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Carolina Almonte
Executive Director

LGBTQ+ Commission Meeting Minutes
Thursday, July 25, 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, Finley Foster, Evan Mackay, Frank Arce, Cindy Telingator, Emmy Howe, Sukia Akiba, Vincent Monrreal

Staff: Executive Director Carolina Almonte, Director of Operations Sarah Binney, LGBTQ+ Research Associate Amelia Joselow. LGBTQ+ Program Leader Phoebe Hallahan

Members of the Public: Kimberly Rhoten

Absent: Commissioners Caitlin Egleson, Bob Bordone, Caitlin Egleson, Noelani Kamelamela, Mary Gardner

- 1. Call to order**
 - Chair Barnert called this meeting to order at 6:08pm.
- 2. Review and approval of agenda**
 - No Commissioners had any additions to the agenda.
- 3. Review and approval of June 2024 minutes**
 - Commissioner Huhmann proposed an edit to the Housing Working Group update in the June 2024 minutes. Commissioner MacDonough moved to approve the June 2024 minutes with this update. Commissioner Howe seconded.
- 4. Updating Cambridge's legal definition of Sexual Orientation in the Human Rights Ordinance and the Fair Housing Ordinance**
 - Currently, Cambridge's legal definition of "sexual orientation" in the Human Rights Ordinance and the Fair Housing Ordinance reads: "The term "sexual orientation" [in laws, ordinances, etc.] shall mean the actual or supposed heterosexuality, homosexuality, or bisexuality of an individual."
 - Kimberly Rhoten proposed that we change this language to: "The term "sexual orientation" shall mean one's physical, intimate, emotional, sexual, romantic attraction or relationship to people of a particular gender OR multiple genders, or lack thereof. A person's sexual orientation may be identified by terms including, but not limited to, asexual, aromantic, bisexual, gay, lesbian, heterosexual, homosexual, pansexual, and queer. Discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation shall include both discrimination based on actual knowledge of sexual orientation as well as discrimination based on

supposition or assumption of an individual's sexual orientation, which can include assumptions based on someone's gender expression or identity." Rhoten explained that this language is expansive enough to adapt to ways that language will change around sexuality. The language also explicitly includes asexual identities which are often written out of other definitions. Commissioners Huhmann and Mackay expressed support for Rhoten's definition.

- Commissioner Monrreal proposed the following alternative language: "Sexual orientation encompasses a vast array of terminologies involving cultural & ethnic affiliations that ought not to be limited to certain specific verbiages of solely categorical basis but rather experiences that are lively expressed." Commissioner Monrreal wanted language that can account for language change and expansiveness in definition. Commissioner Howe shared that this could be used in conjunction with Rhoten's language to fill gaps in the definition. Rhoten suggested that this language be added in a whereas clause with the definition.
- RA Joselow wants the language to clearly have room for self-identity and how one might be identified by others. Commissioners will form a team to write up a definition that encompasses this discussion that will be proposed at the September meeting. ED Almonte, Commissioners Akiba, Monrreal, Huhmann, and Kimberly Rhoten will be part of this discussion.

5. **Staff Reports**

- DOO Binney
 - DOO Binney shared that LGBTQ+ Commission T-shirts were purchased for Commissioners to wear at community events.
- ED Almonte
 - ED Almonte shared an update from the Office of Equity and Inclusion. Employee Resource Groups will be formed for city employees, including an LGBTQ+ Resource Group.
- RA Joselow
 - RA Joselow shared that a draft of the LGBTQ+ Healthcare report has been completed and asked if any Commissioners wanted to review it. Commissioner Monrreal expressed interest in reviewing the report.
- PL Hallahan
 - PL Hallahan proposed two dates for the next SAGE intergenerational dinner. The event will either be on October 9 or October 16 in the Main library community room.

6. **Overview of Commissioner-to-City communication policies**

- ED Almonte explained that the Commission can only speak as a body. Any Commission directive that comes from the group must be voted on by the body, such as a directive for staff or a letter to city council. Commissioners can engage individually as residents with City Council but cannot represent the Commission without a majority vote.

7. **Working Groups**

- **Communications**- Commissioner Huhmann and Chair Barnert are working on a zine about the domestic partnership ordinance. They are looking for artists who would be interested in creating art for the zine.
- **Working group revitalization** – Commissioners discussed which working groups they would like to start or revitalize and the role of the different groups. The following are the groups with sufficient interest that will convene:

- Youth Working Group – Chair Barnert and Commissioners Egleson, Telingator, Howe, and Akiba
 - Seniors Working Group- RA Joselow, Chair Barnert, Commissioners Howe, Mackay, Akiba, and Monrreal
 - Outreach Working Group – PL Hallahan, Chair Barnert, Commissioners MacDonough, Arce, and Monrreal
 - Policies and Practices Working Group- This group would work on investigating and changing city policies and practices to make them more inclusive, such as policies and practices relating the restrooms, Domestic Partnership, Housing, City Forms, and the definition of Sexual Orientation – Commissioners Huhmann, Akiba, Long, Foster, and Monrreal
 - Strategic Planning- ED Almonte, Commissioners Huhmann, Monrreal, Long, and Arce
 - **Working Group Procedure**- Commissioners expressed confusion around the Open Meeting Law procedures for working groups. ED Almonte will speak with the Law Department and send a document outlining this procedure to Commissioners.
- 8. New Business**
- Mayor Simmons expressed interest in joining an upcoming Commission meeting. ED Almonte will reach out to propose the September and October meeting dates and will confirm the Mayor’s availability.
- 9. Adjournment:** Chair Barnert moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:30pm.