



**Cambridge Human Rights Commission
Thursday, May 4, 2023
Virtual Public Meeting**

Present: Chair Judith Laguerre, and Commissioners Josh Stadlan, Kaileigh Callender, Stephen Curran, Yasmin Padamsee Forbes, Stefanie Haug, Deputy Superintendent Fred Cabral.

City Staff: Attorney Investigator, Carolina Almonte and Director of Operations, Sarah Binney.

Guest Presenter: Derrick Neal, Chief Public Health Officer from Cambridge Health Alliance

Absent: Commissioners Katie Stack, Sabrina Selk, Olinda Marshall, Mercedes Evans, and Bonita Cox.

Documents Used:

- March 2, 2023, Minutes
- Article “Somerville celebrates another first for polyamorous people” by Meredith Goldstein from bostonglobe.com

1. Call to Order:

- Chair Laguerre called the meeting to order at 6:09pm.

2. Public Comment

- No members of the public joined.

3. Review and approval of March 2023 Minutes

- The Commission reviewed the minutes from the meeting on March 2, 2023. Commissioner Callender moved to approve the minutes. Commissioner Curran seconded.

4. Guest Presenter – Derrick Neal, Chief Public Health Officer for the Cambridge Health Alliance (CHA)

- CPHO Neal introduced himself and shared about his work and issues of health equity that affect Cambridge. He shared his background working in Texas and his transition to Cambridge 1 year and 8 months ago. He talked about the ways racial disparities create an uneven impact, and how where residents work, live, and play can dictate health outcomes and lifespan. He focused on the importance of “building stronger children,” and addressing generational health problems in youth through education. He discussed the Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) which focuses on food security and food access. Chair Laguerre asked

about the difference between the assessments of Cambridge compared to surrounding cities such as Everett. Commissioner Curran asked about the principal health disparities in Cambridge. CPHO Neal discussed community resilience, healthy living, affordable foods, knowledge about mental health resources, and internal implicit bias. CPHO Neal talked about women's health and maternal health as public health issues, and the way politics intersect with public health. Commissioner Stadlan asked about COVID and preventative care. Commissioner Haug asked about Elder Care and free programs. CPHO Neal explained the disparity in experience for residents with insurance vs. those without.

5. Staff report

- LGBTQ Task Force
 - Project Goals
 - The Task Force will consider opportunities for new or revised practices and procedures to improve LGBTQ+ persons' access to, and inclusion in, existing housing. The Task Force will also evaluate possibilities for new housing to be more LGBTQ+-friendly. The Task Force will issue a final report with concrete recommendations and action plans for ensuring LGBTQ+ housing access, safety, and inclusivity in Cambridge.
 - Who should apply?
 - Applicants are sought from various backgrounds and stakeholder groups, including, but not limited to:
 - Affordable housing providers,
 - Private real estate developers,
 - Individuals who have worked on LGBTQ+-friendly housing efforts in other municipalities,
 - Residents with lived experience as members of the LGBTQ+ community familiar with or searching for inclusive housing, and
 - Residents with experience related to and/or regarding housing inequity who seek to participate in developing LGBTQ+ inclusive housing opportunities
 - What are the membership/meeting expectations?
 - The Task Force is anticipated to be approximately 15 members, with two co-chairs appointed by the City Manager. The full Task Force will meet eight to ten times between March 2023 and January 2024. Smaller working groups may investigate specific topics and report back to the full Task Force. Working groups are anticipated to meet more frequently. Meetings of the full Task Force will be open to the public.
 - How to Apply
 - If you are interested in being considered for the LGBTQ+-Friendly Housing Task Force, please apply online at

www.cambridgema.gov/apply. Paper applications are available in the City Manager's Office at Cambridge City Hall, 795 Massachusetts Avenue.

- **Recap of Gender Identity and Sexual Orientation Event - 3/29**
 - We presented on gender identity and sexual orientation on March 29. Our portion of the presentation focused on housing-related discrimination issues. We partnered with the Massachusetts Transgender Political Coalition ("MTPC"), which is an organization that ensures the wellbeing, safety, and lived equity of all transgender, nonbinary, and gender expansive community members in Massachusetts. Tre-Andre Carmel Valentine, the Executive Director of MTPC, presented on broader issues faced by trans and nonbinary communities, with a focus on how MTPC provides direct support in the areas of employment, education, health care, homelessness, identity documents, and incarceration.
- **Attorney-Investigator Case Report.**
 - AI Almonte provided case updates. There are 7 cases currently pending. 7 Cases were closed since the last meeting. Of the 7 cases, 4 cases are involving housing discrimination, 1 case is involving employment discrimination, and 2 cases involve public accommodation. 7 Cases were recently closed. Of the 7 closed cases, 3 ended in LOPC determinations, 2 ended in PDSA, and 2 ended in withdrawals. A new case will be filed involving public accommodation discrimination based on disability.

6. Old Business

- **Update from Commissioners on Board/Commission Connections**
 - Commissioner Haug has connections with services for people who are food insecure. She can reach out to organizations that might have people who can present.
- **Fair Housing Month Event Recap - 4/29**
 - Commissioner Laguerre- 3 Kaleigh, Stafanie, Judith and AI Almonte participated in the event. There were many other organizations that focused on housing there.
 - AI Almonte- 150 attendees came to the event. Commissioner Haug moderated the panel to discuss discrimination. The CHRC created an FAQ document that was translated into 7 languages with information to help guide people towards the resources that best suited their needs.
- **Drop in hours library**
 - Housed In Drop In hours will take place on Monday 5/8 at the Main Library. Anyone with questions about housing in Cambridge will be able to meet with city staff and learn about housing resources in Cambridge.

7. New Business

- **Somerville – Increased Polyamory Protections in Employment**
 - Somerville updated how relationship status was defined to include more than one partner.
- **Commissioner Presentations on Topics of Interest**

- Chair Laguerre shared about recent action at the statehouse relating to single payer universal healthcare. She met with State Senator Jehlen.

8. Adjournment

- Chair Laguerre moved to adjourn at 7:21pm, Commissioner Callendar seconded.

The next Commission meeting will be on Thursday, June 1, 2023, virtually on Zoom.