

**January 28, 2016 meeting minutes  
Cambridge GLBT Commission**

**THE NEXT MEETING WILL BE HELD ON THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 25, 2016**

Call to Order.

Kevin Shpritzer recorded these minutes.

Agenda for the January 28 meeting was accepted.

The minutes of the November 19 meeting were approved.

**Commissioners Present:** Jessica Daniels, Mal Malme, Kevin Shpritzer, Aren Stone, Steven Lee, Bob Parlin, John Gintell, Anna Weick, Kristina Mastropasqua, Lesley Phillips,

**Commissioners Absent:** (excused) – Bill Barnert, Rachel Oppenheimer, Maya Escobar

**Guests:** Police Superintendent Chris Burke (Police Dept. Liaison to the Commission)

**I. Police Report**

- a. Chris has continued to meet with Taha Jennings, Aide to the City Manager, and Jackie Phillips, City Training Coordinator, regarding LGBTQ cultural competency training for municipal employees.
- b. He was happy to report that the Request for Proposal (RFP) for a vendor to supply a training program will go out in February.
- c. The department is currently doing background investigations for employment. They are looking to fill 14 positions.

**II. New Commissioners**

- a. Seven new commissioners were selected by the Commission to fill our vacancies.
- b. The recommendations will be sent to the City Manager for approval.
- c. Assuming approval, we will have 20 commissioners.
- d. We expect the new commissioners will be able to attend our February meeting.

**III. Possible Commission Name Change**

- a. Aren suggested we establish a deadline for making a name-change decision.
- b. We agreed to make a decision by our April meeting.
- c. Steven and Anna volunteered to head a name-change committee.
- d. The rest of the committee will be formed during the February or March meeting.

**IV. Future Event**

- a. We would like to host an event related to Transgender/Gender Queer/Non-gender conforming people.
- b. The Commission decided that fall would be the best time for the event, but we will keep late-spring in mind in case the transgender anti-discrimination bill passes.
- c. Anna and Mal agreed to co-lead the event.

**V. Cambridge Community Engagement Team Event – December 17, 2015**

- a. John and Aren presented information about the Commission at the event.

- b. The subject for this event was helping service providers deal with LGBT issues, especially in communities who deny the existence of LGBT people. John and Aren gave a brief overview of the Commission and what it has been doing, John “Longjones” Wambere spoke about his experiences as a Ugandan immigrant, and Melody Brazo led an exercise to highlight how service providers could respond in various situations.
- c. A resource list was created as part of this event. Chris asked if he or the police department could be included on the resource list. It will be included on our web page in the future.

VI. **Gender Neutral Bathrooms**

- a. John reported that he met with Taha Jennings.
- b. Taha has been trying to get things moving along on this project.
- c. They discussed the issue of the bathrooms in City Hall. Is it safe to have a single-stall lockable bathroom in this public building?
- d. What will the signage look like?
- e. John will have follow-up meetings with Taha to establish a timeline.
- f. We formed a committee to further the progress of this project.
- g. Definite tasks for the committee will be to design an informational postcard to give out to businesses and to come up with signage recommendations.
- h. Kevin, Mal and Kristina volunteered to join John with this project.

VII. **City Website**

- a. The City is in the process of updating their website and will likely launch it in the spring.
- b. John suggested we wait until the new City site is launched before inquiring about getting Commissioners trained on how to manage and update our webpage.

VIII. **Seniors Healthcare and Housing Projects**

- a. Elysia Chandler (Commission Intern) and John will be going to the LGBT Elders in an Ever-Changing World 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference at Salem State University on March 18.
- b. They will be presenting the Seniors Healthcare report that Elysia put together in 2015.
- c. Elysia designed a draft survey for the housing project.
- d. She will be sending the draft survey to the Commission for feedback.

IX. **Attendance/Late Policy**

- a. Members have asked for clarification of and possible changes to the Commission’s current policy.
- b. The current policy is that if any Commissioner is absent, without excuse, from three meetings during a calendar year, the City Manager shall have authority to declare that position vacant and appoint a replacement.
  - i. It also states that as long as the co-chairs are notified, absences are considered excused.
- c. The Commission proposed replacing the existing definition of an unexcused absence to the following: ***Missing more than 1/3 of a regularly scheduled meeting is considered an unexcused absence.***
  - i. The Commission approved this revision.

X. **Request from Human Rights Commission**

- a. The Cambridge Human Rights Commission (CHRC) wants input about wording in the Human Rights Ordinance regarding the addition of gender identity as a protected class to their Fair Housing Ordinance.

- i. The Commission is recommending the CHRC use the wording from the Massachusetts state anti-discrimination statute.

**XI. Future Meetings with the Mayor and City Manager/Deputy City Manager**

- a. John and Aren will be meeting with Mayor Simmons and Neal Alpert, Chief of Staff.
- b. Discussion topics include:
  - i. Review of what the Commission accomplished in 2015
  - ii. Update on the Seniors Healthcare and Housing projects
  - iii. Pride Brunch
  - iv. LGBT housing issue that Mayor Simmons raised last year
  - v. Getting a liaison to Mayor Simmons' office.
- c. They will also meet with the City Manager or Deputy City Manager.
- d. Discussion topics include:
  - i. Review of what the Commission accomplished in 2015
  - ii. Update on the Seniors Healthcare and Housing projects
  - iii. Request funding for the Youth Afterschool Activities project
  - iv. Positive comments about Chris Burke and the Police department
  - v. Request liaisons with Human Services and with Community Development

**XII. Announcements**

- a. Lesley mentioned that Professionals for Transgender Rights is doing an annual fundraiser for the Transgender Rights community on April 14. The Commission agreed to support this event.

Meeting was adjourned at 7:30pm