

LGBTQ+ Meeting Minutes – October 23, 2025

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

Staff: Executive Director Carolina Almonte, Director of Operations Sarah Binney, and LGBTQ+ Program Lead Phoebe Hallahan

Absent: Commissioners Bob Bordone, Noelani Kamelamela, Frank Arce, Mary Gardner, and Sukia Akiba

1. **Call to order**
 - Chair Barnert called this meeting to order at 6:07pm.
2. **Review and approval of agenda**
 - No Commissioners had any additions to the agenda.
3. **Review and approval of July 2025 minutes**
 - Commissioner MacDonough moved to approve the September 2025 meeting minutes. Chair Dresser seconded. All Commissioners voted to approve the minutes.
4. **Staff Reports**
 - ED Almonte
 - Employee Engagement Manager Saffana Anwar will continue to support the LGBTQ+ Commission while ED Almonte is part time.
 - The City is standardizing agenda and minutes formats. Templates will be uploaded to the sharepoint.
 - DOO Binney
 - FallFest – The LGBTQ+ Commission, Boston LesBiGay Urban Foundation (BLU) and the CHA Sexual and Reproductive Health Division will be hosting a fallfest at the Senior Center on **Wednesday, November 12 from 5:00pm – 8:30pm**. This event will offer family activities such as crafts and games, fall themed refreshments, community resource tables, and free STI testing. Chair Barnert and Commissioner Monrreal volunteered to support the event. Other Commissioners interested in volunteering should reach out to staff.
 - The Commission is hoping to put on another LGBTQ+ craft night in collaboration with the library in early 2026. The event will feature a different organization cosponsor.
 - CIRC and the LGBTQ+ Commission are collaborating with the City of Somerville to put on a virtual Know Your Rights series about issues that affect LGBTQ+ Immigrant Communities. Commissioner Egleson offered to reprise the webinar about Legal Parentage and Estate Planning for the LGBTQ+ Community. Staff are also reaching out to Glad Law and other legal organizations to present.

- The Commission received an inquiry from an MSW student looking to create an intergenerational LGBTQ+ community panel. This ask has been passed along to the chairs of the Youth Working Group and the Seniors Working Group.
- DOO Binney is inquiring about the possibility of an LGBTQ+ community skating event.

5. Working Group Reports

- Commissioner Monrreal suggested creating a list of working groups to share with the public at tabling events. Chair Barnert offered to create the document.
- Outreach Working Group—The next meeting of this Working Group will be on November 5.
- Public Health and Safety Working Group—Commissioner Monrreal asked about the history of the Police Liaison at LGBTQ+ Commission Meetings. Chair Dresser and DOO Binney shared about the last Public Safety proposal which was approved by the Commission in July 2023. DOO Binney will send out the text of this proposal to the Commission.
- Trans Sanctuary Working Group—
 - The working group has updated language from the City of Boston's gender inclusion ordinance (see Appendix A). Commissioner Foster expressed interest in adding language that limits where collected gender data can go. Commissioner Howe expressed support for this. Commissioner Foster will finalize language to be voted on in December meeting. ED Almonte shared that more consistent processes for Commission advocacy projects will be coming soon.
 - Commissioner Huhmann reminded the Commission that in the Commission's April 2024 meeting, the Commission voted unanimously to make a set of recommendations for the City of Cambridge's housing programs. In October 2024, the City of Cambridge included these recommendations in its LGBTQ+ Friendly Housing Task Force Report.
 - Commissioner Huhmann shared the following asks from the Trans Sanctuary Working Group to the Commission staff. (1) To be provided with a timeline for when the applications and other materials for the City of Cambridge's housing programs will be updated to reflect these recommendations. (2) To continue to be informed about progress while these updates are being made and to have the opportunity to review the updates and provide input.
 - ED Almonte will reach out to Phoebe West, Project Coordinator with the Office of the Housing Liaison, to present on the current status of the recommendations to the Commission.
 - This working group will meet on the second Tuesday of the month at 5:30pm.
- Youth Working Group—The youth working group co-sponsored a Banned Book Read-Aloud event with the Central Square Library. The event was very successful. 17 people were in attendance.
- Working Group for New Protected Classes Outreach— A working group with members from both CHRC and the LGBTQ+ Commission met to discuss ways to inform the public of the two new protected classes, Family Structure and Relationship Status. They discussed the mission of the Working Group, ways social media can be used for outreach, and potential outreach to artists to support the work. Commissioner Howe shared about a very successful event at the Morse School where dinner was provided and the movie "That's a Family" was screened followed by a facilitated discussion, which could be an effective format to have a

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panel about diverse family structures. Commissioners interested in joining this working group should reach out to DOO Binney.

6. Old Business

- Domestic Partnership Zine—PL Hallahan requested final edits to the text before sending the draft to the artist. Chair Barnert and Commissioner Huhmann will provide edits.
- New Commissioners—Commissioners discussed interest in recruiting new Commissioners. ED Almonte suggested that this process happen in the new year. Commissioner Foster suggested that new Commissioners could help with Quorum. Commissioner Huhmann added that new commissioners could allow for more policy and advocacy projects. Commissioner Huhmann requested that Commissioner interviews take place in evenings so that more Commissioners could help with the process. Commissioner MacDonough suggested that it is important to prioritize Commissioners who are very committed to attending meetings and working on projects. Chair Dresser proposed the creation of a new working group to oversee the process of recruiting new Commissioners and offered to be the Chair of this working group. Chair Dresser motioned to approve this proposal, Commissioner Monrreal seconded. Commissioners Huhmann and MacDonough expressed interest in joining this working group. Other interested Commissioners can reach out to Chair Dresser. ED Almonte shared that the process including the posting, interviewing, and confirmation of Commissioners generally takes about a month and a half. Chair Barnert moved to authorize this working group to make decisions without full group approval. Chair Dresser seconded. All commissioners voted in favor.

7. Announcements

- Greater Boston PFLAG will be hosting Read with Love: A Banned Books Read OUT on Monday, Oct 27, from 7:00-8:00pm on Zoom. Chair Barnert will send out more information.

8. Adjournment – Chair Barnert moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:31pm. Commissioner MacDonough seconded.

Appendix A-
Gender Inclusion Ordinance

(A) All existing and future city-issued forms, documents and certificates that provide for a gender or sex designation shall do so using language that includes all genders and family structures. All forms shall include an option where an individual may designate their chosen name if different from their legal name.

(B) All city-issued forms will only collect information about gender and family structures when necessary and appropriate for delivering city services. The city departments collecting this information shall take measures to protect individuals' privacy and safety.

(C) The appropriate city departments shall prepare a report for the Council, listing all city forms or documents that require individuals to designate their gender or sex, whether the form has a gender neutral designation option, and whether, if applicable, binary gender designation is required by city, commonwealth or federal law. This report shall be filed in Cambridge City Council within 60 days of the passage of this Section.

(D) The appropriate city departments shall develop guidelines to aid in the implementation of this ordinance, similar to Boston's "Gender-Aware Guidelines and Standards for City of Boston Services."