



Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender Advisory Committee Minutes of the January 19, 2010 Meeting

Committee Members Present: Commissioner Cecilia Chung, Alex Baty, Bart Broome, Corrin Buchanan, Samer Danfoura, Mark Dunlop, Allison Laureano, Dominique Leslie, Amos Lim, Joseph Peralata, Poonam, Martin Rawlings-Fein, Lindasusan Ulrich, and Vaughn Villaverde.

Committee Members Absent: Commission August Longo (excused), Jane Aceituno (excused), Bill Doggett (excused), Justin Jones (excused), Mark Murphy (excused), Donna Sachet, and Brad Vanderbilt (excused).

Staff Present: Nadia Babella, Larry Brinkin, Theresa Sparks, and Domenic Viterbo.

Guests Present: Alexander T. Henderson, Seth Kilbourn, Leigh McLellan, and Karen Rosen.

1. **Call to Order and Roll Call:**

Commissioner Chung called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. Ms. Babella called the roll.

Executive Director Theresa Sparks greeted the Committee and stated that she was excited to be here and to work to reenergize the agency.

2. **Public Comment For Items Not On The Agenda:**

None

3. **Approval of November 17, 2009 Minutes (action item):**

Martin Rawlings-Fein moved to approve the November 17, 2009 draft minutes as written. Dominique Leslie seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

4. **Panel Presentation: Issues Affecting LGBT Seniors (Discussion Item):**

SETH KILBOURN, Executive Director of Openhouse presented to the Advisory Committee. Openhouse has developed an extensive and comprehensive cultural competency training program to reach out to LGBT seniors. LGBT seniors are still largely invisible and underserved. Many service providers including social services, senior housing programs, health service providers and nursing homes are unaware of LGBT related aging issues. This program is designed to better educate and train senior service providers.



Since 2004 Openhouse has trained 1600 participants from 170 agencies. They have designed a curriculum that is available to assist agencies that already have internal trainers and for trainers across California. The curriculum covers LGBT cultural training topics including: what does it mean to be gay, what does it mean to be transgender, coming out, history of what it was like to be LGBT person in the 1940's and 50's, and expectations from the baby boom generation. The training also taps into the experiences of straight seniors and how growing up in a time of misunderstanding and prejudice shaped their views on gender and sexual identity. This often results with many LGBT seniors being reluctant to join their neighborhood senior center. Multiple health studies ranging from the 1960's through the 1990's confirm a direct link between isolation and individual health outcomes. There have been plenty studies, including one that has been done by Openhouse, that confirms very clearly that the LGBT senior population are disproportionately isolated. They tend to have a smaller support network, less contact with family members and are less likely to access services. The curriculum also includes a speaker's panel facilitated by LGBT seniors. Other topics include legal issues that social service providers have to recognize and activities that service providers can use to be more inclusive of LGBT seniors. Openhouse has been working with community senior organizations for 3 years. Feedback from the trainings has been very positive.

KAREN ROSEN from the Department on Aging and Adult Services and LGBT Senior Collaborative presented to the Advisory committee. The Department on Aging and Adult Services receives federal, state, and local general fund money to provide case management services to seniors in the community and senior centers. Services range from bingo to discussion groups. They have 50 organizations that receive grants from the Department of Aging and 55 nutrition sites. They have provided trainings for community agencies to assist them access isolated seniors. Ms. Rosen disseminated flyers. They have developed four community partnerships LGBT, API, African American and Latino communities to improve long care delivery systems. They provide a small grant to Openhouse and have worked with them on the concept of having agencies be more LGBT sensitive. They also fund the senior program at new leaf. They have worked on events with other agencies that address LGBT and persons with disabilities and how agencies can better meet their needs. Emerging issues that the agency is focusing on is providing trainings for HIV service providers. An estimated 40% of persons living with HIV in San Francisco are over 50.

LARRY BRINKIN with the Human Rights Commission presented to the Advisory Committee. Mr. Brinkin stated that ageism within the LGBT community is a huge issue – especially a problem with older gay men, who can be both victims and perpetrators of isolation. We need an increase of awareness in our institutions, community organizations, businesses, and bars on how welcoming we are as a community to our elders. The population of baby boomers is reaching retirement age. This will result in a huge population that we have to take it seriously. He would like to see some of the media having columns on LGBT senior issues.

SETH KILBOURN spoke about housing for LGBT seniors. Openhouse was founded to build an affordable/mixed rate income senior housing marketed to the LGBT community. One site being looked at is at 55 Laguna where 400 market rate units will be built, 88 of the units have been allotted to seniors. The building will include not just housing, but will have services available not only to the residents, but also to the community. The project has been stalled due to the economy and budget issues. In the meantime Openhouse will be working on having somebody on staff to direct LGBT seniors to housing opportunities and appropriate services.

The presenters entertained questions from the Committee.

5. Presentation by the Speakers Bureau Collective (formerly of CUAV) (Discussion Item):

Leigh McLellan described the work of the Speakers Bureau. They train speakers to go to public schools to talk about LGBT issues. They present to students from 4th or 5th grade all the way to high school. The

program was no longer funded by CUAU, but they have managed to keep it alive. They picked up an unexpected donation and are now working on get some structure without an office. They have hired a half person to do some of the work. Teacher value their program. They were upset when the program they will end because this is an effective way to reach students with real stories. They address questions regarding harassment experienced by LGBT students. Larry Brinkin said that he found the students to be very respectful when he spoke. They are currently looking for funding and fiscal sponsors. Please contact Leigh McLellan at Leighm4896@aol.com with questions or ideas.

Ms. McLellan entertained questions from the Committee.

6. Follow-Up On New Member Recruitment Efforts (Discussion Item):

The recruitment committee reported on its recruitment efforts and recruitment timeline.

7. Work Group Reports:

Youth: Nadia Babella reported that the group is working with SFUSD to help strengthen the anti-harassment programs. They are rewriting the resolution which is scheduled to go before the curriculum committee and the budget committee before going before the full board.

Outreach: Samer Danfoura reported that the group has been working on recruitment primarily targeting underrepresented groups.

Bisexuals Invisibility: Lindasusan Ulrich reported that the group has finished a draft of all sections except the survey. The draft is being reviewed. All of the organizations have gotten the survey and the group anticipates feedback.

Alternative Families: Bart Broome reported that in December there was a discussion with the legislative consultant for the City Judiciary Committee. The group went through all the legislative proposals. There were reasons to proceed or not on every proposal. It was decided that without a sponsoring organization the failure rate would be high because there's nobody there to fight for it. The direction that came from the City Judiciary Committee is that it would be useful to document the work already done, and expand on it

8. Commissioners Report:

Commissioner Chung reported that we are experiencing some mid year budget cuts again, but hopefully will not be impacting the HRC. It might have an impact on departments that work with HRC like DPW, PUC, MTA. Information will be forwarded as we receive it. Director Sparks is working hard with commission staff on this. Hopefully we will have something to report back. We now have a first draft of a blueprint on restructuring some of our own services or align with other departments to consolidate work and combine resources. Commission Chung was re-elected as Chair of the Commission and Commissioner Sweet also re-elected as Vice Chair

The Commission will honor Larry Brinkin for his 22 years of employment at the next Commission meeting.

9. Staff Report:

Nadia Babella reported that this meeting is Larry Brinkin's last LGBT Advisory Committee meeting as an HRC staff because he will be retiring. Mr. Brinkin has worked at the Human Rights Commission for 22 years and served on the Committee for 27 years! His contributions to LGBT issues and all human rights

issues are immense. He received numerous honors for this work. His retirement party is scheduled for Monday, February 1 at 5:30 PM in the South Light Courthouse at City Hall.

Larry Brinkin addressed the Committee and stated that in 1983 he applied to be on the Committee and was selected and served on it for five years. In 1988 he applied for a staff position at HRC and was hired. Over the years he was told by the various directors that he can stop staffing the Committee, but declined. Of all the things he does at the HRC, his favorite thing has always been the Committee. He loves the work of the Committee. So much of what goes on in the LGBT world in terms of advancing our rights comes from this Committee. Because of the work of people like the current members and their predecessors in identifying what are the emerging issues, we now have rights which take for granted, but they were not always with us, such as domestic partnership, equal benefits, gender identity protections, intersex rights, aging in the community, youth issues, economic issues, to name a few. Our work has led to legislation which affected San Francisco and other jurisdiction. In closing, Mr. Brinkin thanked everyone and asked them to come to the party.

10. Old/New Business:

Lindasusan Ulrich asked the Committee to consider whether the HRC can play a role in the discussion on whether to repeal Prop 8 in 2010 or 2012 as a future agenda item.

11. Announcements:

Announcements were made.

12. Adjournment:

The meeting was adjourned at 7:35 p.m.