

**March 24, 2016 meeting minutes  
Cambridge GLBT Commission**

**THE NEXT MEETING WILL BE HELD ON THURSDAY, APRIL 28, 2016**

Call to Order.

Kevin Shpritzer recorded these minutes.

Agenda for the March 24 meeting was accepted.

The minutes of the February 25 meeting were approved.

**Commissioners Present:** Aren Stone, Maya Escobar, Brian Eiermann, Jessica Daniels, Steven Lee, Bill Barnert, Ted Waechter, Susan Bernstein, Sylvia Guerra, Rachel Oppenheimer, Kevin Shpritzer, Linda Daniels, Kimm Topping, Lesley Phillips

**Commissioners Absent:** (excused) – Mason Weintraub, Bob Parlin, Mal Malme, John Gintell, Anna Weick, Kristina Mastropasqua

**Guests:** Catherine Flaherty

**I. Welcome**

- a. New commissioners were welcomed to the Commission and everyone introduced themselves.

**II. Police Report**

- a. Police Superintendent Chris Burke (Police Dept. Liaison to the Commission) sent an email to Aren with his report.
- b. He said they are close to finalizing the language on the Request for Proposals (RFP) for a vendor to supply LGBTQ cultural competency training for municipal employees. The city has named the training SOGI for sexual orientation and gender identity.
- c. Commissioner Haas will be retiring in May. It was noted that Commissioner Haas brought a true Community Policing model to Cambridge and has fully supported Chris's active role as liaison to the Commission.

**III. Meeting with City Manager and Assistant City Manager**

- a. John and Aren met with Richard Rossi, City Manager, Lisa Peterson, Deputy City Manager to discuss Commission initiatives and needs.
- b. During this meeting, they made the request that the City increase the Commission Research Intern Elysia Chandler's hours to enable her to start work on a new project.
- c. They requested a liaison in the Department of Human Services and to the Community Development Department who could support the Commission by being familiar with our activities, reading our minutes and being available for collaboration. This request is under consideration.

**IV. Meeting with Mayor Simmons**

- a. John and Aren met with Mayor Simmons and Neal Alpert, Chief of Staff.
- b. They discussed the lack of diversity at previous Pride Brunches and the future of the event.
- c. The Mayor will work with us to explore the subject of diversity.

- i. The Mayor suggested reaching out to several other organizations to see if we can entice more people to come to the brunch.
- ii. The Mayor is considering surveying people at this year's Pride Brunch about what changes they would like to see in future years.
- iii. Lesley suggested giving these surveys to groups at the meeting point at the Pride Parade.
- iv. Bill reminded us that people at the Pride Parade are most likely unable to attend Pride Brunch.
  - v. Sylvia suggested having an online component to the survey.
  - vi. Maya suggested including a link to the survey on our Pride Brunch postcards.
  - vii. There have been several suggestions about considering a different day for the brunch that should be considered for the future.
- d. The Mayor would like to have, with the Commission, a Cambridge round-table discussion to talk about what services and issues LGBTQ residents would like the city and the Commission to be working on. Commissioners would like us to participate in this.
- e. Jeff Walker, former Commissioner, is the Mayor's Director of Special Projects. He will work on Pride Brunch, LGBT-friendly senior housing, and other issues.
- f. Thursday, March 31 – 9-10:30am – Mayor Simmons is holding a meeting to discuss LGBT-friendly senior housing. The meeting will be in the Mayor's office in City Hall. Aren, Anna, and John will be attending.

**V. LGBT Elders in an Ever-Changing World 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference**

- a. Elysia and John presented the Senior Healthcare Project at this conference at Salem State University on March 18.
- b. They had a good-sized crowd for their presentation. Many attendees were interested in more information about our data collection and survey creation processes.

**VI. Seniors Healthcare and Housing Projects and Youth Project**

- a. Elysia is continuing to work on the Seniors Healthcare Project, contacting participating organizations to see if they'd like follow-up information or support.
- b. She has sent out surveys to all employees of the Cambridge Housing Authority for the Housing Project, and is scheduling meetings with other senior housing organizations.
- c. The City Manager approved more hours for Elysia, starting immediately, increasing her hours from 12 per week to 17. It was noted with great appreciation that the money for this position comes from the Human Rights Commission budget. She is starting work on our Youth Project, which will survey organizations that serve young people from kindergarten through high school as to their policies and practices in regards to LGBTQ youth, parents, and employees. We are especially interested in adult responses to bullying. She'll start by compiling a list of organizations.
- d. Jessica suggested that we change Elysia's job title so that she is no longer called an intern. We decided to ask her to come up with her preferred job title.
- e. It was also suggested that Elysia have business cards. Aren will find out whether the city provides these to all employees.
- f. Kimm would like to join John and Aren in working with Elysia, especially on the Youth Project.

**VII. Pride Brunch – Saturday, June 11**

- a. Neither John nor Aren are able to attend this year's event.

- b. Aren explained Pride Brunch to the new Commissioners and requested the formation of a committee.
- c. The committee will meet with Jeff Walker and help decide how the event will run.
- d. Bill, Lesley, and Brian volunteered to be on this committee.
- e. Aren will give Jeff Walker their email addresses, so the discussion can get started.

**VIII. Gender Neutral Bathrooms Committee**

- a. Kevin reported on the progress of this project.
- b. John has been working with Taha Jennings (Aide to the City Manager) about gender-neutral bathrooms.
- c. Taha mentioned that the City has a list of about 1600 establishments in Cambridge with ground-floor retail.
- d. He requested materials to review that can be sent out to these establishments to encourage the implementation of gender-neutral bathrooms.
- e. The committee will need to meet to create such a document.
- f. The Commission had suggested that we create an informational flyer or post card about the need for gender-neutral bathrooms to give to retail establishments and others. Taha reported that the City would like to take charge of printing is disseminating this, with our input.

**IX. Strategic Planning Committee**

- a. Steven will be sending out meeting notes to the Commission.

**X. Diversity Committee**

- a. This committee has not met yet.
- b. Linda offered to take the lead for the committee, and Aren will help mentor her through that process.
- c. Linda, Brian, Maya, Anna, Rachel, and Aren make up the Diversity Committee.

**XI. Communications Committee**

- a. Bill reported that the committee is working on updating the Commission's brochure.
- b. They are working on a short email to our mailing list to introduce new and old Commissioners and will include our 2015 Annual Report.
- c. John has arranged for the Committee to get trained with the City's new web system so we might be able to update our site in the future.

**XII. Teacher Appreciation Event**

- a. This will probably be in the first half of May in Central Square at an establishment to be named later.

**XIII. Transgender Arts Event - November**

- a. The event will showcase local transgender and gender non-conforming artists and is being co-organized by Mason Dunn, Director of the Massachusetts Transgender Political Caucus.
- b. We will have performances and art displays during the event.
- c. The committee is working on the possibility of having citywide exhibits of art displayed during the month of November.
- d. The Main Library is reserved for November 10 for an exhibit and performance event.

- e. There will be another planning meeting on Saturday, April 9 at the YWCA library from 12:30-2:00pm.
- f. Mal and Anna are the leads on this.

**XIV. Name Change**

- a. Steven, Ted, Jessica and Anna are the committee.
- b. They will be meeting on April 13 to further the discussion and come up with possible changes to the Commission's name.
- c. Commissioners should send their suggestions, thoughts, and discussion points to Steven.
- d. Lesley suggested that, if the committee can do so, it would be nice to have a survey at Pride Brunch with a short list of potential name changes.

**XV. Budget**

- a. Our fiscal year runs from July 1 to June 30.
- b. We are allocated \$2,500 each fiscal year.
- c. We have \$2,100 remaining.
- d. Bill requested up to \$750 for the Teacher Appreciation event.
  - i. This request was approved.
- e. Bill requested up to \$350 to print new brochures/cards with information about the Commission to have available at outreach events.
  - i. This request was approved.
  - ii. Bill will send out the draft cards for the Commission to review prior to printing.
- f. The Commission approved up to \$400 to be used to purchase a button-maker and additional money to purchase blanks.
- g. Steven, as Treasurer, will work with the city's purchasing liaison to purchase items. He would like to spend any additional funds on give-aways.
- h. Ted requested information get emailed out about for what the Commission can and cannot use our budget. Steven will send this information to the Commission.
- i. Commissioners can be thinking of other items we may want so we can make final budget decisions next month.

**XVI. Announcements**

- a. April 9 is Fenway Health's Annual Women's Fundraiser party.
  - i. It will be at the Marriott Copley Place.
  - ii. Commissioners interested in attending should contact Linda for tickets and more information.

Meeting was adjourned at 7:30pm