

GLBT Commission Minutes – July 23, 2015 6:00 - 7:30 PM

Commissioners present:

Aren Stone, Bill Barnert, Jessica Daniels, John Gintell, Kristina Mastropasqua, Mal Malme, Maya Escobar, Neil MacInnes-Barker, Steven Lee

Commissioners absent (excused):

Anna Weick, Bob Parlin, Kevin Shpritzer, Rachel Oppenheimer, Lesley Phillips, Maggie Giles (LoA)

Guests: Steve (*Community member*), Elysia Chandler (*Commission intern*)

Welcome/Introductions

Approve / Modify Agenda APPROVED

Approve Minutes from June Meeting APPROVED

Future Event Planning:

Sun, Oct 11 OctoberFest

Kevin Shpritzer coord.

Volunteers needed – Kevin will coordinate. 1 ½ – 2 hours each, 2 people per shift.

Thurs, Oct 15: Film showing *The Year We Thought About Love*

Budget approved. (see notes).

We would like to give the youth cash. Steven will look into options.

Perhaps one check to Theater Offensive or Ellen Brodsky, & they distribute.

We need someone on the committee to coordinate food. And we don't want to always ask the same vendors.

LGBTQ Senior's Health Care Report

Brief update by Elysia Chandler: Met with Bill Barnert to streamline the Powerpoint presentation. Met with John Gintell, Aren Stone, Taha Jennings (Assistant to the City Manager) & Lisa Peterson (Deputy City Manager) to present the report and discuss next steps, including following up with participating organizations, other organizations working with seniors, and other city groups. The Deputy City Manager's feedback was helpful and extremely positive. Lisa and Taha will present the information to the City Manager and we will proceed with the next steps once he has had the chance to give his feedback.

We are also seeking permission for wider distribution of this report: e.g., the LGBT Aging Project, Cambridge-Somerville Elder Services, the Cambridge Council on Aging, & the Cambridge Public Health Department.

LGBTQ Seniors Housing - Policy and Practices project

Intro by Elysia Chandler: Hope to interview managers, etc. rather than simple survey.

Elysia compiled and distributed a list of Cambridge senior housing options, including:

- Cambridge Housing Authority units
- Other Over-55 Subsidized Elderly Housing
- Co-housing developments
- Aging-in-place services.

Seattle has done a similar survey of their housing and Elysia is trying to get specific information on their survey questions.

Neil will be on the board of **Project Q**, a Boston LGBT-friendly housing facility, and offered to collaborate. Neil is especially interested in low-income & subsidized housing & home-care. Neil also wants to learn what people do while waiting for services. Aren: This may be important but not really part of our project, we should decide .

Budget

New fiscal year, so we start fresh with \$2500.

Steven reports that we ended the year with about \$300 unspent.

Question from Aren: Why did we not spend this on give-aways?

Steven will check with Kara to find out what was ordered, and where it is.

CityView (Cambridge municipal TV channel) request for interview

John and Aren were asked to do an interview about the Commission on Wed. August 5th, at 11 am.

Aren cannot attend; John and Neil will do the interview.

Unfinished Business

- **Cultural Competency Training** – Taha Jennings , Chris Burke, and the city's training manager will draft a Request for Proposal for trainers. They will send it to us for review.
- **Gender Neutral Bathroom status** – The committee has not yet met. A three-year-old census report exists. Neil met with City Manager Rich Rossi & mentioned to him we'd be talking to him about that. He is very receptive.
There is a DPW prepared spreadsheet (slightly obsolete) that lists bathroom status in city buildings and Taha Jennings is seeking similar information about school buildings.
- **Diversity Committee** – Later this summer, Neil will be contacting the commissioners who volunteered for this committee. Neil has met with Denise Simmons, Corey Yarbrough & Quincey Roberts, & City Manager Rich Rossi. Neil is looking to find out if other city agencies are doing something similar, to combine the effort.
N.B.: There are at least five Commissioner openings to be filled this January. Part of the Diversity Committee's purview should be to do outreach to get diverse applicants.
- **Strategic Planning Committee** – Later this summer, Neil will be contacting the commissioners who volunteered for this committee. As with the Diversity Committee, Neil is looking to find out if other city agencies are doing something similar, to combine the effort

Strategic Planning

Brainstorming about what we would like to accomplish during the next twelve months.

- Katrina: Highlight that Cambridge has many different volunteer Commissions & get some publicity about how great this is.
- Neil: It would be nice to get some official thank-you from the City, and for us to thank our supporters, like a thank you for when you leave the Commission. From the Mayor, and/or from the Commission members. (Bill would like to see thank you's for STAYING as well.)
- Bill: Would like to research what the other Commissions do, and what support (staff, budget, etc.) they have that we don't. Perhaps we could move up a tier. (John: We are the ONLY Commission with no paid staff. Plus & minus, as we really do our own work.)
- Mal: "Same old faces every year" at Pride Brunch. How to get more new people. Is it the time? The day? The format?
- Mal: Every year, Brian Corr, Director of the Peace Commission, coordinates the MLK, Jr. Day Commemoration and the Mayor's Office coordinates the M.L.K. Jr. Service Day. Perhaps we could sponsor a service project or otherwise be part of this day as well.
- Mal: Invite back the organizers of the Y2Y youth shelter & ask what we can do to help them.
- Aren: The idea of Strategic Planning is to decide what we want to do. If we are going to ask for a larger budget, we should do this AFTER the strategic planning so that we are asking for money for specific purposes.
- John: Wants every single city building to have at least one gender-neutral bathroom, with correct signage. And to get the city to encourage private developers to do the same. Other city departments can be part of this effort.
- Neil: Look at how the Commission is communicating via social media, how we communicate within and outside of the Commission. Look back at how we're communicating (including the location of the meetings), and see how well everything we're doing is working for us.
- Kristina: Would like to start up a new Communications team. Since she took over tweeting, we have increased from four followers to about 420.
- Elysia: There might be a new position that involves support for some Commissions. Perhaps we can get some services from this person.
- John: Wants the paper records stored at his house to be filed elsewhere.
- Aren: Wants an event (or more than one) on transgender issues, and gender identity & expression.
- Bill: Wants an event (or more than one) on LGBT asylum seekers
- Neil: Wants to increase cross-commission/agency collaboration. (John: Meeting between several Commissions has already happened & minutes will be sent out by the City Manager.)

Public Comment/Announcements/Adjournment

- Neil: If you know any LGBT veterans, there is a study that the VA Health System is doing. Call 857-364-2790 to schedule a visit. \$85 compensation.

Next Meeting: Thursday, Sept 24, 2015 (No August meeting)