



LGBTQ+ Commission

City of Cambridge

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Carolina Almonte
Executive Director

LGBTQ+ Commission Meeting via Zoom October 24, 2024, 6:00pm Meeting Minutes

Present: Chairs Bill Barnert and Zachary Dresser, Commissioners Gregory MacDonough, Linden Huhmann, Cindy Telingator, Emmy Howe, Vincent Monrreal, Noelani Kamelamela, Finley Foster, Sukia Akiba, Frank Arce, Evan Mackay.

Staff: Executive Director Carolina Almonte, Research Associate Amelia Joselow.

Absent: Commissioners Bob Bordone, Kat Long, Mary Rebecca Gardner, Caitlin Egleson, Director of Operations Sarah Binney, Programming Leader Phoebe Hallahan

1. Call to order

- Chair Barnert called this meeting to order at 6:12pm.

2. Review and approval of agenda

- Commissioner Monrreal shared interest in adding agenda items as requested by email about the ability to nominate new Commissioners as chairs, having a minimum of 50% Commissioner participation in community events, addressing the lack of community awareness about the Commission, a discussion of Commission budget, and a request for public meeting recordings. These items will be added to the end of the agenda or added to next month's agenda depending on timing.

3. Review and approval of September 2024 minutes

- Commissioner MacDonough requested to correct the minutes to show that he was present. Commissioner MacDonough moves to approve amended September 2024 Minutes. Commissioner Telingator Seconded.

4. Staff Reports

- ED Almonte: LGBTQ+-Friendly Housing Taskforce report is complete and will be shared with the City Council. Phoebe West, project coordinator with the Office of the Housing Liaison will join ED Almonte to present the recommendations at the December meeting.
- RA Joselow: PL Hallahan and RA Joselow have been writing project plans as part of OEI retreat. These will be presented to the Commission in the future.

5. Old Business

- Sexual Orientation Definition Change Proposal: "Sexual orientation shall mean one's physical, intimate, emotional, sexual, romantic attraction or relationship to people of a particular gender OR multiple genders, or lack thereof. A person's sexual orientation may be identified by terms including, but not limited to, asexual, aromantic, bisexual, gay, lesbian, heterosexual, homosexual, pansexual, and queer. Discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation shall include both discrimination based on actual knowledge of sexual

orientation as well as discrimination based on supposition or assumption of an individual's sexual orientation, which can include assumptions based on someone's gender expression or identity."

- Commissioner Monrreal expresses concern over current definition not including their previous suggestions regarding including language about cultural differences.
- Executive Director Almonte explains definition of "protective class". It is not a high burden to qualify under our local Ordinances; other protective classes, such as Race and National Origin, can apply in same case; language of "included, but not limited to" is legally sufficient. EA Almonte explained that the Human Rights Commission needs to review and vote as well.
- Commissioners Monrreal's proposed language is: "Sexual orientation encompasses a vast array of terminologies involving cultural & ethnic affiliations that ought not to be limited to certain specific verbiages of solely categorical basis but rather experiences that are lively expressed." Commissioner Monrreal makes motion to table vote until language is reviewed/amended. Commissioner Akiba seconds. Motion not passed.
- Commissioner Arce makes motion to approve current version. Commissioner Kamelamela seconds. Motion passed.

6. Working Groups Review and Commissioner Signup

- Commissioners determined which working groups should exist and signed up to be part of them. The results are below.
 - i. Youth Working Group- This Working Group has been on hiatus since COVID. The group would like to re-start and meet with GSAs and other youth groups.
 - Commissioner Howe (Chair)
 - Chair Barnert
 - Commissioner Egleson
 - Commissioner Telingator
 - Commissioner Akiba
 - ii. Seniors Working Group
 - Commissioner Mackay (Chair)
 - Chair Barnert
 - Commissioner Howe
 - RA Joselow
 - iii. Outreach and Visibility – Planning tabling and other outreach opportunities
 - Commissioner Arce (Chair)
 - PL Hallahan
 - Chair Barnert
 - Commissioner MacDonough
 - Commissioner Kamelamela
 - iv. Policy and Advocacy- Ongoing working group to discuss policy and advocacy recommendations in the areas of restrooms, domestic partnership, city ordinances, housing, and city forms. In the past, individual issues have had working groups, but there has not been an ongoing working group.
 - Commissioner Monrreal (Chair)
 - Commissioner Huhmann
 - Commissioner Akiba
 - Commissioner Mackay
 - Commissioner Foster

- Member of the Commission staff
- v. Communications- Commissioners historically created newsletters, social media posts, and printed materials, but these are now created by staff. Commissioner Monrreal voices concern regarding Communications Working Group staying remaining separate vs absorbed into Outreach/Visibility Working Group. Commissioner Dresser makes motion to absorb communications working group into Outreach/Visibility working group. Motion does not pass and is tabled until December.
- vi. Events- Chair Barnert questions if Events Working Group should be ad hoc or ongoing; It remains ad hoc. Commissioners will volunteer as needed for events like Pride Brunch.
- vii. Diversity- This group worked to foster diversity within the Commission. This group has been dormant but will be revitalized.
 - Commissioner Akiba (Chair)
 - Commissioner Monrreal
 - Commissioner Howe
 - RA Joselow
- viii. Public Health and Safety
 - Commissioner Monrreal (chair)
 - Commissioner Dresser
 - Commissioner Huhmann
- ix. Rainbows Across Communities- This is not a working group, but an external group that meets via zoom with members of LGBTQ+ groups throughout greater Boston.
 - Chair Barnert
 - Commissioner Monrreal
 - Commissioner Howe

7. **New Business**

- Executive Director Almonte gives overview/clarification of Appendices in Meeting Agenda regarding Working Groups and Group Agreements. Group Agreement review tabled until next Commission Meeting

8. **Public Comments and Announcements**

- Commissioner Mackay announces World AIDS Day is December 1st. Commissioner Mcay suggests collaboration with Boston River Collective on event.
- Chair Barnert notes event “Day Without Art” event for that day (<https://www.spokeart.org/support-spoke/day-without-art/>)
- Next Commission Meeting: Thursday, December 12, 2024 6:00pm-7:30pm hybrid at 51 Inman St. 2nd Floor and on Zoom.

9. **Adjournment**

- Public meeting ended at 7:34pm.