Barnert shared that the event was overall successful. The speeches were a long portion of the program, and more interactivity would be preferable. Commissioner Bordone expressed that the event felt rushed being in advance of Boston Pride and expressed a preference for the event to be on a Sunday. Commissioner Egleson shared that other nearby towns plan for Pride events on weekends other than Boston Pride weekend and seconded a preference for a different date. Commissioner Mackay shared the opinion that the speeches took up too much of the program and enjoyed hearing attendee voices. Commissioners expressed a preference to continue pride debrief at the July Commission meeting.
 - ED Almonte and RA Joselow will combine the existing Commission handbook and Commission bylaws into an updated Rules of Procedure. This will be presented at the September Commission meeting. Chair Barnert and Commissioners Long and Arce expressed interest in being a part of the creation of the Rules of Procedure process.

- ED Almonte has been engaged in a strategic planning process with Director of Equity and Inclusion Deidre Travis Brown.
- DOO Binney
 - DOO Binney shared that the Longfellow Pride Picnic is scheduled for Sunday, June 30th at the Longfellow House in Harvard Square. Commissioners Foster and Egleson are able to attend on June 30th. Due to rain forecast, there is a chance that the event will be moved to July 7. Chair Barnert and Commissioners Arce, Gardner, Telingater, Foster, Kamelamela will be able to volunteer if the event is moved to July 7.
- RA Joselow
 - RA Joselow offered to write up Commissioner recommendations for Pride 2025 and to support with investigation into gender inclusivity in City Forms.

5. Working Group Reports

- **Housing** – Commissioner Huhmann shared that after two years of work, the City has finally amended the Zoning Ordinance’s definition of definition of “family” so that dwellings can be occupied by more than 3 unrelated people. RA Joselow suggested a reflective process to document learnings from this effort. Commissioner Mackay asked how this change will be communicated to the public.
- **Working group revitalization** - Commissioners discussed what working groups they would like to continue and revitalize going forward. Commissioners Telingator, Kamelamela, Egleson, and Gardener expressed interest in joining a youth working group. Commissioner Huhmann would like to start a working group to investigate and advocate for gender inclusivity on city forms. Chair Dresser shared the work from last year from the Public Health and Safety working group and expressed interest in revitalizing the group. Commissioners requested a form sent over email to gauge interest in working groups. The form will also ask for interest in leading the working groups. ED Almonte reminded Commissioners of Open Meeting Law compliance for Working Group meetings which includes posting agendas and minutes. Commission staff will support with Open Meeting Law compliance.

6. New Business

- ED Almonte was approached by a Foster Parent Recruiter with the Department of Children and Families (DCF) who would like to give a presentation during a Commission meeting and/or work with Commissioners regarding how to build more foster homes that are LGBTQ+ affirming. The Recruiter asked if there was any interest from the LGBTQ+ Commission to collaborate on events, meetings, and information sessions. Commissioners discussed concerns about DCF working with the Commission. Commissioners shared concern about DCF history of family separation especially in poor communities and communities of color. Commissioners discussed the extent to which the Commission should engage with DCF. They also expressed interest in asking about what has changed for families in the last few years, and having an opportunity to voice concerns. Commissioners expressed interest in continuing discussion in a meeting of the Youth Working Group before any decisions are made.

7. Rainbows Across Communities

- Rainbows Across Communities created a chart with municipal Pride events across greater Boston.

8. Adjournment: Chair Dresser moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:23pm. Commissioner MacDonough seconded.