

Shameka Gregory
Executive Director

Cambridge LGBTQ+ Commission

MINUTES: March 26, 2026

Location: Hybrid: 689 Mass. Ave, 2nd floor & 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: Bill Barnert

Present: Linden Huhmann, Vincent (Vinny) Monrreal, Bill Barnert, Noelani (Noe) Kamelamela, Gregory (Greg) MacDonough, Finley Foster, Zachary (Zack) Dresser

Virtual: Robert (Bob) Bordone, Evan MacKay (until 6:30)

Absent: Frank Arce, Caitlin Egleson, Emmy Howe

Guests: Luke Smith

1. **Call to Order 6:06 pm Chair Barnert**
2. **Welcome**
3. **Approve / Modify Agenda-** Seniors working group moved up on agenda as Commissioner MacKay needs to leave early.
4. **Approve Previous Minutes:** Feb. 26, 2026. Commissioner MacDonough motions. Commissioner Foster seconds. Approved unanimously.
5. **Intro/Ice Breaker** – How are you? What was one of your favorite children's books and why?
6. **Seniors WG** (MacKay)
 - Partnering with multiple organizations to plan a book club about the Combahee River Collective including reading of original statement. Flyers being finalized by

library staff. Location Central Sq. Library. 5 meetings total. First meeting will be a reading of original statement followed by discussion. The other 4 meetings will be a reading group and alternate between Tuesday evenings and Saturday mornings with rotating facilitators. Different people will read the statement. Book begins with statement and then interviews with scholars and activists who put the statement together and organized right here in Central Sq.

- Format is learning opportunity to see if we should have stuck with weekend or weekdays.
- Statement Reading, Tuesday, April 28th at 6:30 pm. Central Sq. Library
- Book Club Saturday, May 9th & 23rd at 11 am, Tuesday, May 12th & 26th at 6:30 pm

7. Updates on Previous Action Items

- **Clothing swap for pool party:** Guest Eliakesha Spencer suggests a vendor providing free clothes to community. ED Gregory says she will follow up.
 - i. ED Gregory followed up with organization "Help by AMG". Bringing mini closet for pool party
 - ii. Connected us with DJ as well! Rebel.liOn.
- **Gender Inclusion Ordinance:** Ordinance assigned for review to Sean McKendry with law department. McKendry previously shared timeline of end of February. On March 20th requested 4-5 weeks due to other litigation issues. ED Gregory will follow up with him on April 21st if no updates received by that time.
- **Fair Housing Ordinance & Sexual Orientation Definition:**
 - i. ED Gregory will reach out to law department for follow up as soon as updates received regarding Gender Inclusion Ordinance. Law Department has a lot more demands on their time given all of the legal battles they are fighting with Federal government and due to actions of Federal government. ED Gregory mindful of their workload and doesn't want to overwhelm them.
 - ii. When she reaches out, ED Gregory will ask if this is something the Council can decide on their own or if it needs to be approved by the MA Legislature first.
 - iii. Requested that Commissioners consider if they want to bring this before the entire Council at once or approach a specific Councillor to champion the change. Councillors McGovern and Sobrinho-Wheeler considered as options.
 1. ED Gregory communicated information to Commissioner Foster who shared update. New language received from law department "Sexual orientation means an actual or perceived enduring emotional, romantic, or physical attraction, to others based on sex or gender. For example, sexual orientations may include heterosexual, lesbian, gay, bisexual, queer, or asexual individuals."

2. Changed “perceived”. Struck “lack of attraction”. Kept “asexual”. “Can include” changed to “for example”.
 3. Moves to Human Rights Commission (HRC) for approval and if they say yes, to the Council for Home Rule petition. HRC will vote on new definition then it goes back to law department for final approval. HRC brings to Council for Home Rule petition then Council votes to move to State Legislature.
- **Rose Lipkin Award (Pride):** Commissioner Howe volunteered to connect and coordinate with Arthur Lipkin
 - i. Tabled.
 - **BLU Foundation:**
 - i. Eliakeisha will share presentation with ED Gregory for distribution to Commission.
 1. DONE: In the notes for February meeting.
 - ii. ED Gregory will share Eliakeisha’s contact information with Chair Barnert to learn more about “Rainbows Across Communities.”
 1. [DONE: Invitation to Rainbows across Communities shared with Eliakeisha.]
 - **Budget:** ED Gregory plans to request additional \$5000 for Commission budget for programming.
 - i. Funds requested in budget process. Request currently sitting with City Manager for his approval or rejection. If approved, it goes before the Council for a final decision. ED Gregory will keep Commission apprised of progress.
8. **Project Updates** (current actions & plans, including reports from Shameka)
- **(Monthly until resolved): Status update on Fair Housing Ordinance change in definition of sexualities.**
 - i. Update provided above.
 - **Policy Order for Trans Day of Visibility.**
 - i. ED Gregory submitted policy order to light up City Hall in colors of Trans flag from March 31st-Apr. 6 in honor of Trans Day of Visibility. Passed unanimously by Council.
 - **Updates on registration for various events**
 - i. Pool Party 33 registered
 - ii. Queer Intentional Families 1 registered
 - iii. Multi-Generational Dinner 22 registered
9. **Working Group Reports**
- **Outreach & Visibility WG (Greg & Bill)**
 - Commissioner MacDonough shared about panel on fostering and adoption. Have a great panel lined up with various experiences.
 - Chair Barnert shared that they had planned on potentially having CCTV broadcast and record. They discussed this with panelists. Idea will not

move forward as not all panelists comfortable being recorded so they can be more candid.

- **Policy & Advocacy (Vinny)**

- Commissioner Monrreal shared that the group was supposed to connect yesterday. Didn't have enough people for quorum so meeting was cancelled.

- **Public Health & Safety WG (Vinny)**

- Commissioner Monrreal shares that the group met. Has questions about mission, goals, purpose. Wondering if all working groups have that? Are we going to stick with having that? Struggled to discuss definitions without exact criteria. Moving forward if all working groups are going to have these, would like some uniformity either from ED Gregory or from the Commission.
- Commissioner Kamelamela thinks that these are all in the share drive if folks have it written down. Can change depending on who's there. Do you want Commission to define it?
- Commissioner Monrreal recalls it being a requirement when everyone was deciding what groups people will be part of
 - Co-Chair Dresser shares that it is not a requirement for working groups to have this. Not in bylaws. Think it's a good thing to have. Can provide Commissions goals to use for guidance.
 - Co-Chair Barnert states that main audience is people who aren't in the working group and trying to decide if they want to join. If trying to get people to join, must be able to tell them what they'll be working on.
 - Commissioner Monrreal recalls that for public health and safety there were notes on discussions from meetings with CPD. How to bring it into present. How to navigate this
 - ED Gregory reminds that there aren't any limitations in how they approach the work. It is all decided by the people doing the work as long as it remains within the focus of the working group, Commission, city policy, and legal standards.
 - Commissioner Kamelamela reminds that different working groups did different things with documenting. If you can't find something, can query the Commission if anyone remembers anything. Commissioner Huhmann wonders if there would be any minutes from that era. Co-Chair Barnert says there are not. Commissioner Kamelamela asks about shared google drive. Co-Chair Barnert reminds all that anything that was on the google drive has been moved to sharepoint.
 - Co-Chair Dresser gives general reminder that all working groups have full agency to do what they would like within their working group

- Commissioner Kamelamela reminds about importance of properly documenting all work with people on the Commission and people outside as well.
 - Commissioner Monrreal will look at archives and figure out where to go from there
 - Commissioner Huhmann shares that working group quorum challenge may be due to people who have stopped coming to Commission things at all
 - Commissioner Monrreal notes challenge because everyone here already working really hard. Glad to have a discussion. Had a meeting and we had a good talk.
- **Pride**
 - Chair Barnert asked if there is an existing Pride working group. There is not. Group decided to form one. Commissioner Kamelamela took vote for working group. Approved unanimously.
 - ED Gregory will chair temporary working group. Commissioners Dresser and Monrreal volunteered to participate. ED Gregory will follow up with entire Commission to see if anyone else would like to participate.
- **Trans Sanctuary WG (Finley)**
 - Met earlier this month. Commissioners Huhmann and Foster reviewed housing recommendations and compared them to current housing applications. Found areas of inconsistency. Restrictions on how many people can share a bedroom (couples expected to share a bedroom). Invited Phoebe West to join working group meeting. Phoebe suggested inviting others who are over these processes. **Commissioner Foster will send Commissioner Huhmann's notes and invite these people to one of the next two working group meetings.**
 - Commissioner Huhmann notes that depending on how things go with Phoebe, they may get pushback. May need to delineate between couple and domestic partners. Used to be that kids have to share room based on gender. There was concern that that was a federal rule but they managed to change that. Current laws dictate what's possible at this time. Don't want to conflate couples and domestic partners
 - Commissioner Foster shares that the Pool party is set for Saturday, April 4th from 6-7:30. Very excited. Want people to come and table
 - Notes say pool party starting at 5
 - ED Gregory explains that was her original plan but it is not feasible as the pool is open to the public until 4:30/4:45. Earliest we can set up is 5:30 which means party starts at 6.
 - Location is War Memorial
 - Cambridge Health Alliance, Trans Emergency Fund, Mass Trans Political Coalition, all tabling.

- If folks can come 30 minutes early and stay 30 minutes late for set up/breakdown
 - **Youth WG (Emmy)**
 - Commissioner Howe absent. Co-Chair Barnert reporting. Would like to have someone table at Youth Pride. Commissioner Howe and Co-Chair Barnert are not available. Have also been discussing possibility of recruiting high school student to join Commission. Have had one in the past and thought it would be nice to do it again. Would be nice to have a flyer announcing that at Youth Pride.
 - Commissioner Monrreal able to table at Youth Pride.
 - Youth working group will ensure flyer is provided in time.
 - Considering a Queer ball in 2027. Co-planning event with Outreach working group. Commissioner MacDonough on board. ED Gregory would like to co-host event with Somerville. Commission agrees.

10. Old Business

11. New Business

- Tabling Opportunities:
- Shameka will send email to recruit Commissioners for all of these
 - i. **Trans-friendly Pool Party** – Saturday, April 4th, 2026, 6pm – 7:30
 1. Shameka
 - ii. **Queer Intentional Families** panel – Thursday, April 9th, 2026, 6-8:30pm
 1. Shameka
 - iii. **Multi-Generational LGBTQ+ Dinner** – Wednesday, April 15, 2026, 6-8:30
 1. Co-Chair Barnert notes that since we only need someone as people come in, he can do it then can be facilitator at a table.
 - iv. **Youth Pride** – Saturday, May 16th, 2026, 11-4
 1. Commissioner Monrreal
 - v. **Mayfair** – Sunday, May 24th, 2026, 11-6
 1. Done Mayfair in the past. Get a lot of walk-bys and people who sign up for the email list. Lot of fun. Kids coming by. In Harvard Sq.
 2. Commissioner MacDonough available
 3. Request to make sure we have a table
 4. If people want a 10x10 tent, Co-Chair Barnert has one that we can use. Can store at EID office if needed.
 - vi. **Boston Pride** – Saturday, June 6th, 2026, 12noon - ?
 1. Co-Chair Barnert notes that the Commission hasn't tabled that event in the past because Cambridge pride event held the same day. Asks if we want to table? Thoughts?
 2. Commissioner Kamelamela will reach out to Boston Pride for the people. Questions if there are any open spots. Not a bad idea to go.

3. Co-Chair Dresser asks if anyone is able to table. No one available. Unable to table at Boston Pride.
- vii. **Cambridge Pride** - Saturday, June 13th, 2026, TBA
1. Co-Chair Barnert-Hopes everyone is there and can take rotating shifts.
- **Pride Committee**
 - i. Bayard Rustin and Rose Lipkin Award
 1. Process for selecting award recipients Commissions responsibility
 2. Co-Chair Barnert suggests asking previous winners if they have suggestions.
 - **City Hall Lawn Billboard** – ED Gregory secured City billboards for 2 weeks in June. What do we want it to say? In the past, it's announced Pride.
 - i. Possibly awareness about the Commission
 - ii. Domestic Partnership Zine
 - iii. Pride
 1. Commissioner Kamelamela asks for specific dates noting that we don't want it to be for Pride if it's after Pride. Suggests that we highlight the planned zine because it's evergreen. Things we want for next year?
 2. ED Gregory encourages Commission to take the opportunity to provide education.
 3. Co-Chair Barnert opportunity to spread love to Queer community
 4. Commissioner Monrreal suggests encouraging people to get more involved with Commission.
 5. Co-Chair Barnert suggests sharing a subset of brochure
 6. ED Gregory suggests that the conversation move to outreach and visibility working group. Requests that the group send text/descriptions of design requests to share with Rachel Alexander to render graphics.
 7. Commissioner MacDonough okay moving to Outreach and Visibility working group. They have a light agenda and can add this.
 8. Commissioner Foster suggests, "Cambridge is for queers".
 9. Co-Chair Barnert suggests, "Cambridge, it's always been a little bit queer"
- **Membership:**
 1. Co-Chair Dresser shares membership updates. Recruitment of new Commissioners been on hold until staffing changes shakes out/settles down.
 2. Co-Chairs and ED Gregory doing all we can about attendance if you notice people not showing up to meetings. Having conversations with Commissioners that are frequently absent.

3. Revisited rules and members **are able to take a leave of absence if needed**. Goal is to meet quorum at 6 pm on Thursday nights like tonight. Trying to be intentional.
 4. Co-Chair Barnert asks if we will know by youth pride if we're recruiting
 5. Commissioner Kamelamela asks if we need to do things with the City first?
 6. Co-Chair Dresser takes informal vote. Are we interested in having a youth Commissioner? Commission interested.
 7. Commissioner Huhmann notes that there has been concern in the past that youth would be flakey. Commissioner Kamelamela notes that previous youth Commissioner wasn't flakey. Co-Chair Dresser notes that like any Commissioner, we want someone who we feel will be committed. Commissioner Kamelamela shares that since we are permanently hybrid, youth Commissioner will likely attend on their phone.
 8. Co-Chair Barnert shows recruitment flyer. Group consensus that the flyer is too busy. We need a youth oriented graphic for Youth pride.
- Request from partner at CPSD
 1. Sam Musher from Cambridge Public Schools is requesting that people fill in hearts for Queer youth that will be hung in hallways to encourage them. Feels they would be thrilled to hear from Commissioners and asks that we draw some hearts.
 2. ED Gregory says she will send them electronically

12. Public Comments / Announcements

- Unable to connect with guest though multiple attempts made to allow guest to speak.
- Co-Chair Dresser suggests that we provide Commissions email and invites guest to connect with us that way. Apologies for technical issues.

13. Next Commission Meeting: Thursday, April 23, 2026, Hybrid

14. Commissioner Kamelamela motions for end of meeting. Commissioners Monrreal and MacDonough second. Passes. Meeting adjourned 7:21 pm