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Carolina Almonte  
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### **LGBTQ+ Meeting Minutes – February Meeting**

**Present:** Chairs Bill Barnert and Zachary Dresser, Commissioners Linden Huhmann, Bob Bordone, Caitlin Egleson, Finley Foster, Mary Gardner, Vincent Monrreal, Emmy Howe, Frank Arce, Gregory MacDonough, Evan Mackay, Frank Arce

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

Members of the Public: Kris Dickson

**Absent:** Commissioners Sukia Akiba, Cindy Telingator, Noelani Kamelamela

1. **Call to order**
  - Chair Dresser called this meeting to order at 6:03pm.
2. **Review and approval of agenda**
  - No Commissioners had any additions to the agenda.
3. **Review and approval of January 2025 minutes**
  - Chair Barnert requested that Working Groups without reports be removed from the minutes. Chair Barnert moved to approve January minutes with this edit. Commissioner MacDonough seconded. Minutes approved unanimously.
4. **Staff Reports**
  - ED Almonte
    - Commissioner Long resigned from the Commission. We thank her for her years of service.
    - The Massachusetts State Legislature approved the petition for Cambridge Fair Housing Ordinance amendments. This means that the new protected classes—Relationship Status and Family Structure—have been approved and are ready to be ordained by the Council.
    - The proposed updated definition of Sexual Orientation for the Fair Housing and Human Rights ordinances was sent for feedback to the Human Rights

Commission and the Law Department. The definition will be sent again to the LGBTQ+ Commission before being voted on by City Council.

- The Human Rights Commission (CHRC) is no longer able to dual file cases of discrimination based on gender identity with HUD. CHRC is still able to accept these cases under the city ordinances.
- ED Almonte shared guidance for event planning that Working Groups can use. The guidance can be seen in Appendix A. Commissioners can use this guidance to propose events at Commission meetings. ED Almonte explained the time frames needed for different types of events, and suggested 6-8 weeks advance before an event. Commissioners can use the questions on the document as templates for proposing events to the Commission.
- DOO Binney
  - Thanks to all Commission volunteers who helped make the “Legal Protections for the LGBTQ+ Family” Webinar, the STI Clinic and Workshop, and the Name Change Clinic.
  - DOO Binney is working with the public information office to update the city website to make resources more accessible and ensure that information is up to date.
- PL Hallahan
  - Upcoming event- **Name Change Workshop with Massachusetts Trans Political Coalition** - Date: March 2, 1:30pm-3:30pm on Zoom - Join the City of Cambridge, the City of Somerville, and the Mass Trans Political Coalition (MTPC) for a workshop about the legal name change process.
  - PL Hallahan is working on planning the next SAGE Intergenerational Dinner on April 10. The event will be in the Central Square Library. The room has a capacity of 50 people.
  - The Harvard Square news stand is going to reopen as a spot where programs, workshops, and exhibitions can take place. Commissioners can send program ideas for this location to PL Hallahan. Chair Barnert asked about the possibility to have a recurring program slot. PL Hallahan affirmed this possibility and suggested an LGBTQ+ Artist showcase. If Commissioners know LGBTQ+ performers who would be interested in performing there or at other Commission events, send their information to PL Hallahan.
  - March 31 is Trans Day of Visibility (TDoV). Staff will send a policy order request to light up City Hall with the colors of the trans flag. PL Hallahan has featured in the past trans activists on the Commission’s Instagram and was looking for new ideas from commissioners. Chair Barnert suggested featuring TDoV events in nearby towns.
  - PL Hallahan is working on confirming the upcoming movies at the Senior Center, which will go out in the next newsletter. Chair Barnert also requested that the information about the Domestic Partnership Ordinance Zine be sent out in the March Newsletter.
- RA Joselow
  - RA Joselow is helping put together a focus group of LGBTQ+ older adults around healthcare needs. If anyone is interesting in joining this focus group, reach out to RA Joselow. Participants will receive gift cards.

- RA Joselow is working on structures for creating recurring events for LGBTQ community members. She is working on an LGBTQ+ crafting and mental health event that would start in the summer.

#### 5. **Working Group Reports**

- Seniors Working Group- Commissioner Mackay proposed a recurring reading group focused on the book “How We Get Free: Black Feminism and the Combahee River Collective.” This event would be in partnership with the Cambridge Public Library. Commissioner Mackay moved to approve this event and the use of Commission funds to purchase refreshments and consider purchasing paperback books. Commissioner Egleson seconded. This motion was approved unanimously.
- Youth Working Group- Commissioner Howe shared about an upcoming event- **Welcoming Schools Trans Stories Read Aloud**- Date: February 28, 4:00pm-5:00pm - Join the Cambridge LGBTQ+ Commission and the Cambridge Public Library for the 10th Anniversary Welcoming Schools National Day of Reading: A Celebration of Trans Stories. At this all-ages story time, librarians will read aloud from books that support and affirm transgender and non-binary youth and celebrate gender diversity for everyone. Refreshments provided.

#### 6. **New Business**

- Name Change Process Advocacy - Commissioner Gardner spoke with the staff from the Mass Trans Political Coalition (MTPC) about the state requirement to publish a legal name change in a local newspaper. Many other states have removed this requirement from the process, and this could be a good opportunity for Advocacy from the Commission. Commissioner Gardner will report back on any action items from MTPC about advocacy opportunities. Commissioner Egleson will follow up with MTPC.
- Pride Planning – The Mayor will be joining the March Commission meeting to discuss the annual Pride event partnership. DOO Binney asked Commissioners to brainstorm what they would like to see at Pride! DOO Binney will pull together an ad-hoc working group to discuss Pride Events.
  - Commissioners would like the event to be on a different morning than Boston Pride, the event should stand on its own. The Commission could host multiple Pride events.
  - Commissioners would like the event to be festive, inclusive, warm, and have a party atmosphere.
  - Commissioners would like the event to have drag performers, face painters, a balloon arch, and queer performers.
  - Commissioners would like the event to be outdoor and indoor, with potential for activities on the City Hall lawn and closing down the block of city hall.
  - Commissioners would like the event to be more inclusive by having options for quiet spaces and stroller parking.
- Chair Barnert shared that Cambridge Somerville Elder Services has a monthly dinner, and funding has been renewed for several more months, with some of the funding coming from Mayor Simmons’ office.

- #### 7. **Adjournment** – Chair Dresser moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:31pm. Commissioner Foster seconded.

## APPENDIX A: Event Planning Guidance Chart for LGBTQ Commissioners

*We have multiple Working Groups, staff, & others that may want to organize an event. This is a new document that Carolina wrote to help standardize the process of creating & hosting events.*

### Event Planning Guidance Chart for LGBTQ+ Commissioners and Staff

This chart is designed to provide clarity and structure to LGBTQ+ Commissioners and staff for planning and executing community programming.

#### 1. Event Planning Framework

##### Step 1 - Idea Creation

When a Working Group meets, use the questions below to begin planning:

1. Define Objectives:
  - o What is the purpose of the event?
  - o What outcomes do we hope to achieve (e.g., education, community building, advocacy)?
2. Identify Target Audience:
  - o Who is the event for (e.g., youth, LGBTQ older adults, allies)?
3. Establish Budget and Resources:
  - o Determine funding request and staff support capacity.
  - o Identify potential partnerships.
4. Check Existing Practices:
  - o Review previous events for guidance and lessons learned.

##### Step 2 – Bring ideas to the full Commission

When a Working Group wants to plan an event, it must first be brought to the full Commission for **discussion and a vote**. However, please note that not all events can be possible due to budget constraints and staff capacity, but we will try to implement as many events for the community as we can.

In terms of which events are possible, they must be aligned with the Ordinance: “To design and implement programs that promote and sustain equality for all LGBTQ+ individuals residing or working in the City.” This is very broad as we have a lot of freedom to create events that educate the community and bring the community together/create social resiliency.

If an event is voted in the affirmative, continue with steps below.

#### 2. Coordination and Logistics (Staff can support)

### **Select Date and Location:**

- Consider accessibility of the venue, if in-person.
- Avoid conflicts with other major community events.

### **Develop a Timeline:**

- When should planning be finalized?

### **3. Plan Outreach and Promotion:**

- Use the Newsletter (add event to the shared send schedule).
- Leverage LGBTQ+ Commission social media account, City Communications Office (both internal and external), and partner organizations.
- Create a streamlined outreach plan.

### **Summary of typical outreach practices (these depend greatly on the scale/ nature of the event!)**

- Create a flyer (include registration link with QR)
- Add calendar event to City website, link to flyer
- Submit to Communications office for posting in City daily update email
- Send to Phoebe for Instagram submission
- Submit to internal employee newsletter
- Add to LGBTQ+ Newsletter on Constant Contact (sometimes send out dedicated constant contact)
- Submit to other City departments to advertise- DHSP, CDD, library, etc.
- Print onto sandwich board signs to put in front of our office, city hall, library, etc.
- Submit to public newsletters (pleasure pie, etc.)
- Create Find it Cambridge page

### **4. Event Execution (Staff primarily handles this)**

#### **Finalize Details:**

- Confirm logistics, vendors, and speakers, if any.
- Prepare materials, if any.
- Bring brochure to distribute.
- Confirm Commissioner volunteers for set up, clean up, tabling.

#### **Day-of Coordination**

#### **Set Up:**

- Arrive early to organize the space.
- Technology test (e.g., microphones, projectors).

**Welcome and Facilitate:**

- Greet attendees.
- Ensure moderators or facilitators are prepared.