Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender Advisory Committee
Minutes of the August 21, 2012 Meeting

Committee Members Present: Commissioner Pappas, Amos Lim, Angie Perone, Bart Broome, Bonnie Milluso, Corrin Buchanan, Cynthia Yeung, Fayaz Rajani, Mark Snyder, Matthew Valdez, Mike Van Nguyen, Patrick Pablo, Paul Klees, Ray Rudolph, Tracy Garza, and Vaughn Villaverde.

Committee Members Absent: Commissioner Mavis, Amy Whelan, Bianca Polovina, Bill Ambrunn, Diane Alcala, Marcelle Million, Mark Murphy, Neo Veavea, and Sterling Johnson.

Staff Present: Nadia Babella

1. Call to order and roll call

Commissioner Pappas called the meeting to order. Nadia Babella called the roll. There was quorum.

2. Public Comment for Items not on the Agenda

None

3. Approval of July 17, 2012 Minutes (Action Item)

Motion was made to adopt the minutes with corrections. Motion was seconded and approved.

4. 7 by 7 Presentation by Tracy Garza on Autism in the LGBT Community

Tracy Garza gave a presentation on autism and neurodiversity in the LGBT community. People with disabilities face discrimination in employment and in society. When you add homophobia and transphobia, the discrimination is multiplied and unemployment rates are very high. Because of lack of awareness about neurodiversity, many adults are undiagnosed. Also there are no programs that look at the intersection of LGBT and autism and the particular needs and unique challenges faced by people who are both autistic and members of the LGBT community.

In addition to high unemployment rates, LGBT people with neurodiversity face social isolation, because social relations may be difficult. This is especially true because the disability is invisible and a person may be highly functioning. People how are neurotypical often lack awareness of neurodiversity and the difficulties faced by people on the autism spectrum. They may mistake the disability for rudeness or childishness. The LGBT community can develop support systems for its neurodiverse members in the following ways: 1) create mentor relationships between neurotypical and neurodiverse members 2)
create peer support group for LGBT members on the autism spectrum 3) provide education to the LGBT community on neurodiversity 4) Develop programs that specifically address the needs of LGBT community members who are on the autism spectrum.

Tracy distributed the article below on higher levels of autism in the transgender community. http://healthland.time.com/2011/05/18/study-why-some-transgendered-people-have-higher-levels-of-autistic-traits/

The presentation was followed by questions from committee members.

**Question:** What specific services are lacking?

**Answer:** More job placement services are needed. Neurodiverse people have excellent skills but may have difficulty conveying them in a job interview. A program can help applicants and provide information to employers on how to provide accommodations. There is not much understanding currently in how to assist people in the autistic spectrum. Ideally society would be more accepting of neurodiversity.

In addition, programs can provide social support to alleviate the isolation.

**Question:** The article focused on transmen, do you have data on neudiversity in the other letters in the LGBT community?

**Answer:** There’s not much data. Tracie spoke to Dan Karasic at UCSF about this. Tracy stated that she has observed an inverse correlation in lack of privilege and ability to cope. It was easier for her to cope with neudiversity before she transitioned because the discrimination is not as multilayered.

**Question:** Is there a relationship between neurodiversity and people with hypersensitivity to external stimuli? Also, please say more about nueroprivilege and neurodiversity.

**Answer:** No two autistic people are alike. Some people on the autism spectrum may also have hypersensitivity, but you can’t generalize. Neurodiversity means, for example, not being too judgmental and condescending if people are not typical or if they don’t read nonverbal clues.

**Question:** Are there support groups for LGBTQ folks who self identify as neurodiverse?

**Answer:** Tracy met people on twitter, but there are no groups here. Tracy is considering starting a chapter in SF to provide support services and to address LGBT autistic issues. If someone can take the initiative a lot can be accomplished. Hopefully the LGBT Advisory Committee can start the process.

5. **Presentation on The Trevor Project - Kip Williams**

The Trevor Project is a nationwide organization addressing suicide in LGBTQ youth. http://www.thetrevorproject.org/ Their main focus is a lifeline that youth ages 13 -24 can call to talk to someone. Trevor Project celebrated its 14th birthday. It started with an Oscar winning film called “Trevor.” The movie was supposedly a “comedy” about a young man who tries to kill himself. He’s not successful and it has a happy ending. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Trevor_(film) HBO asked the film makers if there’s a phone for LGBT youth to contact, so they can advertise it after the movie. There
wasn’t one at the time, so they decided to start one. The first night the hotline went live, they logged 1500 calls. They have one call center in New York and one in Los Angeles. The call centers depend on volunteers. Up until recently there was no night coverage. The hotline number would roll over to a general suicide hotline number, which didn’t always have staff with LGBT cultural competency. The San Francisco office was then opened to cover the hours between 11 pm until 11 am, so the line is now 24 hours. Lifelines are normally volunteer run, but it’s hard to cover overnight hours, so they’ve hired people for those shifts.

In addition to the lifeline, the Trevor Project has a chat program and a project called “Ask Trevor” where youth write in and someone responds to them. The Trevor Project also get calls from outside the 13-24 age range and is used by the LGBT community for broader mental health services. It’s also used by some as a help in coming out. They get calls from older LGBT folks who had tried to kill themselves when they were young and have not told anyone about it. They are hoping to expand the services to offer them in Spanish. They have a legislative arm in DC that works on public policy. Finally, they have the ambassador committee which is primarily a fundraising entity for the Trevor Project. 
http://www.thetrevorproject.org/ambassadors

Kip is doing his practicum with the Queer Life Space, a new San Francisco therapy nonprofit counseling agency that seeks to bring sustainable mental health and substance abuse services to the LGBTQI community.  http://queerlifespace.org/  It’s important for our community to have culturally competent safe, affordable, broad range mental health support services.

**Question:** Can you help people with hearing disabilities?

**Answer:** Trevor chat is accessible and also TTY services are used.

**Question:** Do you have data regarding where the calls come from?

**Answer:** Yes, but it’s strictly confidential. The Trevor Project publishes some data on call volume and trends they see. They are exploring how to use the data to understand the bigger picture and how to train counselors and providers on issues which come up.

**Question:** Is there targeted outreach to youth of color, and what is the Trevor Project doing to ensure that youth of color feel that this organization can understand their culture?

**Answer:** Right now there is no targeted outreach strategy. At the local level in New York and Los Angeles volunteers go back to their own communities. They also receive calls from people internationally and from people with limited English proficiency. Part of the training volunteers receive highlights that you can say I don’t know your cultural background but help educate me.

**Question:** How can the City assist the Trevor Project?

**Answer:** The City can assist through the ambassadors program.

http://www.thetrevorproject.org/ambassadors
**Question:** What do you gleam from the calls as far as policy changes or topics the community should be working on to decrease LGBTQ youth suicide rates?

**Answer:** Understanding and elevating the experience of transgender youth is very important. There is no support across the country for transgender youth.

**Question:** Does Trevor Project work with schools?

**Answer:** Trevor Project is not school based. GSA Network and GLSEN are school focused.

**Question:** Is there relationship between the Trevor Project and the “It Gets Better” videos?

**Answer:** The “It Gets Better” project was started by Dan Savage. They are not related, but the videos refer people to the Trevor Project.

6. **Report Back from the National Queer Asian Pacific Island Alliance Conference on Issues of HIV Prevention in the AAPI Communities**

   The item was moved to a later meeting.

7. **2013 LGBTAC Recruitment**

   Nadia went over the recruitment timeline. She will send the bylaws to clarify committee member terms and reinstatement. A key to success in recruiting new members is word of mouth and using social networks. It was recommended that we use Facebook to do outreach. The following committee members volunteered to be on the selection committee: Mike Nguyen, Tracy Garza, Paul Klees, Patrick Pablo, Bonnie Miluso, and Angie Perone.

8. **Workgroup Report Back**

    **Beyond Castro**

   The Bayview meeting originally scheduled for August was moved to October because the workgroup wanted to have more time to do outreach to District 10 senior and youth. In addition, key speakers were not available for the August meeting. The next workgroup meeting is Tuesday, August 28. We will meet at the YMCA in Bayview to have a focus group discussion on the needs of LGBT seniors in D10. One of the gaps is faith leaders who are LGBT friendly. Reverend Roland Stringfellow is doing a series of seminars to have clergy undergo LGBT sensitivity training so that their congregations are LGBT welcoming.

   **Housing Workgroup**

   The group is in the honing phase of the process. Group members have taken on different tasks. We hope to have speakers talk to us about experience of transgender people in shelters. In addition we’re looking at what is holding up the opening of the LGBT shelter. We know that it has to do with
permitting and financing, but we will contact Supervisor Campos’ office to get more information. The next work group meeting is Thursday, September 6 at 6 pm.

LGBT Youth

The workgroup met two weeks ago to plan the September panel to hear from LGBT youth on the experience of LGBT youth in the San Francisco Unified School District. The group is trying to get youth that will represent different letters. The group drafted 10 questions they will provide to youth panelists and have each panelist choose which questions they want to answer. Patrick will moderate the panel and introduce the work of the workgroup. The vision and goal of the panel is to record the responses and look at the resolution that was passed 2 years ago to see which of the recommendations have been implemented and which need more work. One recommendation that is being implemented is increasing the half time LGBT student support services position to a fulltime position. The group discussed the importance of preparing youth for the panel and to explain that this is a public meeting.

9. Member Report on Activities

Amos and Mike attended the National Queer Asian Pacific Alliance. Amos also attended a White House meeting for delegates. Several themes emerged from the conference including: the generational gap between those who lived through the HIV epidemic and today’s youth; school bullying of LGBT youth, particularly those who are transgender and/or who are Sikh or Muslim; needs of undocumented LGBT API’s. API’s have high rates of late testing. A 2011 report states that HIV sero-conversion is increasing but there’s no data as to why it’s happening. There is little to no funding to study this. Local agencies have the data but there’s no coordination to study the data. Another issue is how little time is allotted for counseling when people are tested. When people test late, they may have full blown AIDS and need more dedicated counseling time. Also, health providers receiving city funds should be trained to offer HIV testing when doing Hepatitis B testing and to provide culturally competent HIV friendly testers. API Wellness tests for both HIV and Hepatitis B.

Tracy attended a meeting in Sacramento regarding LGBT immigrant detainees. She wrote about it in a blog for TLC. http://www.transgenderlawcenter.org/archives/1725 One of the main issues is access to health care, whether HIV or hormone treatment.

Tracy went to the Compton cafeteria riot 40 year celebration. The riots took place in San Francisco and preceded Stonewall riots. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Compton's_Cafeteria_riot

Paul is recruiting for a UCSF advisory board regarding humane treatment for people enrolled in AIDS clinical trial. They need more diversity on the advisory board. San Francisco has led the way in these efforts. It’s so important to have your voice shape these protocols.

Immigration Equality is helping LGBT dreamers with deferred action applications.
10. **Commissioner Report**

Commissioner Pappas attended a July 18 gathering to talk about bullying. David Miree was there as well. He will keep us abreast of the project. Commissioner Pappas attended the LGBT seniors of color event at the Women’s Building. The event was very well attended and we benefited from community feedback.

Commissioner Pappas announced that reparative therapy resolution was passed. Chris Stoll from NCLR made a great presentation to the Commission. Commissioner Pappas is also collaborating on a movie project called “First Out.” They will be working on a movie about the first outing professional baseball player. Commissioner Pappas thanked Mark Snyder who will be giving him a tour of the Transgender Law Center.

11. **Staff Report**

The transition has been completed. Contract compliance duties have been moved to another city department and the Human Rights Commission now handles discrimination complaints and policy work. Commission staff is working on finalizing the War on Drug report. We will also be having a discussion on the use of condoms as evidence. The Commission is responding to Muni bus ads that used the word “savage” to describe Palestinians and Muslims. A former NCLR intern will be working with the Commission on implementing the LGBT asylum training.

12. **Announcements**

Cynthia Yeung announced that this is her last meeting. She will be leaving the City. She learned a great deal from the committee and heard different perspectives. She will be on a ship for 6 months and will be blogging from there.

NCLR will be having a forum on deferred action on August 29 at 5:30 at the Public library.

SFDA’s Office is hosting a video challenge asking youth to talk to youth regarding bullying.

El Rio’s September 9 Salsa Sunday is a fundraiser for the General Assistance Project.

Transgender Law Center will be celebrating its 10th anniversary. Visit their website for more information.

13. **Old New Business**

None

14. **Adjournment**

Meeting was adjourned at 7:40.