

**CITY OF CAMBRIDGE GLBT COMMISSION**  
**Meeting Minutes 10-27-16**

**WELCOME/INTRODUCTIONS**

**MINUTE TAKER**

- We need a Commissioner to take minutes. Ted volunteered for this meeting.

**Commissioners Present:** John Gintell, Maya Escobar, Bill Barnert, Bob Parlin, Rachel Oppenheimer, Jessica Daniels, Mal Malme, Ted Waechter, Steven Lee, Mason Weintraub, Lesley Phillips, Susan Bernstein

**Commissioners Absent:** (excused): Aren Stone, Linda Daniels, Anna Weick, Sylvia Guerra, Kimm Topping

**MINUTES**

We approved the September meeting minutes.

**POLICE LIAISON REPORT**

- 5 parties submitted proposals to conduct the city's SOGI (Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity) training for city employees.
- A group of 9, including City of Cambridge employees, and Aren and John, will meet as the Training Feedback Team on November 2 to review proposals and make recommendations to the City Manager and leadership team.
- Once a vendor is selected the Training Feedback Team will attend a pilot SOGI training class.

**PAST EVENTS**

**LGBTQ Educator's Appreciation Event on Oct. 6**

- Nice event
- Low attendance
  - Attendance seems to be shrinking – is it worth doing again?
  - Could we reconfigure such that it's a seminar that grants teachers a certificate/PDP? Or an event with a speaker?
- Fall is better than spring in terms of timing.

**FUTURE EVENTS**

**Rainbow Room on Nov. 17 at the YWCA**

- Joint event of Commission, Cambridge Arts Council, and Mass Transgender Political Coalition
- Poetry and multi-genre music.
- We have cards publicizing the event for Commissioners to distribute.
  - Mason Dunn at the MTPC will distribute at upcoming events as well.
- Can we do \$75 stipends for the musicians?

- Steven will figure it out.
- We sent out a press release today.
- We need people to help set up and clean that night (6:15pmish-7:00pm for set up and then 10:00pm-10:30ish for cleanup.)
- Susan and Bob working on food.
- Need help getting the message out – especially to students.
  - o Maybe our queer educators’ list can help us connect to students.
- Make sure to have instructions about how to enter the YWCA.
- Let Susan and Bob know if you can think of food places that might donate.

## **STATUS/DISCUSSION/COMMITTEE REPORTS**

### **Name Change**

- John has met with the City’s Solicitor’s office, and LGBTQ+ has been approved so long as the long-form, written-out version says “plus.”
- We’ll probably get more swag.
- We’ll tweak our logo to change the name but won’t look for a new logo.
- We’ll wait until this goes before the City Council before making swag in case there are objections.

### **Budget**

- No budget updates.

### **Communications**

- Waiting for the City to get its new website up and train us. City’s goal is more similarity in groups’ content appearance.

### **Gender Neutral Bathrooms**

- No updates.

### **SOGI Training status**

- See update under “Police Liaison Report”.

### **Diversity Committee**

- Mal, Maya, Aren, Bob, and Linda wrote the following mission statement:
- That the Commission better serve and represent LGBTQ+ individuals of color who live and work in Cambridge.
- That we have the full support and participation of all Commissioners in this work.
- Three key goals:
  1. Exude a sense of welcome.
  2. Outreach to communities of color.
  3. Training for Commissioners on issues of race and ethnicity, probably in April.

- With respect to training, there are concerns about waiting until April. Earlier might allow us to demonstrate to new commissioners that we're doing the work and not just looking to tokenize folks.
  - o Suggestion that POC members could be part of the making of the new training.
  - o Concern that this should not be POC members' responsibility.
  - o Concern that rushing the training might make it harder to be intentional.
  - o Suggestion that we could do a brief training before new members join in addition to a robust training after.
- No decision was made as to who would do the training.
- 

**UPDATE by Elysia Chandler, Commission Researcher/Intern**

**LGBT Seniors House – Policies and Practices project**

- Our first report surveyed 10 healthcare organizations – this report assesses Cambridge Housing Authority, which has the most senior housing units in the city. Report considered data collection, organizational culture, and training. John and Elysia met with CHA today to discuss the report.
- On data collection, looked at how to ask seniors how they feel about their experiences with respect to LGBT elders' experiences
  - o In Elysia and John's meeting with Cambridge Housing Authority, they seemed receptive to asking about experiences along sexual orientation and gender identity, although HUD regulations require them to do it in a particular way.
- On organizational culture, asked how employees assessed LGBT-friendliness for residents and staff. Many staff felt like CHA is very welcoming to staff but fewer felt like it is as welcoming to LGBT residents.
  - o In Elysia and John's meeting with CHA, they talked about making organizational norms as explicit to residents as they do to staff.
  - o Plans to meet with resident-led groups, Service Coordinators, etc. to discuss how to promote from there.
- On training, employees wanted training about LGBT seniors' needs. Most felt like they could respond to anti-LGBT behavior but fewer felt like they had enough knowledge about LGBT issues.
- Thinking about approaching tenants' councils to change culture among residents.
- In the meeting, CHA folks asked us to amend the report to include a section about the meeting and their plans for next steps. Then we'll release.
- Note: survey only got 24 staff responses out of 150 employees.
- Training will likely need to adapt as new generations move into senior housing.
- How can we get the word out about the report?
  - o Cambridge Chronicle
  - o Channel 5 Chronicle program

- In the works – Storymap to promote best practices for LGBT-friendliness.
- Idea from Mal – resident town hall?
  - o Maybe working through Kate’s Café?

### **LGBT Youth After School Activities – Policies and Practices project**

- Elysia has been interviewing staff at out-of-school-time programs to learn about training, inclusion of LGBT youth-related topics in the curriculum, feelings about LGBT-friendliness for students, staff, and families, and ideas for support.
- Lots of staff have said they want best practices guides, reading material.
- Concerns about having director support, parent approval if LGBT topics are incorporated into curricula.
- Elysia has interviewed 8 people and now looking at survey to get responses from a wider range of after-school workers.
  - o Elysia will send questions to Commissioners for feedback.

### **RECRUITING NEW COMMISSIONERS**

- Make sure to do outreach with people Commissioners know.
- To help address diversity of applicants we should do more media outreach (i.e. Rainbow Times), asking former Bayard Rustin award recipients to help.

### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

- Neil MacInnes- Barker is a former Commission member and now the Director of the City of Cambridge Department of Veterans’ Services.
  - o Neil is on the SOGI training feedback team.
  - o Neil’s department is also working to reverse discharges made pre-DADT against LGBT service members.
  - o Neil’s department is working to help Transgender veterans correct their identification on military documents.
  - o There’s a new Veterans’ Life and Recreation Center (VLRC) open for programming for veterans, especially to help them heal and reintegrate into society.
  - o Request for the Commission to table at Veterans’ Appreciation Day from 1-4pm on November 11. If we can’t get people there, we could also just set up the table or lend the flag.
    - Jessica will recruit for the table.