



LGBTQIA+ Rainbow Commission Minutes

Date: Thursday April 20, 2023

Time: 6:30 pm

Location: Conducted by Hybrid Participation -Arlington Community Center HHS Conference Room and via Zoom

This will be a hybrid meeting. Individuals may choose one of the following in-person or virtual options:

1. Attend in person in the 2nd Floor HHS Conference Room at the Community Center (Senior Center), 20 Academy Street/27 Maple Street. Registration not required for in-person attendance.
2. *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. 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>

Present: Susan Ryan-Vollmar, Helene Newberg, Andy Rubinson, Lisa Krinsky, Kym Goldsmith, Molly Blaauw-Gillis, Kari Sasportas

Absent: Paloma Cotton-Herman

Guests: Chief Julie Flaherty, APD; Teresa Marzilli, DEI; Len Diggins, Select Board; Julie Starkey, Library; Kerrie Fallon, Disability Commission; Stacey – Arlington Parent

Minutes

Meeting called to order at: 6:33pm

1. Remote Participation Statement and Guidelines
 - a. Read

2. Land Acknowledgement
 - a. Read
3. Commission Membership: Laura Gitelson resigned from Rainbow Commission as she is now new member of School Commission
4. Review and approval of March 2023 Minutes
 - a. SRV motioned to approve; AR seconded the motion; all approved.
5. Overview of Rainbow Commission response to curriculum challenge
 - a. 300 Arlington residents showed support; 50 wrote testimony. Teachers, Parents, Town employees, residents all showed support. 150 people at First Parish to celebrate inclusive community in Arlington.
 - b. DEI department has built strong networks of community groups and Commission members worked with town systems and other community groups in response to curriculum challenge.
 - c. KG asks how Commission learned about the situation and wants to know if a protocol can be established with town when LGBTQIA+ rights are under attack that the DEI Commissions are immediately notified. SRV and MG say that Rainbow Commission learned of the situation via public comment at School Committee meeting and via work with APS Rainbow Task Force.
 - d. No one on Rainbow Commission has been told why the complaint was withdrawn.
 - e. What can we do if/when this happens again? Commission will create a response template based on what it learned from this work when/if something similar happens again.
 - f. Stacey – parent: Asked about how individuals who have never testified or advocated can prepare to participate/respond in the future. Len Diggins advised to share personal stories with elected officials.
6. APD response to anti-LGBTQIA+ graffiti near Blue Bikes on Linwood Avenue
 - a. Incidents began in March repeatedly. APD had plainclothes officers assigned to scene and eventually made an arrest. Mental health issues are a significant component of why incidents occurred and APD's mental health clinician is working with the resident, who is now on probation. APD remains vigilant.
 - b. Question about how much information is required to make complaint. Online form asks a lot of the person making the complaint. Other options include anonymous call to police with complaint; or use the anonymous tip line <https://www.arlingtonma.gov/departments/police/tip411-submit-an-anonymous-tip>. Suggestion that APD and Rainbow Commission (and other community groups) could promote the anonymous ways to file complaints.
7. Working Group Updates
 - a. Communications
 - i. April newsletter goes out 4/21/23.
 - ii. Kari has created spreadsheet/calendar for sharing info.
 - iii. Continuing to use social media.
 - b. Town Systems & Policies

- i. Met re: HRC MEI criteria. Although we score 100 (including bonus points) there are still 2 areas we can work on
 - ii. Reviewed Executive summary of Equity Audit to see where Rainbow Commission can support that work as well. In conversations with town DEI department to find ways to collaborate and support the audit recommendations
 - c. Community Engagement
 - i. Supporting May 13 school district-wide Pride event.
 - ii. Pride – when June date is confirmed then will send out calendar of events and link for volunteers to help
 - iii. The Mule – APD Jeep will have Pride decorations for June
 - iv. Rainbows Across Communities – Rainbow Commission to co-sponsor BYO picnic Saturday July 29 in Arlington. Location TBD.
 - d. Finance
 - i. Draft Form for all Commissioners, Liaisons, anyone requesting co-sponsorship etc. Commissioners will review form and vote next meeting.
 - ii. Budget allocations for Admin, Events, Co-sponsorships etc.
 - iii. 2 requests to fund School District-wide Pride and Pride Prom – co-chairs to review as new protocols for review are not yet in place
 - e. Education
 - i. Presented update on APS Rainbow Task Force work to School Committee.
 - ii. May 13 Pride event – district wide 11am-2pm at High School. Request for Commission to rent 2 bouncy houses (\$500) total. Food trucks, bake sales, DJ. Rainbow Groups across district.
- 8. Liaison Updates
 - a. Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (DEI)
 - i. Sunday April 30th 12 - 3 pm Resources and Connections Fair at Town Hall: current tally is up to 30+ organizations and departments that provide services and support in education; employment; food access; mental health; youth programming; housing; household goods; services for immigrants, folks with disabilities, folks with diverse identities; sustainability.
 - ii. Working internally on strategic planning for the Equity Audit recommendations, particularly around community engagement
 - iii. Language Access project is set to begin focus groups in the next two weeks, still actively seeking participants
 - iv. The Black Joy group has had consistent monthly convenings, getting ready for next month's workshop with Medford Poet Laureate, Terry Carter
 - b. Police Department (APD)
 - i. Continuing training re: Active Shooter and working with faith communities doing threat assessments
 - c. GSA/QSA-AHS/Ottoson/Gibbs

- i. AHS GSA Fundraiser was success; Gibbs QSA creating video for staff
- d. Library
 - i. Pride Prom: May 12. Have had Prom dress donations; still seeking more masculine clothing. Suggestion to ask Arlington lists for donations. Volunteer applications will close on Monday and the volunteer roster will be finalized by Friday. We are looking good for volunteers in every role except possibly after-event tear down. We've had a DJ switch up, but a new DJ has been found and we are on track for a good event. The teen-created Flyer is beautiful and has been spread to AHS and other libraries. Things are still finalizing, but it looks like we will have a last-minute addition of a second drag performer, who is a college freshman who attended previous Pride Proms as a teen!
 - ii. Queer Book Group Wednesday, May 31st 7:00-8:00 p.m. Robbins Library Conference room or Zoom
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82574195308>, Meeting ID: 825 7419 5308
 - iii. We will be discussing Love in the Big City by Sang Young Park. Park is a Korean author, and this is his English language debut. The publisher's description is: "Young is a cynical yet fun-loving Korean student who pinballs from home to class to the beds of recent Tinder matches. He and Jaehee, his female best friend and roommate, frequent nearby bars where they push away their anxieties about their love lives, families, and money with rounds of soju and ice-cold Marlboro Reds that they keep in their freezer. Yet over time, even Jaehee leaves Young to settle down, leaving him alone to care for his ailing mother and to find companionship in his relationships with a series of men, including one whose handsomeness is matched by his coldness, and another who might end up being the great love of his life." Copies of Love in the Big City are available at the Robbins Library circulation desk. The book is also available on Libby.
 - iv. Speculative Fiction Group Monday, June 12 from 7:00-8:00 p.m. Robbins Library Conference Room, with remote attendance option (no registration required) Zoom meeting ID: 859 3845 1417 Invite Link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85938451417>
 - v. The book group will be discussing Left Hand of Darkness by Ursula K. LeGuin. A lone human ambassador is sent to the icebound planet of Winter, a world without sexual prejudice, where the inhabitants' gender is fluid. His goal is to facilitate Winter's inclusion in a growing intergalactic civilization. But to do so he must bridge the gulf between his own views and those of the strange, intriguing culture he encounters...Embracing the aspects of psychology, society, and human emotion on an alien world, The Left Hand of Darkness stands as a landmark achievement in the annals of

intellectual science fiction. Copies of Left Hand of Darkness are available at the Robbins Library circulation desk. The audiobook is available on Hoopla. The audiobook and ebook are also available on Libby.

- e. Select Board
 - i. Town Meeting taking place
 - f. Council on Aging
 - i. Our upcoming schedule looks like this Arlington & Beyond LGBTQ+ Seniors and Friends:
 - ii. April 25 (Tues) in person only, 2:30 card craft with Intergenerational book club students, Arlington Community Center, Arts & Crafts room
 - iii. April 27 (Thursday) In person only, Reel Queer Movie, 6:30PM Robbins Library downstairs community room
 - iv. May 2 zoom only 2PM, contact Marci for more information
 - v. May 13 (Sat) 11:30 AM listening session re LGBTQ+ meal sites, in Bedford, contact Marci for more information
 - vi. May 16 zoom only 2pm
 - vii. May 30 in person 2PM Arlington Community Center, Arts & Crafts room
9. Public Engagement and Open Commentary
- a. Julia Starkey – suggesting a Community Conversation about national anti LGBTQIA+ legislation. Discussion included focus on information/update about activities, intersectional issues (autistic community and others), what you can do...perhaps a panel with journalists, academics, political advocacy
 - b. Kerrie Fallon – member of Disability Commission, wanting to learn more about Rainbow Commission. Offering Pride Prom support to Library.
 - c. Kym Goldsmith – Suggesting a clothing swap at Pride event? Julia has experience with swaps and interested in working on this with Kym.
10. Move to adjourn by SRV and seconded by AR – all approve at 7:34pm

Close and Next Meeting. Thursday, May 18, 2023. 6:30pm Hybrid

Commission members not able to attend please email dei@town.arlington.ma.us prior to the scheduled meeting.

Anyone needing accessibility information or other assistance in order to attend this meeting should contact dei@town.arlington.ma.us. This meeting is open to all interested individuals.