

September 2019 Minutes

Call to Order at 6:37pm

Attendees

- Desireé Luckey
- Reggie Greer
- Randy Downs
- Nii-Quartelai Quartey
- Monika Nemeth
- Consuella Lopez
- David Perez
- Peter Fortner
- Brad Lewis
- Nicole Armstead Williams

Agenda

Review of the minutes from May 2019

With edits, the motion passes at 6:44pm

Reports

Sheila Alexander-Reid, Director of LGBTQ Affairs

- Some communication has not been as good as it should be and we are committed to improving that moving forward
- We will be meeting with the Rainbow Caucus (elected ANC Commissioners)
 - The Rainbow Caucus is approaching 20 people and the Office will be meeting with them next Monday for a discussion
- Increase in hate crimes in DC over the past few years, especially this year
 - *Moment of silence for transgender women who have been murdered*
 - Hate Crimes: launching a media campaign centering respect for the lives of LGBTQ people in DC
 - Working with MPD and a representative from MPD is here to discuss issues
 - Continue to meet monthly with various government agencies to discuss hate crimes best practices
- Sent out RFPs for grant applications for LGBT provider trainings so homeless LGBTQ youth are treated with respect
- Working with various departments on reporting (OHR) and diversion options in DC
- September 19th, 10:00am in Rayburn HOB: Congress will host the first hearing on HR 51
- Save the Date for Tuesday, October 15, 7-10pm: NMAAHC for a free LGBTQ event celebrating LGBTQ History Month and National Coming Out Day
- Reminder that 33rd Annual High Heel Race is coming up

Department Of Employment Services Report, Representative: Charles Smith, Workforce Development Specialist

- Project Empowerment: job readiness training, internships, mental health services, housing resources, etc.
- Partnering to brainstorm more programs for LGBTQ community and working with OHR to tackle more discrimination issues in hiring

Question for DOES

- Question: If the initiative is new, then how are they prepared to serve?
- Smith: LGBTQ customer base is not new; they have success stories from working with the community
- Quartey: What are some of the unique challenges or barriers to employment for LGBTQ residents in the District? What research informs outreach?
- Smith: Breaking barriers training in the job readiness program; after completing the program, most of the time he doesn't see many barriers
- Q: Does DOES collect demographic information on the individuals served?
- Smith: Yes, they do, but not LGBTQ specific information
- Q: How many LGBTQ folks served?
- Smith: Not sure on specifics, in every cohort, there are LGBTQ individuals served
- Greer: Over the summer, there has been an idea floating around about putting together all demographic information that the District has about the LGBTQ population to do a State of the LGBTQ Community in the District
- Nemeth: Area of particular concern is trans employment, especially trans people of color, who often need a more intensive program. How is DOES prepared to handle that?
- What is the Department doing for the trans community?
- Alexander-Reid: RFP went out for a workforce development program (external) with wraparound programs for transgender women specifically. Hoping to roll out in the next fiscal year. The ONES office has a program for young offenders; many of the trans sex workers are returning citizens, so they may be eligible for this.
- Smith: Job Readiness training program is very intensive, so this should be helpful for transgender individuals who need the more intensive assistance. The internship phase is six months, then there is an additional job search phase if they are unable to find employment after the internships.
- Nemeth: Glad to hear that there are intensive programs more similar to the assistance available for returning citizens
- Lopez: Project Empowerment does not work for the transgender women who are going through the program because of the private sector actors who are not hiring them. It is not sustainable if the transgender women are able to get hired.
- Alexander-Reid: There was a focus group where this issue was brought up, so they are assisting with the program to address that issue moving forward.
- Smith: Not just cultural competence, but cultural humility. There aren't any guarantees with the program.

- Director Jones: There have been success stories out of the program; the Office of Human Rights is in partnership with them to address discrimination when it arises. They have hired a full-time mental health specialist in DOES. There is not a specific program for LGBTQ seniors, but they do partner with AARP for individuals who are 50+. They do not ask specifically if someone is an LGBTQ individual

Public Comments on DOES

- Holly Goldman: A lot of people need peer-mentorship and money to support the program; it's been ten years and there hasn't been enough success
- Are there programs set aside for older LGBTQ individuals?
- Nick Harrison: It does not seem like DOES is coming with specific information focused on the LGBTQ community; it seems like there is a one size fits all approach that does not take LGBTQ individuals into consideration
- Greer: There is importance to have data collection and analysis on LGBTQ
- Quartey: It would be great to invite DOES to come back and share

Metropolitan Police Department, Representative: Brett Parson

- Current Units: Asian, Latino, Deaf/Hard-of-Hearing/LGBTQ
 - Special Outreach: Jewish, African, Muslim communities
 - LGBT Unit has four full-time officers assigned
 - There is a full-time victim advocate and community outreach specialist
 - Goals: Outreach, training and education, law enforcement
- Statistics
 - Several reports that are concerning about bias-related crimes because there are increases
 - LGBTQ individuals are the number one group reporting crimes
 - Causation is always the question and that is what we always struggle with
 - For a bias-related crime, you have to prove forethought
 - MPD works closely with AG, Office of LGBTQ Affairs
 - Released their first set of data for the NEAR Act because it showed a discrepancy in the number of stops being made versus population for the LGBTQ community
 - They are turning to academics to help come up with an explanation

MPD Questions

- Lopez: The reason that the unit was made was so that there could be members of the LGBTQ community in the unit. If an LGBTQ org needs an officer to come make an arrest, how is it being addressed if there is not an LGBTQ officer?
- Parson: When a call comes into 911 it has to be dispatched by their protocols in a certain amount of time. The priority is to get an officer to that situation to address the issue. Many times, that is not going to be a member of the LGBTQ unit. They continue to press for officers who are not part of special liaison units to call their unit when it is a situation that would be ideal. Has not heard of that request being denied.

- Lopez: There are not trans women of color in MPD and that does not go along with the spirit of the unit and its purpose
- Parson: They are doing their best to recruit individuals from all the communities that they serve; if we can get qualified candidates to apply, then they will be hired.

Public Comment

- DC Dyke March had quite a police presence and there was no permit
- Parson: There were an estimated 25-30 officers there
- Dee Curry: There is not preemptive support from law enforcement; how to work with the community in advance before something terrible happens. What sort of dialogue is happening?
- Parson: There needs to be a better job with dialogue that is sustained. There have been years and years of work by the special liaison units/officers to build trust.
- Curry: Periodic gatherings where community leaders meet with police departments. Commercial sex work is currently illegal in the District but there is targeting of transgender women and entrapment. Entrapment of any individual is wrong, particularly transgender individuals. There are many transgender folks who don't have a voice and don't understand the rules about entrapment.
- Parson: There are PSA meetings in every ward; information is available on the MPD website. Entrapment is an illegal practice and should stop.

Department of Health, Representatives: Kent Pettigrew, Tiara Guinea

- How do we address violence through the lens of public health?
- Pilot program for defense and personal safety trainings for transgender individuals
- Focus on de-escalation, physical defense moves, and violence prevention methods
- There will also be opportunities to address HIV, PrEP, ARTs through this training
- Tiara: Shared personal story about the impact of violence on her abilities to access needed services
- This is not a comprehensive approach but it is a pronged-approach to go with other programs that they have

Comments

- Nicole: There are moments where fighting might cost you your life, so we need to be sensitive around the natural responses that people have in moments of fear. We need to make sure that it does not evoke shame in participants
- Pettigrew: There will be mental health providers as part of it
- Nemeth: Does the pilot program have a name yet
- Pettigrew: Prepping for Life is the name of the program
- Heidi Ellis: Be cognizant of this; violence begets violence so be intentional about this program.
- Guinea: Part of the program is de-escalation and prevention
- Curry: Concern is that hurt people hurt people. We need to prepare a transgender survival kit to preempt situations where there might be a gun pulled on a person. We talk about what we need to do, but we don't have the at-risk individuals as a

part of the architecture of the programs; speaker has suggested a wellness initiative that addresses the root of the problems through mind, body, and spirit.

Department of Aging, Representative: Laura Newland

- Programs for FY2020
 - There was a competitive process a few months ago and they have awarded to different organizations
 - Senior Pride Celebration
 - DC Center for coffee and lunches
 - Capitol Hill Village
 - Department has received criticism for not being as responsive to the needs of LGBTQ seniors
 - Developed an advisory committee of interested people to support LGBTQ seniors
- Make sure that all the locations that they fund throughout the city are safe and welcoming throughout the city
- Developing a “secret shopper” program to test the customer service to test how people are treated throughout the city

Department of Human Services, Representative Larry Henderhend

- Provide the continuum of care for people experiencing homelessness, administer the public benefit programs, growing their presence in diversion for youth services
- LGBTQ Youth
- Recently instituted a youth census for those under the age of 24 experiencing homelessness
 - Important to have enough interventions for youth
 - They will have 117 youth shelter beds (38%)
 - Almost all services through providers, who are some of the most progressive in the country
 - Work to support adults experiencing homelessness
 - There are enough beds for everyone who is experiencing a housing emergency
 - A series of listening sessions in 2017 were hosted to get a better sense of the specific issues
- Working on a series of initiatives
 - Training: security and staff needed
 - Changed LGBTQ cultural competency requirements
 - Added DV for LGBTQ cultural competency
 - Amended hypothermia to explicitly affirm LGBTQ individuals coming in on the coldest nights
 - Unaccompanied adults, especially for men.
 - People want to be in smaller settings, self-select into areas that are more desirable for them (ie. waking up early)

- Open to ideas about responses about how to address situations
- Plugging into broader Administration's efforts to provide services to LGBTQ residents
- FY2020-21 budget for LGBTQ community, legislative priorities with Council, how to bridge information gaps to make sure that information is shared

Office of Human Rights, Representative: Alta Ray

- There is a "no street harassment" DC campaign going on right now
 - You can learn more about the campaign, visit the OHR website and search "no street harassment"
- Effective October 1: Status as a victim or family member of a victim of domestic violence, sexual offense, or startstalking,
 - Releasing a fact sheet for employees and employers
- OHR has Human Rights Liaison (HRL) trainings: day long trainings
 - Next one is Wednesday, September 18th, 9:30am-4:30pm
 - Reach out to Ajan Brown ajan.brown@dc.gov
- At any given time, they have 600+ cases on their docket; revising to make the investigation process more streamlined
 - When there is a new law, they get new positions, but otherwise, they do not necessarily get new position
- If there are suggestions to make OHR process more efficient, email alta.ray@dc.gov

New Business

- Greer: Consider having an Advisory Committee Retreat
- As we're looking for new people to join the committee this is important
- Search for a date for a retreat when we have a full committee
- Advisory Committee's Legislative Proposal
 - Funding: Priorities for the LGBTQ community and how they are funded
 - Gay and Trans Panic Defense Bill
 - Care for LGBTQ Seniors Bill

Randy Downs (ANC Commissioner and member of the Rainbow Caucus)

Care for LGBTQ Seniors Bill

Move: Randy Downs

Second: Nii-Quartelai Quartey

- Quartey: Works with national AARP office; familiar with efforts to pass bills like this in other parts of the country. There is an enormous need for this sort of legislation in DC.
- Slattery: Add CM Bonds to the salutation

Comment

- Alexander-Reid: What does the amendment do?

- Downs: The bill will [type the “whereas” above “therefore”]

Motion passes at 8:17pm

Secure a Fair and Equitable Trial Act of 2017

- Downs: Makes it illegal for someone to use someone’s status as an LGBTQ individual to claim defense for their crime
- Bill was introduced in 2017, but was not made into law at that time; up for consideration again now
- Slattery: Should the salutation go to the introducers of the original bill?
- Downs: We can CC the rest of the Council
- Nemeth: Rainbow Caucus met with CM Allen and he was very open to moving the legislation forward, so he now that this is coming
- Public Comment:
- Curry: What was the opposition to the bill? What are the chances of the bill passing this time?
- Nemeth: It just died in committee, there was no opposition to the bill
- Curry: We should make this a priority and not give them an excuse that they are busy

Motion: Down

Second: Nemeth

Motion passes at 8:24pm

LGBTQ Grant Programs Resolution

- Downs: 15 member letter from various LGBTQ organizations requesting more money to support the LGBTQ community. \$3M for the FY2020 budget, which was denied.
- Motion: Downs
- Second: Nemeth
- Nemeth: Original signator of the letter as President of Gertrude Stein Democrats
- Greer: We need to think about how to engage the budget process moving forward. We can get better at plugging into this conversation earlier
- Larry, DHS: What is the grant for and why based in the Office of LGBTQ Affairs
- David Mariner: We had specific priorities (health, housing, seniors, etc.) and it was supposed to be modeled after the grants given to other affinity group departments. Models from HIV/AIDS organizations from the 70s/80s, but those have not been incorporated into grant models moving forward.
- Quartey: “whereas” competitive grant paragraph. There are community-based orgs with the capacity to meet these needs. Friendly amendment to add in specific call for data collection in this allocation. This may require consultative and staff support.
- Friendly amendment accepted by Downs
- Original letter was written to Chairman Mendelson

- Slattery: Amend to ask the Council to reconsider and for the Council/Mayor to use supplemental appropriation or reprogramming
- We should add the original letter that was written into the minutes

Motion passed at 8:38pm

Public Comment

Casa Ruby

- It is very clear that our city is falling behind when it comes to elevating the lives of LGBTQ people, like hate crimes
- The WASHINGTON Post is planning to address this over the course of the next year
- CASA Ruby is overwhelmed
- There are 72 employees who show up to address the needs of the most vulnerable in Washington, D.C., including immigrants and transgender individuals
- Four transgender women have lost their lives from preventable causes
- Since October 1, 2018, 41,250 individuals visited their 24-hour drop-in center, which receives no money from the District government
- CASA Ruby has received money for housing services; 13,811 individuals have used shelter beds since October 1, 2018
- Three years in a row, there has been community support to keep the housing services open
- 34,000 meals have been served
- Department of Behavioral Health provides funding
- After Zoe's death, many of the youth experienced secondary trauma and there is no one helping with mental services.
- 94 people have received comprehensive mental health services since Zoe's death.
- Mayor took the opinion that individual agencies rather than the Office of LGBTQ Affairs should be funding services for the LGBTQ community. The Council must do better; the expectation that the
- Ask DHS to fully fund the drop-in services with a contract for those services
- Wants the government agencies to follow the mandate of the Mayor

Heidi Ellis, consultant-

- Intersectionality of world with LGBTQ communities
- Working on an initiative to host a LGBTQ Youth Summit in Spring 2020
- Did something similar at the White House during the Obama Administration
- In conjunction with youth summit, have a resource fair
- Pulling in national resources

David Mariner, outgoing Director of the DC Center

- Every meeting should have the urgency and the focus of every person in this room, just like this month
- Transparency on housing vouchers

Tyrone, GLA Member

- The community will come back together for the next budget session
- Submitted a programming request to Robert White looking for the Mayor to reprogram 100k to OHR (50 for follow up on trans discrimination report, 50k to purchase ad buys for campaign run by OHR)

Benjamin Brooks, Assistant Director of Policy at Whitman Walker

- Support of decrim bill
- Decriminalize consensual commercial sexual exchange
- Found that there is no benefit of criminalization for communities

Molly Hatcher

- Employment for transgender community
- Trans WOC are not going to be focused on a job if they do not have housing
- There are positive outcomes that come from housing

AJ Campbell, Nice Jewish Girls

- This has been a tough summer for the Jewish community
- DC Dyke March was an example of anti-Semitism
- Organizers tried to exclude them, there was outreach to various offices and organizations but did not receive any support and wants to know why
- Alexander-Reid: Suggested that all sides come together for a discussion

Dr. Imani, Mary's House for LGBTQ Adults

- Asked for 20 vouchers for LGBTQ individuals for elders
- They don't know where the vouchers are and if they can go to seniors
- May need to be in contact with Larry at DHS
- Talk about a couple that was told that they needed to be truly homeless and go to a shelter before they could go onto a housing list

Motion to adjourn meeting: Downs

Second: Armstead Williams

Meeting adjourned at 9:23pm

