



## LGBTQIA+ Rainbow Commission Minutes

**Date:** Thursday, December 16, 2021

**Time:** 6:30 PM -8:30 PM

**Location:** Conducted by Remote Participation

**\*Notice to the Public on meeting privacy\*** In the interests of preventing abuse of videoconferencing technology (i.e. Zoom Bombing) all participants, including members of the public, wishing to engage via the Zoom App must register for each meeting and will notice multi-step authentication protocols. Please allow additional time to join the meeting. Further, members of the public who wish to participate without providing their name may still do so by registering to receive the meeting info and using the telephone dial-in information provided.

Please read Governor Baker's Executive Order Suspending Certain Provision of Open Meeting Law for more information regarding virtual public hearings and meetings: <https://www.mass.gov/doc/open-meeting-law-order-march-12-2020/download>

Attendees: Lisa Krinsky, Andy Rubinson, Kari Sasportas, Molly Gillis, Susan Ryan-Vollmar

Liaisons: Julie Flaherty, Marci Shapito-Ide, Len Diggins

Guests: Amos Meeks, Kellye Eversole

Meeting called to order at 6:30. MG assigned as minute taker

### Minutes

1. Remote participation statement and guidelines read by LEK.
2. Welcome and introductions (include your pronouns if you want to)
3. Consent Agenda
  - a. MG motions to approve consent agenda, KS seconded, motion approved unanimously.
4. Commission Membership/Recruitment/Infrastructure (5 min)
  - a. Recruitment update – efforts made via Arlington Advocate, social media. One potential candidate (also applied to AHRC). Suggestion for targeted outreach: to seek resident who is school teacher (outside of Arlington) for school committee seat. Important to seek Trans/gender diverse representation.
  - b. New Co-chairs for 2022 Susan Ryan Vollmar is a candidate, commission will vote in January.
  - c. 2021 Annual Report - update last year's report; due early January. Len suggested including pictures from Pride and other activities.

## 5. Liaison Updates (25 min)

- a. Council on Aging – Thanks for SAGE Table support. Estimate 21 people attended from 37 RSVPs. Need to add attendees to contact list. Tuesdays still going strong, as are LexPride senior-focused events. Dec 28 Lexington event, with clothing giveaway. Adele from FriendshipWorks came to recent Tuesday meeting. Reel Queer in person for 2<sup>nd</sup> time with 16 attendees watching I Love You Phillip Morris. Bill Barnert from Cambridge LGBTQ+ Commission brought a number of people. Next movie is Feb. Next Queer Book Group is in Jan.
- b. Diversity Equity and Inclusion (DEI) – Tabled
- c. Library – Not present. Marci relayed that Julia purchased a copy of To Survive on the Shore – Photos and interviews with Transgender and gender non-conforming adults. Lisa hopes to share Reel in the Closet DVD with Library, containing lots of old photos and old movies with LGBTQ folks.
- d. Police Department – New clinician started with APD. Been having office hours at library and public housing sites. Also partners with HHS to do outreach to homeless. Clinician who did that has retired. Hiring part-time recovery coach for substance abuse to help get them to healthcare and meetings. Finalizing the candidate for 25 hours/week. Serve anyone in town needing the support. APD often connects if someone overdoses or via homeless outreach but will try to do more to promote to the general public. Seeing at least 1 overdose a week. Broad demographic and age span, occurring all over town. Police and fire carry Narcan.
  - i. Short recap on Matthew Shepherd Foundation training. Trying to do a lot of community engagement. Study committee for civilian review – met in Dec to review recommendations to Town Meeting. Hoping to start up Chief’s advisory commission again in Jan and study committee may come together with advisory.
- e. Select Board – They are in article season, due on Jan 27<sup>th</sup>, so may want to allow adequate time if you want Town Counsel to review. Lisa asked question on employee policies and benefits. Len mentioned paternity leave a possible topic to explore, as he thought the town only offered maternity leave at the moment. Lisa suggested the town offer parental leave, which is less gendered language. Len offered to speak with Adam C. if we had questions. Len will let us know if Town Day may happen again in Fall 2022.

## 6. Domestic Partnerships revisions - Amos Meeks, TMM Precinct

- a. Amos worked with Guillermo on article that passed and is currently under review by AG. Deadline has been extended to December 27<sup>th</sup>
- b. Passed bylaw was written for partnership of two or more but didn’t change much else in the bylaw. Been in contact with PLAC, who worked with Cambridge and Somerville. Hoping to get line-by-line inputs, but they do know what they submitted for Somerville. Hope to have it by Jan 27 to include in warrant article. Depending, he hopes to possibly have two versions. Would like our thoughts on how to submit the article. Shared link to Somerville changes [:https://library.municode.com/ma/somerville/ordinances/code\\_of\\_ordinances?no\\_deld=1116769](https://library.municode.com/ma/somerville/ordinances/code_of_ordinances?no_deld=1116769). Recognizing relationships from other towns.
- c. Changing how the term Spouse is used - removing restriction of someone not being married and residing together.

- i. Arlington is first Town (not city or village, etc.) LK inquired if there was any backlash and Amos says there's been overall very positive support for the article that passed.
- ii. City ordinances don't get AG review, but Towns do, so AG reviews to help avoid lawsuits. Questions on the legal workings of AG review.
- iii. Question of impact to parental leave and how domestic partnership. RC would need to submit as a better way of getting support. Select Board hears it on merits, but Town Meeting ultimately discusses. Amos' main concern is about requiring people to live together, as there are people in non-traditional families, not living together, who may still need those benefits and rights. Also raised concerns with requirement that everyone lives in Arlington, which may not apply in non-traditional case. Lisa asked about any data on how many people in Arlington would fall under this. No data at this time.

#### 7. Strategic Planning Session - Proposed January 2022

Lisa proposed focusing on priorities for next 6 months and do more in-depth planning when the Commissioner slots are filled. ID skillsets we'd like new commissioners to have. Could spend 1.5 hours, i.e. 7:00-8:30 and verify if Helene is able to join. Len recommended blocking out the full year and noting important dates we need to plan around.

#### 8. Working Group Updates and Membership

- a. Community Engagement Upcoming Events. Ask Drake & Hina of AHRC about MLK day and how we can help publicize any event. Len would like to make it clear to Black community that there are LGBTQIA+ people within their community. Consider community panel, multi-generational event. Len brought up outreach to the Arlington resident who was on the TV show Survivor see if they'd be open to having a fireside chat. Banners on polls in East Arlington to expand. Kari suggested partnering with Disability community – April Autism awareness month. There's a large number of people who are on the autism spectrum who are also LGBTQ.. Explore doing an event with them.
- b. Communications – newsletter? Kari suggested more focus on Instagram. Arlington Advocate article on health/sex ed – Lisa read article from local student advocating for better curriculum. Was in print edition in the last couple weeks. Need to track down and then share on our social media.
- c. Public Education – MG provided an update. Requested to have GSA and Ottoson QSA reps attend January meeting. A lot going on with Leadership Taskforce. 4 near-term goals for year. Speaker series. Marketed with RC, AHRC, and possibly Robbins Library. Starting with student experience and creating safe environment and areas needing some attention. Update to health and wellness curriculum at 4<sup>th</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup> grade level. Molly asked about gender in the curriculum. Julie from Lexington did recent updates to their curriculum and Molly is trying to get her involved in the group. This is going to be a big change for people.
  - i. Bathrooms in the new high school – Urinals in the men's bathrooms. Supposed to be 2 gender-inclusive bathrooms, but they are located opposite Mens/Womens bathrooms and many feel it reinforces not "belonging" in those traditional categories. Rod & Molly, Dr. Janger met with Dr. Homan and she committed to looking at what changes could be made. Some custodial preferences may have also influenced. Single occupancy bathrooms also create concerns around potential for illicit activities.

- ii. Pierce had first in-person GSA meeting in person with over 100 attendees. We will include this in newsletter. Panorama survey went out, including gender identity. Would like to consider RC awards for teachers and staff who are going above and beyond.
  - d. Town Systems & Policies – Town received score of 100 on HRC/MEI. Working group plans to reconvene to evaluate the gaps and steps to receive a full score of 100 without bonus points.
- 9. Public Engagement and Open Commentary
  - a. No comments
- 10. Close and Next Meeting: Thursday January 20, 2022
  - a. 7:00-7:30pm Business meeting, 7:30-8:30pm Strategic Planning, schedule to be confirmed.

Anyone needing accessibility information or other assistance in order to attend this meeting should contact Jillian Harvey, [jharvey@town.arlington.ma.us](mailto:jharvey@town.arlington.ma.us). This meeting is open to all interested individuals.