

## LGBTQ+ Commission – July 25, 2019 Minutes

### Welcome

**Commissioners present:** John Gintell, Aren Stone, Kimm Topping, Leo Austin-Spooner, Bill Barnert, Susan Bernstein, Jessica Daniels, Catherine Grams, Britt Huhmann, Mal Malme, Greg McDonough, Nefyn Meissner, Meesh Zucker

**Absent:** Maya Escobar, Noelani Kamelamela, Steven Lee, Rachel Oppenheimer, Bob Parlin, Lesley Phillips

**On Leave of Absence:** Silas Winer

**Staff present:** Amelia Joselow

### Guests:

Will Durbin (Mayor McGovern's Chief of Staff), Libby Bouvier (History Project), Police Comm. Branville Bard

**Minute Taker** – Bill B.

### Introductions

### Approve Minutes from June Meeting

– June minutes will be approved at the September meeting

### Approve / Modify Agenda

### Police Department : Commissioner Bard (our liaison) will attend

- Response to questions we asked recently
- Discussion about topics covered in response

Questions that the commission sent to Comm. Bard in advance, and his responses:

1. Now that Judge Ireland's investigation is complete, what are your thoughts on the Harvard grad student incident?

*COMM. BARD: "I initially supported the officers and still do support the officers' actions—their action's fell within state law, practice and current policy. "I believe we at all times should be responsive to society's demands, as we work for, and are accountable to society.*

*I mentioned that I had frequent communication with the attorneys as a means to inform the Commission of the non-adversarial relationship; and also to convey that our position was not to introduce the person in question to the criminal justice system but to get him help and therefore closely aligned with his attorneys.*

*(Cont'd)*

*“My digression about replacing the head of the Professional Standards Unit with a Civilian was meant to express to the Commission that my inclination is to do what I feel is procedurally just and in the best interest of police-citizen relationships (even if it’s unpopular with the rank and file); this move happened prior to the incident and was unrelated (but I certainly did take a lot of heat for doing so).*

*“Having an outside expert such as Chief Justice Ireland conduct a review of the incident fell into this same category (hotly contested by the rank and file—but I felt it necessary to maintain public legitimacy and ensured it was done despite internal criticisms)”*

2. What happened to the LGBTQ-inclusive messaging that was supposed to be included in the promotion of CPD's cadet recruitment program?

*COMM. BARD: Comm. Bard thought he had made it very clear about what he wanted, and all publicity should have had at minimum, a rainbow. But somehow this message got lost in the scramble to get the publicity out. But since this is an on-going program, not a single event, we can improve this in the future. And at specific events, LGBTQ+ recruitment was brought up verbally. Comm. Bard said that he would send the flyer to us, and we could add a rainbow flag and/or LGBTQ+-inclusive text & send it back. And as soon as he gets it back, it will become the flyer they use. We discussed how to bring this up in an interview, and the consensus was that the officers should (A) introduce themselves with their pronouns (if they are comfortable, this should not be a requirement), (B) asking the recruits if they are comfortable working with the LGBTQ+ community, and (C) stating explicitly that the dept. encourages LGBTQ+ involvement.*

3. We have heard that there have been tensions between the staff of the Y2Y youth homeless shelter and members of the CPD. Do you have a sense of what lies at the root of those tensions and have any ideas on how they could be resolved?

*COMM. BARD: That is definitely true. Comm. Bard & others are in constant communication with the shelter. A lot of this may be due to the general (national) assumption that the police cannot be trusted to do the right thing. But it is also true that some of the officers' behavior was unprofessional & lead to escalation. So now, a Supervisor must accompany any officers to any incident at the Y2Y shelter. The police do have dedicated youth outreach officers & homeless outreach officers, but they are not always the ones that are working the shifts that respond.*

4. We would like several Commissioners to attend a GOAL training along with other Police Officers. Can you help arrange that?

*BARD: Short answer: Yes. But we ran out of time for further discussion.*

5. Can you confirm that new members of the Police Department - through the standard recruitment and training process, the Cadet Program, or transfers from other Police Forces get GOAL training?

*BARD: Short answer: Yes. But we ran out of time for further discussion.*

6. Can you help us work on getting GOAL training for members of the Fire Department and for EMT Companies that serve people in Cambridge?

*BARD: Short answer: Yes. But we ran out of time for further discussion.*

### **Cambridge Panel LGBTQ Exhibit by The History Project –**

These will be panels with graphics, articles, etc., that will be displayed in City Hall in October. Libby Bouvier wanted to hear what we'd like to see, given the space constraints. The display will be door-sized panels to be put in the front lobby of City Hall. The Mayor's Parlor has a display space that could be used in October-December for the History Project.

*(Cont'd)*

There will also be a display from NAICOB (North American Indian Center of Boston) in the lobby in October, and we should be mindful of that.

Ideas: Do we focus on one decade? Ideas:

- Display visually interesting things, maybe a link to other info.
- Can we include history of trans people in Cambridge?
- Three panels, two decades/panel, left-to-right history from 60's to now

How can we help?

- Meesh volunteered to be liaison to History Project & NAICOB.
- Wil Durbin offered to help get it displayed in City Hall.
- If anyone has photos, send them to the History Project (via Meesh)

Any publicity we do should also highlight the NAICOB display.

### **Past Events**

- **Pride Brunch** – June 8. How did it go? Suggestions for next year?
  - Video exists. Audio for Just JP's performance not good, but we have the audio. Wil & Kimm will send the video & audio to Bill, who will attempt to merge them.
  - Leo reported he had a great time. (Also noted that it was pretty white, and wondered how we can make it more diverse.)

- Britt reported that they invited some friends, and they sat at a table and were talking, and a stranger at their table joined the conversation in a somewhat confrontational way about someone's asexuality.
- Kimm suggested we be more intentional about why we added the plus-sign, and spell out many different communities.
- Aren suggested we post more info on various topics., including asexuality, and that we might need more discussion on the topic. Mal suggested we review what we have posted to see what gaps we have.
- Meesh suggested that we start each of our events with a statement of inclusivity and who to talk to if anyone feels disrespected. We may need to train ourselves on how to handle any issues.
- Mal loved the performance element.
- Jessica complemented the smooth logistics & that it ended on time.
- Meesh suggested moving the event to the lawn to invite more in.
- Aren suggested we have greeters outside to bring people in.
- For the record, the following awards were presented at the Pride Brunch on June 8th:
  - Individual Community award to **Val Frias** for her work helping passing legislation banning conversion therapy for minors
  - Individual Community award to **Reverend Leslie K. Sterling** for her work on the *Yes on 3* campaign
  - Community Organization award to **Black and Pink**, an organization that works for prison reform, especially as it affects LGBTQ+ people
  - Rose Lipkin award to **Annalise Slate**, a CRLS student, for her work in Project10 East
  - Bayard Rustin award to **Khari Charles** for his work and leadership with several organizations: Black Lives Matter Cambridge & Boston, Black & Pink, and Violence in Boston
- **Hoops 'n Health** – Worth doing.

#### **Future Events**

- **Cambridge Carnival** - Sun, Sept 8 11-6 – We have the minimum people, so we can do it.
- **Oktoberfest** – We will do Oktoberfest IF enough people sign up to table.

#### **Report from Amelia Joselow – Research Associate – Sent via email due to lack of time**

##### **All Gender Restrooms:**

- We have selected the signs. They need a little design work which needs to be figured out but it is a good start
- Contacted DPW to find out the process for sign printing/ installation
- Will be working on a draft City Manager letter to go to department heads about the change
- Will set up a meeting with the City Manager's office to get approval

*(Cont'd)*

**Senior Housing Report:**

- I am doing background reading to prep for writing the report
- Survey links have been sent to all CHA tenants and staff
- Made and sent a flyer for CHA to accompany the survey for tenants
- Today I will be printing paper copies of the private tenant survey (per request) for the Cambridge Homes and Home Owners Rehab / 2 Mt. Auburn (240 surveys total) (2 out of 10 private senior housing sites, will follow up with others next week)
- Set up a phone call with Dale Mitchell at Ethos to go over LGBT senior issues around housing and the work he's done on the subject
- Reached out to Susan Pacheco to see about getting surveys at the senior center events
- Started writing the summary of the Part I report

**Public Comment / Announcements**

- Aren proposed that we co-sponsor a "Pride & Progress" Film Festival & Symposium this October 25th. We voted in favor. Kimm will be the liaison. Our contact is Yasmin Padamsee-Forbes, of the Human Rights Commission.
- Leo announced a Trans Health rally for this Sunday (July 28). Details at <http://www.facebook.com/events/2343009639126479/>. More info at <http://www.facebook.com/ProtectTransHealthMA/> & <http://ProtectTransHealth.org>

**Next Meeting:** Thursday, Sept 26

## Tabled due to lack of time

**Logo/flags – should they be changed?**

- Logo: This would involve updating the banner, the tablecloth, business cards, brochures, the website, and anything else we put our logo on.
- Flags: Purchase more diverse flags for display (not just rainbow)

**Future Events**

- Rainbow Room, where?, when?  
Planning committee (Meesh, Aren, Mal, Susan, Bill, and Maya)

**Committees status**