

**Cambridge LGBTQ+ Commission
Commission Meeting
September 24, 2020 Virtual Zoom Meeting**

Commissioners in Attendance: Jessica Daniels; Maya Escobar; John Gintell; Kate Grams; Linden Huhmann; Steven Lee; Gregory MacDonough; Mal Malme; Nefyn Meissner; Rebecca Oppenheimer; Lesley Phillips; Aren Stone

Commission Staff in Attendance: Amelia Joselow

Commissioners Absent: Susan Bernstein (representing Commission at another meeting); Noe Kamelamela; Leo Austin-Spooner; Bill Barnert

Community Guests in Attendance: Kimberly M. Rhoten, Esq.

These minutes reflect overall themes. Effort was made to record direct comments as carefully as possible to preserve the voices of the Commissioners making them.

- **Opening** Co-Chair Aren Stone facilitated the meeting with Nefyn Meissner recording meeting minutes.
- **August Meeting Minutes** The Commission approved the August Meeting minutes.
- **Working Group Reports**
 - **Police Relations Working Group** (Aren, John, Rachel, Jessica, Steven, Susan)
 - Jessica's report on meeting with Brian Corr, Executive Director, Cambridge Police Review and Advisory Board
 - Met in August
 - Invited Brian to come to a Commission meeting in October or November
 - Brian is a national expert in police and civilian relations; can provide context on that work and CPD overall
 - Jessica will share note with the Commission once Brian approves them
 - **October Coming Out Day Event** (Rachel, John, Aren, Amelia, Noe)
 - Rachel shared write-up from working group
 - Met with Mayor Siddiqui and Madeleine McCormick (Mayor's Chief of Staff)
 - Rachel, Aren, and John
 - Idea:
 - Sunday, October 11
 - 2-3 hours of programming
 - may be easier to have it pre-recorded
 - Mayor will contact CCTV about how to do this

- Themes:
 - health care/mental health/self-care, with specific focus on BIPOC
 - panel with seniors and youth talking about coming out (Aren may be able to moderate)
 - City willing to pay for performer
- Potential: Commissioners sharing coming out stories on camera
- **Action items:**
 - Aren, John, and Rachel have brought this to the Commission
 - Madeleine is contacting CCTV and CCing Amelia
 - CCTV recommends a two-hour segment (3:00—5:00 p.m.)
 - potential for performance and stories to be pre-recorded with panel live
 - could pre-record panel
 - performer
 - Mal knows two drag kings of color who might be interested
 - Maya raises the point about Zoom fatigue
 - Nefyn mentioned Jujubee as a potential performer—they will reach out to see if she will partner with us
 - Amelia will recruit panelists (has youth in mind); needs help with recruiting elders (Rachel and Maya can help with that)
 - We need folks to help!
- **Domestic Partnership Ordinance Working Group** (Linden, John, Lesley)
 - City Council proposal to broaden the ordinance to include more than one partner:
 - Allows “two or more adults” to be partnered. Some issues with the letter of the ordinance and the spirit of the ordinance.
 - Question for the Commission: Do we want to change this?
 - Rebecca (community guest and community activist on this topic) shared details about the ordinance in Somerville, the proposed ordinance in Cambridge, and shared additional insight and expertise around the issues involved:
 - Potential Proposed Changes:
 - allow folks to enter multiple partnerships
 - allow partnerships with folks outside married relationships
 - remove requirement for folks to reside together
 - remove requirements for proof of how partners portray partnership to the wider world
 - Lesley shared the Somerville ordinance was reactive v. proactive
 - focused on being flexible in the broadest terms

- applies to city employees, residents for city housing
 - encouragement for private employers to follow suit
 - Big difference between Somerville and Cambridge ordinances is that Cambridge requires partners to share a residence
 - What do we want from the working group?
 - Remove requirement to live together
 - Remove requirement about how folks “hold their relationship out to the world”
 - ties to stigma
 - real-world implications
 - ability to pick up kids from school
 - firing
 - poly households are not always out in all fields of their lives—unlikely that families could meet factor two of the ordinance about how they “hold their relationship out to the world”
 - Next steps: the working group will seek advice from the Law Dept.
 - Aren made a motion to empower the working group to make work on the language for the proposed changes and bring it to the next meeting so we can vote on this AND to empower the working group to present to the Law Dept. without full Commission review if needed
 - Linden clarified what’s on the table
 - Kimberley provided additional context on the ordinances
 - the Commission passed the motion
- **Co-Chair Succession Planning**
 - **Co-Chair/Vice Chair**
 - Aren noted that we previously had three co-chairs, and that our ordinance dictates that we can only have two HOWEVER, the two co-chairs can appoint a vice chair
 - Aren noted that Nefyn is interested in being a Vice-Chair
 - Jessica noted that Aren has hoped to step down—do we still need an election for co-chair(s)?
 - Aren noted that having three co-chairs was helpful, hopes to step away in January or February
 - John, Steven, and Aren noted that we will need to have co-chair elections, given that the ordinance dictates we have an election for co-chairs for one-year terms
 - Aren motioned for Nefyn to take on the role of Vice Chair; Nefyn spoke about their interest in the position; the Commission approved the motion
 - **Timing of Election for Co-Chair**
 - Steven noted that Strategic Planning Working Group might want the election to be in November
 - John raised a concern that if folks are elected co-chair, we might lose folks who are not re-appointed in January

- In a pinch, Rachel noted that we could have interim co-chairs
- Steven noted that we have emergency election abilities
- Lesley mentioned that we have tended to hold co-chair elections in January given the lack of December meeting, turnover in January
- Working Group will discuss and bring this to October meeting
- John noted that we have five Commissioner openings and six folks who are up for re-appointment
- **Recruitment of New Members**
 - Rachel highlighted that we have Recruiting Working Group
 - Rachel, Steven, John, Linden, Nefyn
 - Steven will be the lead on this and bring updates to the next Commission meeting

The Commission had a celebration of Mal ahead of Mal's departure from the Commission. This was Mal's last meeting after being a Commissioner for many years.

- **Public Comment / Announcements**
 - None
- **Closing** The meeting was adjourned.
- **Next Commission Meeting:** Thursday October 22, 2020