

Shameka Gregory
Executive Director

Cambridge LGBTQ+ Commission

MINUTES:

July 23, 2026

Location: Hybrid-689 Mass. Ave. & Zoom

Neighborhood: City Wide

Contact

- Cambridge LGBTQ+ Commission <LGBTQ@CambridgeMA.gov>
- 617-349-3355

Agenda

Co-Chairs: Bill Barnert and Zachary Dresser

Tonight's meeting chaired by: Shameka Gregory and Zachary Dresser

Attendance

Present: Bob Bordone, Frank Arce, Gregory MacDonough, Vincent Daveed (Vinny) Monrreal, Zachary Dresser, Linden Huhmann

Virtual: Finley Foster, Noelani Kamelamela, Evan MacKay, Bill Barnert

Absent: Caitlin Egleson, Emmy Howe

Staff: Shameka Gregory, Zhiren Ye

Public attendee: Amelia Crofoot

Attendance

1. Call to Order

ED Gregory called the meeting to order at 6:03 PM.

2. Welcome

3. Approve / Modify Agenda

The commission approved the meeting agenda.

4. Approve Previous Minutes: 6/25/26

Commissioner Foster motioned to approve, Commissioner Acre seconded, all in favor.

5. **Introductions:** Fun vacation memory or upcoming vacation plans

6. **Working Group Reports**

- Outreach & Visibility WG (Commissioner MacDonough)
 - ⌘ Outreach Projects? Possibly Youth LGBTQ+ Ball with Somerville and Arlington. Commissioner MacDonough mentioned that the working group hasn't met but will meet in two weeks.
 - ⌘ ED Gregory connected with Stephen Toropov from Arlington and had a meeting on 7/17: Arlington is open to explore, keen to partner with the commission, Cambridge youth are more than welcome to join the Ball. They are following up with their leadership, ED Gregory mentioned that we can contribute budget for this initiative. The prom location will be most likely in Arlington, where pizzas, DJs are provided. If the commission partners with Arlington, then the commission will contribute to specific items. The prom is scheduled for next year.
- Policy & Advocacy (Commissioner Monrreal)
 - ⌘ Commissioner Monrreal mentioned that the working group didn't meet, but things are moving in the background.
- Pride (ED Gregory)
 - ⌘ The Pride committee met. It was clarified that community members can pay for food at Pride. The committee proposed spending a max of \$2,500 on food. There will still be some food offered for free. Commissioner Dresser commented that ice cream should be offered for free. Commissioner Arce asked about the possibility of City accepting food donation. ED explained that donation is usually not regular practice of the City. Commissioner Bordone asked if food vendors can pay for having spots at Pride to offset some spending. ED Gregory will follow up to ask about the possibility of food vendors paying for having spots.
 - ⌘ ED Gregory asked DPW about the possible pride date: June 5 and June 12 are two possible options. The commission will keep an eye out and select date, aiming for date after Boston Pride.
 - ⌘ The committee mentioned that Pride will likely be moved to a park, such as Donnelly Field, park in front of main library, Cambridge Commons, etc, first choice is Donnelly Field. Commissioner Kamelamela agreed with Donnelly Field because it's public transit friendly.
 - ⌘ The committee also talked about the awards during Pride, and suggested doing interviews with the awardees to promote Pride and the awards.
 - ⌘ PM Ye added the idea of passing the rainbow torch initiative to engage with communities, organizations and different city Prides.
- Seniors WG (Commissioner MacKay)
 - ⌘ Book Group
 - ⌘ Commissioner MacKay asked about the multi-generational dinner planning. ED Gregory mentioned potential date in September in collaboration with Meet Your Neighbor Day/Month. September 23 will

most likely the date for the multi-generational dinner. It was suggested to reach out to Project 10 East and ask the seniors if they want to come to the teen events. Commissioner Monrreal suggested sharing the dinner initiative with the public high school. Commissioner Kamelamela agreed and added that teens don't have cars so it might be better to go to them. ED Gregory also talked about format of introducing each other during the dinner. The commission discussed about potential formats, ideas of switching across table seating, speed networking were mentioned.

- Trans Sanctuary WG (Commissioner Foster)
 - ✧ Commissioner Foster will follow up with Kimberly on the opportunities of meeting to join collaborative with other cities.
 - ✧ Commissioner Foster will also follow up with the housing group to ask about the reason on collecting relationship status for housing eligibility.: haven't heard back yet. The rationale for this is unclear. Commissioner Foster will consult the group to ask if a statement will be needed.
 - ✧ Pool Party: Set for Monday, August 17 from 6:30PM to 8:30 PM. Registration is open! There will be a vocal coach tabling, 30 people have registered.
 - ✧ Gender Inclusion Ordinance: Updates received from Law Department and shared with working group: had the meeting with City Manager.
 - City Manager is happy to move forward with this. He asked about the background. ED Gregory explained that family structure doesn't align with the city domestic partnership policy. Some challenges were mentioned such as computer system tied to the paperwork. The City Manager welcomes the Commission to contribute to the overarching objective and planning. It was proposed to make this idea into concrete workplan.
 - Commissioner Huhmann asked if the commission can push for both an implementation plan and a policy order. Understanding that pushing for policy order will mean that it needs to go through council, Commissioner Huhmann said that an ordinance creates a long-term commitment by the city rather than a one-time effort.
 - Commissioner Kamelamela shared that this is a similar situation with the same-sex marriage certificates where IT system/data collection change was also required.
 - Commissioner Foster mentioned that a disadvantage of going to City Manager as an implementation plan is that there might be delays. If it's a policy order, then it creates a mandate despite whoever takes the City Manager role. It creates accountability. Commissioner Huhmann agreed that if it's an ordinance then things will follow through as a long-term goal. Commissioner Huhmann mentioned about the success of LGBTQ+ commission in pushing for ordinances. ED Gregory highlighted that there would still be delays. If passed, the

Council would hand it over to the City Manager for implementation and that can include delays.

- Commissioner Bordone suggested communicating with city manager with good framing to move forward with the policy order. Commission moved to vote on whether or not ED Gregory should send an email to the City Manager that states their gratitude and continued plan/desire to move forward with this as a policy order. Commissioner MacDonough motioned to approve ED Gregory sending the email, Commissioner Arce seconded, all in favor to have ED Gregory move forward.
- ED Gregory will draft the email to the city manager.

7. Old Business

- Zine Updates

- Commissioner Huhman, Lily, Commissioner Barnert, & ED Gregory met to compile feedback. Feedback was shared with artist. Updated draft expected by July 24th. ED Gregory and Commissioner Huhman have provided the text, but the artist didn't update, but will give updates by Friday, July 24.

- Bios

- ED Gregory sent the questions below to help guide bio writing. Who has sent in their bios?

So far received Bill's bios. SG asked commission to send. And indicate if you want to be featured in the Commissions newsletter.

1. Where are you from and how did you become part of the Cambridge community?
2. What helps you stay connected to community/what energizes you?
3. Why is advocating and supporting the Queer community important to you?
4. What's something you want to achieve (can be ANYTHING) in the next year?

- "Cured" film opportunity

- Updates: Partnering with CPHD, and BLU Foundation.
- Mental health resources available for the ACTUAL supports needs of the LGBTQ+ Community: discussion afterwards, or tabling. No date settled yet, potentially in late September. Location most likely to be in Library, but will explore Kendall SQ theater screening.

- Perinatal Leave

- ED Gregory met with HR and the discussion went well. HR is looking into it more on their end, in the meantime, second meeting in August.

- Commission Social Event in August

- Silk Screening t-shirts at The Hive (Main Library 449 Broadway)
Thursday, August 27 from 6-8pm.
- This event will be Commissioners only without staff.
- Dinner will not be provided as it's not an official Commission meeting.
- Collect your t-shirt!
- Brainstorm FY 27 events/goals?
This item was skipped for time.
- Status update of Fair Housing Ordinance change in definition of sexual orientation.
 - The proposal goes before the council in the fall. Andrea from the law department has been assigned this task. Commissioner Huhmann asked if it's helpful if we have a statement why we do it. ED Gregory clarified that this will most likely be a vote and approve situation.
 - Human Rights Commission favorably voted on the definition below.
Currently with Law Department
 - "Sexual orientation means an actual or perceived enduring emotional, romantic, or physical attraction, or lack of attraction, to others based on sex or gender. For example, sexual orientations may include, but are not limited to, heterosexual, lesbian, gay, bisexual, omnisexual, pansexual, queer, or asexual."

8. New Business

- Partnerships with CDD - Community Development Department - (Survey to local businesses—looking for feedback, could become listed as a minority owned business. Window Decals, Calendar of community events, Queer Market): In November Shop Local Initiative will have a pride themed window cling option available. Commission wants to also have consistent events and make them into calendar to share with the community. The survey will be distributed from LGBTQ+ Commission instead of CDD. Survey will be sent out digitally by August 31. Commissioner Monrreal asked to make a QR code for posting on social media. Commissioner Bordone suggested to put some questions optional and offer more options than binary choice. ED Gregory will add question 9 about what makes you a LGBTQ+ friendly business.
- Commission Application Update (Request for applications to remain open through August 1st)
- Retreat-3 hour gathering for Commission members to deepen relationships, explain how things work as well as reviewing ordinance, bylaws, and handbook. Possibly facilitated by ED Gregory and PM Ye, and/or someone from the Strategy Team. Commissioner Barnert added that bylaws, handbook, ordinance and checklist of onboarding commissioners are outdated, the retreat could be for commissioners to review and update them. Commissioner MacDonough motioned to approve the retreat idea, Commissioner Arce seconded, all in favor. The content of the retreat will be discussed at another time.

9. Public comment: There were no public comments received.

10. Public Comments / Announcements

- Upcoming films in the LGBTQ+ Film Series at the Cambridge Senior Center (First Tuesdays, 10am):
 - August 4: El Canto del Colibri **(53 mi, 2015)**
 - A heartfelt film about Latino immigrant fathers grappling with their children's LGBTQ identities. Through honest conversations, the families explore love, faith, masculinity, and the journey toward acceptance.

10. Next Commission Meeting: Thursday, September 24, 6-7:30pm, Hybrid*

11. Adjournment: ED Gregory adjourned meeting at 7:28 PM.

*** Hybrid meeting info**

GUESTS: Please let us know if you will be coming, and whether you will be joining us in person or via Zoom by emailing LGBTQ@CambridgeMA.gov.

To join in person, come to 689 Mass. Ave, Cambridge. If the front door is locked, call us at 617-349-3355. Come up to the 2nd floor and follow the signs.

To join via Zoom, join Zoom Meeting:

<https://cambridgema.zoom.us/j/89723365868>

Meeting ID: 897 2336 5868

One tap mobile +19294362866,,89723365868# US (New York)