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Carolina Almonte
Executive Director

LGBTQ+ Commission Meeting Minutes

Monthly Commission Meeting via Zoom
Thursday, April 25, 2024, at 6:00 P.M.
Location: Zoom

Present: Chair Bill Barnert, Commissioners Frank Arce, Gregory Macdonough, Kat Long, Linden Huhmann, Noelani Kamelamela, Zack Dresser, Bob Bordone

Staff: Director of Operations Sarah Binney, LGBTQ+ Program Leader Phoebe Hallahan

Members of the Public: Vincent Monrreal

Absent: Commissioners Cindy Telingator, Mary Gardner, Executive Director Carolina Almonte, LGBTQ+ Research Associate Amelia Joselow

Documents Used:

- [Housing Working Group Draft Recommendations](#)

1. Call to order

- Chair Barnert called this meeting to order at 6:08pm. Chair Barnert noted that DOO Binney will be taking notes for future Commission meetings.

2. Review and approval of agenda

- No Commissioners had any additions to the agenda.

3. Review and approval of February 2024 minutes

- Commissioner Huhmann requested the addition of their housing working group report to the meeting minutes. Commissioner Macdonough moved to approve the February 2024 minutes with these additions. Commissioner Kamelamela seconded.

4. Staff Reports

- DOO Binney requested Commissioner volunteers for the 20 Years of Marriage Equality event on Saturday, May 18, 2024. Chair Barnert, Commissioners Arce and Kamelamela, and Vincent Monrreal volunteered.
- DOO Binney shared that the annual Cambridge Pride Brunch will be a joint awards ceremony with Mayor Simmons' Office on Saturday, June 8, 2024 from 9:30am-11:00am. Shuttles will take participants to Boston Pride.

- DOO Binney shared a call for volunteers for the LGBTQ+-Friendly Housing Taskforce Focus Group. Volunteers should identify as part of the LGBTQ+ community and live in public housing or have a Section 8 voucher.
- LGBTQ+ PL Hallahan asked if Cambridge will have a joint group march together in the Pride parade. Somerville will have a group.

5. Working Group Reports

- **Communications** – The communications working group is planning on creating a new pamphlet or brochure to give people more applicable/actionable information in addition to general information about the LGBTQ+ Commission. For example, the pamphlet would contain ways to get involved or information relevant to LGBTQ+ people about how to navigate city systems and policies, like domestic partnership or housing. Anyone interested in helping out should contact Chair Barnert or Commissioner Huhmann.
- **Events** -
 - SAGE- Commissioner Barnert shared that the SAGE table was a big success and had great attendance. Thanks to all who volunteered, a lot of participants gave very positive feedback.
 - Fair and Affordable Housing Event- DOO Binney shared about the City of Cambridge's Fair Housing for All event on Saturday, April 27 at the Cambridge Senior Center at 806 Massachusetts Avenue from 11:00am-2:30pm. No registration required. From 11am-2:30 p.m., representatives from City departments, local organizations, and non-profits will be available to answer questions and provide resources related to fair and affordable housing in Cambridge.
 - LGBTQ+ Film Series- LGBTQ+ PL Hallahan announced the next segment in the film series at the senior center. Cambridge residents aged 60 and older are invited to join the LGBTQ+ Film Series, held at 10 a.m. on the last Tuesday of each month at the Cambridge Senior Center (806 Massachusetts Ave.). View and discuss movies with LGBTQ+ themes and content. Friends, family members, caretakers and allies are also encouraged to participate. The next two films in the series will be:
 - Tuesday, Apr 30, 10:00am – *The Adventures of Pricilla, Queen of the Desert* (1994, Rated R)
 - Tues. May 26, 10:00am – *The Inspection* (2022, Rated R)
 - LGBTQ+ Commission Social Event- During the break in meetings in August, the Commission will be holding a social gathering for Commissioners and Staff.
- **Housing**- Commissioner Huhmann reviewed two ongoing efforts of the Housing Working Group.
 - Cambridge's zoning ordinance currently doesn't enable households with more than 3 unrelated people to live together in most housing in Cambridge, and the LGBTQ+ Commission's Housing Working Group has been working towards getting the city to remove this restriction for about 2 years. On January 29, the City Council asked CDD to propose language that would remove this restriction on unrelated people living together. On March 6, the City Council's

Housing Committee met to consider CDD's proposed language and Commissioner Huhmann collated input from several Housing Working Group members recommending two wording clarifications and shared it at this meeting. On March 25 CDD presented language that incorporated this input to the full City Council. The city council voted unanimously to kick off the zoning amendment process, which will involve a Planning Board meeting on May 7 and an Ordinance Committee meeting on May 22.

- As part of the LGBTQ+ Friendly Housing Task Force, Commissioner Huhmann reviewed publicly available documents from the City of Cambridge's housing programs for opportunities for improved inclusivity and shared an early draft of recommendations with the LGBTQ+ Commission in January. Afterwards, Commissioner Huhmann revised the recommendations based on input from city housing staff, LGBTQ+ community members, and other relevant individuals. Commissioner Huhmann shared the revised recommendations with the LGBTQ+ Commission in advance of the March meeting that didn't take place due to a lack of quorum and again in advance of the April meeting. During the April meeting, the LGBTQ+ Commissioners present discussed the recommendations, and Commissioner Kamelamela highlighted the particular importance of city housing programs explicitly stating that they are open to households of unrelated people. Commissioner Huhmann moved to vote that the recommendations be shared with the LGBTQ+ Housing Task Force. Chair Barnert seconded. All Commissioners voted to approve.
- **Recruitment-** ED Almonte has been leading the recruitment drive for new Commissioners. DOO Binney shared that the new Commissioners will be joining us at next month's meeting.

6. **Old Business**

- Election of Co-Chairs- Commissioner Dresser nominated himself as co-chair. Commissioner Dresser moved to vote on Chair Barnert and Commissioner Dresser as co-chairs for the next year of the LGBTQ+ Commission. Commissioner Barnert seconded. All Commissioners voted to approve.

7. **Next Commission Meeting:** Thursday, May 23, 2024, 6pm-7:30pm, Hybrid at 51 Inman St. 2nd floor and on Zoom.