Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender Advisory Committee
Minutes of the May 18, 2010 Meeting

Committee Members Present: Commissioner Cecilia Chung, Jane Aceituno, Bart Broome, Samer Danfoura, Mark Dunlop, Elizabeth Labedz, Allison Laureano, Dominique Leslie, Joseph Peralta, Bianca Polovina, Fayaz Rajani, Ray Rudolph, Donna Sachet, Mark Snyder, Lindasusan Ulrich, Vaughn Villaverde, Amy Whelan.

Committee Members Absent: Alex Baty (excused), Corrin Buchanan (excused), Ruby Cymrot-Wu (excused), Amos Lim, Mark Murphy (excused), Poonam (excused), Martin Rawlings-Fein (excused).

Staff Present: Nadia Babella, Domenic Viterbo.

Guests Present:

1. Call to Order and Roll Call:

Allison Laureano called the meeting to order at 5:37 p.m. Nadia Babella called the roll.

2. Public Comment For Items Not On The Agenda:

No public comments were made.

3. Approval of the February 16, 2010 Minutes (Action Item):

Lindasusan Ulrich moved to approve the draft minutes. Dominique Leslie seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

4. Follow-up Discussion to the Annual Retreat and Adoption of the 2010-2011 Work Plan (Action Item):

Report on Retreat:

Nadia Babella reported on the three new work groups – Immigration and Asylum, Housing Rights, and Alternative Families/Senior LGBT Issues. All work groups met last week and work group chairs are responsible for reporting the work group’s Purpose, Outcome, and Process (POP) to staff who will then incorporate them into the year’s work plan.
Commissioner Chung stressed the importance of work group attendance. If there are less than 3 work group members present at 3 consecutive meetings, the work group will be dissolved.

Report from Work Groups:

LGBT ASYLUM:

Fayaz Rajani reported that the LGBT asylum work group met a couple of weeks back and decided to focus on the asylum process by providing cultural competency and sensitivity training to asylum adjudicators and judges. He also reported that the goal of the work group is to hone down issues on asylum because asylum is such a broad issue. The work group decided to address the issue head on since there is a lot of discrimination and bias happening. They believe they can be productive because they can do something concrete by providing actual training and getting to the heart of the problem that’s pervasive. In addition to conducting training, the work group would like to conduct a panel. They are looking for individuals in the legal community, government and other service organizations who support LGBT asylum issues in San Francisco to participate in the panel. They would like to work with the Immigrant Rights Commission (IRC) by having them co-sponsor or co-attend the panel. Next meeting will be the first Tuesday of next month in the HRC conference room.

Proposed POP:

Purpose: To identify LGBT discrimination in asylum seeking process and provide sensitivity training/cultural competency training around LGBT issues to asylum adjudicators and immigration judges.

Outcome: Adjudicator training, possibly creation of resource material

Process: Panel for AC with asylum seekers, law offices who are working on LGBT asylum, and adjudicator/immigration judge

Discussion:

Commissioner Chung encouraged the LGBT Asylum work group to work with the IRC and other departments on this issue or at least invite them to participate.

In response to several questions, Fayaz Rajani explained who they were looking for to conduct the trainings and then briefly explained the asylum process.

Commissioner Chung encouraged the committee members to ask questions pertaining to the details of the asylum process and training to the panel. She also reminded all work groups will be asked to present their reports before the Commission.

HOUSING RIGHTS:

Allison Laureano reported they met three weeks ago and had a good discussion on housing rights. During the discussion, it was discovered that housing rights are nebulous and broad ranging. Thus, they had a lot discussion about how to narrow down housing rights issues. The work group decided for their Purpose to hold onto the idea that housing is a human right based upon language of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The goal is to adopt that idea as part of the City’s philosophy within the HRC. The work group decided to focus on queer homeless youth issues and how the sit/lie law targets queer homeless youth. Another focus of the housing rights work group is to come up with a resolution that states housing is a human right, similar to the language of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Drafting language for
the resolution should not be too consuming. Most of the efforts of the work group will be focused on educating the public on queer homeless youth. To do this, the work group plans to have a town hall meeting to get the public’s feedback on the issue and help come up with some solutions they can recommend to different agencies. During this process, it would be beneficial to have a Coalition building effort by bringing in subject matter experts. They plan to do research to determine which subject matter experts should participate. The primary goal is to educate the public, the work group and the Commission about the issues surrounding queer homeless youth and what's going on now, in the past, and where to go in the future. Next meeting is the second Friday of next month.

Proposed POP:

**Purpose:** Housing is a human right, including for homeless queer youth.

**Outcome:** To have the Human Rights Commission adopt a resolution that affirms housing as a human right and also educates the public about the problems queer homeless youth face – what has been done and what could be done.

**Process:** Draft a resolution, plan a town hall meeting and identify subject matter experts to guide in the process.

Discussion:

Mark Dunlop added that there has been such a long discussion about this so there needs to be a lot of research on this subject matter to figure out who is really doing what in order to finally move forward on this issue. This will be a huge step for the City to say that. In the future, this will be extremely important.

Donna Sachet then expressed concern over whether housing is really within the venue of the LGBTAC (with exception of queer homeless youth). It seems that the goal to make housing viewed as a human right is not within the purpose of the LGBTAC.

Mark Dunlap responded that it is within the jurisdiction of the LGBTAC by explaining a similar thing took place a couple of years ago where LGBTAC took a human rights approach to issues of discrimination facing Native American rights. There was a huge meeting with the Board of Supervisors about general Native American rights. The inquiry into Native American rights started out from a queer perspective. The steps are so intertwined it is hard to separate them. This serves as a proper precedent to make housing a human right to help resolve the issue with queer homeless youth.

Commissioner Chung added that if the LGBTAC is making a case about queer homeless youth whether that then leads to housing as a fundamental human right. This is a question that must considered in the persuasion of declaring housing a human right or else the Commission will ask the same question.

Nadia Babella commented that there is another advisory committee of the HRC called the Equity Committee that has a subgroup on housing. Ms. Babella suggested that the two committees work together and then have a town hall meeting discussing how to apply housing as a human right to the LGBTQ community.

Amy Whelan then expressed a concern over creating duties for the government if housing is declared as a human right.
Commissioner Chung responded by saying that the goal is to urge the government to take responsibility because no one should be homeless in the country. It’s about doing what the Commission is supposed to do. Even though the resolution is a non-binding resolution, the resolution can still be effective. In 1994, the Commission held a series of hearings about transgender discrimination, created a report from those hearings, and, eventually, there was a champion from those hearings putting transgender discrimination into the books as law. Thus, there is precedent that worked. But, will it work every time? There is no guarantee. It’s worth engaging into these types of philosophical discussions to push the envelope a little bit in order for the city to recognize what human rights are. That’s the job of the LGBTAC.

Commissioner Chung then suggested changing the language of the resolution from “having” the HRC adopt the resolution to the HRC “advising” or “urging” to adopt the resolution.

Samer Danfoura also added there should be a verb, like, affirm, establish, recognize.

ALTERNATIVE FAMILIES/SENIOR LGBTS:

Ray Rudolph reported that the work group considered: 1) conducting a LGBT senior needs assessment (suggested by Seth K.); 2) create an LGBT senior fund and criteria to set up fund; 3) send letters of concern to LGBT organizations asking them to address senior issues; 4) set up senior/youth mentorship program; 5) conduct demands surveys especially to HIV organizations as to efforts concerning HIV/AIDS senior programs; 6) housing for seniors. The work group plans to come to the June 12th meeting with one solid idea. Ideas are still abstract.

Discussion:

Commissioner Chung advised the work group to decide on one idea to work on. She also advised identifying the organization, department, or committee that would take the lead on the LGBT senior fund project if the work group decided to pursue that idea. She urged the work group to collaborate with the Commission on Aging on this project so the LGBTAC does not strain its resources.

Mr. Rudolph commented that he noticed that most of the organizations working in the senior area are not centralized and do not share databases. They are now just beginning to share information with each other. Developing collaborative relationships are part of this project.

MOTIONS:

A request for a motion to adopt work plan was made. The motion was amended to have the Alternative Family/LGBT Senior work group present their work plan next month. Commissioner Chung suggested adopting each work plan individually.

A motion was made by Jane Aceituno and seconded by Mark Dunlop to adopt the LGBT Asylum Work Plan. All were in favor of the motion and the motion was carried.

A motion was made by Mark Dunlop and seconded by Dominique Leslie to adopt the Housing Rights Work Plan. Donna Sachet opposed the motion because she believes there needs to be more education on the issue. The rest of the committee was in favor of the motion and the motion carried.

The Alternative Families/LGBT Senior Work Plan was moved for approval until next meeting.

Discussion:
Commissioner Chung told the LGBT Asylum and Housing Rights work groups to present their work plans to the Commission next week if they are ready. If they would like to present they need to call Nadia Babella to let her know by Thursday.

Both work groups wanted to wait until they met again. (Potential presentation date is August of 2010)

5. Discussion of S.F. Pride Day Activities (Discussion Item):

Allison Laureano and Vaughn Villaverde met and talked about possible themes and processes. From a long list of possible themes, the one they gravitated toward was the idea of what “Family Is…” (“FAMILY IS…” you, “FAMILY IS”… me) Ms. Laureano and Mr. Villaverde were thinking about putting a big sign on the car in the parade that says “FAMILY IS…” and then having the parade marchers hold little placards saying what family is (ie family is you and me, family is having a home etc.). They would like feedback from the LGBTAC on what family means to them, which will ultimately add to the goal of the Human Rights Commission. As far as colors, the goal is to have everyone show up wearing a different solid color of the rainbow (not required). But it would be nice if the Human Rights Commission showed up wearing all the different colors of the rainbows to signify how the LGBT community is as a family. They did not work on chants or logistics. Main obstacle is getting people to volunteer for the monitor training. It is necessary to have safety and contingent monitors at the parade. Trainings are coming up soon, so Ms. Laureano suggested having another meeting this week or early next to push the entire process forward. Ms. Laureano also stressed the importance of outreach to other departments to ensure powerful contingent. There will be a pride planning meeting next week, Tuesday the 25th.

Discussion:

Mark Snyder thought that the “Family Is…” theme sounded great, but cautioned that defining family can sometimes be problematic.

Commissioner Chung announced that the next meeting is next Thursday in Room 416 and will agendize the Pride Parade. Mark Dunlop commented that the monitoring training is a blast and there are a ton of them. Thus, as far as scheduling goes, it’s easy. Nadia Babella also thought the theme about family was good but was concerned that the other two issues being worked on, housing and immigration, should be squeezed in. Those two topics get lost. By saying that SFHRC equals LGBT Pride for alternative families, seniors etc. makes the theme broader and more inclusive.

Commissioner Chung suggested changing “HRC equals…” to “SFHRC equals…” SFHRC should not be confused with the Human Rights Campaign.

Another comment was made suggesting the 2010 Pride theme should be “SFHRC equals…” because it speaks more to what the SFHRC does as opposed to “Family is…” “Family is…” seems like someone else’s alley way.

Samer Danfoura suggested having work groups work on slogans, like, “…Justice for LGBT Immigrants,” or have a sign making party. After discussion, the LGBTAC decided on making 3 different slogans for the parade and emailing signs to the work group. There will be one major banner on the car that says “Human Rights Commission is…” and the marchers behind the car will carry signs saying “… Justice for LGBT Immigrants,” “…Fighting for Resources for LGBT Seniors and Alternative Families.” Commissioner Chung suggested inviting other committees to include ideas/slogans not just the work groups. There was also a suggestion to pass out pocket cards with information on how to file a complaint.
Again, the group will meet on Tuesday the 25th at 6:00 p.m. at the Center. Joseph Peralta volunteered to get the room.

6. **Work Group Reports:**

**LGBT ASYLUM:**

Fayaz Rajani reported that the work group members are individually seeking out people to be on the panel. The work group is unsure of their next meeting and they are deciding where to meet on the first Tuesday in June – June 1st at 25 Van Ness at 5:30pm.

Nadia Babella asked for a show of hands of who is in each group. The following people raised their hands for the LGBT Asylum group: Fayaz Rajani, Elizabeth Labedz, Vaughn Villaverde, Bianca Polovina, Samer Danfoura and Amos Lim. (Absent members: Corrin Buchanan, Ruby Cymrot-Wu)

There was a question about whether non-members of a certain group have voting rights if they show up to a meeting?

Commissioner Chung answered a non-member of a work group would have voting rights only for that meeting they attend.

**ALTERNATIVE FAMILIES/SENIOR LGBT:**

Ray Rudolph reported next meeting is June 9 at 5:30pm at SFHRC.

Members of group include: Samer Danfoura, Bart Broome, Mark Dunlop, Mark Snyder, Ray Rudolph, Joseph Peralta, Amy Whelan, and Poonam, who is absent today.

**HOUSING RIGHTS:**

Allison Laureano reported that they met on May 7th. Those present included: Mark Rawlings-Fein, Allison Laureano, Jane Aceituno, Mark Dunlop and Alex Baty. At that meet the housing rights work group hammered out their POP and came away with homework. Mr. Rawlings-Fein plans to do research on resolution wording. Ms. Aceituno will put together a list of non-profits that are currently doing things. Alex Baty will contact the Youth Commission so the work group can begin coalition building. Mr. Peralta will contact the Center of Youth. Mr. Dunlop will contact the Redevelopment Agency. Ms. Laureano will be talking to Mark Snyder and Mark Murphy, who both worked with the youth work group last year. Next meeting is the 1st Thursday of the month (June 3rd) at 6pm at the Hunan Garden restaurant.

Members of group include: Allison Laureano, Mark Dunlop, Jane Aceituno, Dominique Leslie, Joseph Peralta, Alex Baty and Martin Rawlings-Fein. Ms. Laureano then encouraged more people to the join the Housing Rights work group.

**OUTREACH:**

The group is developing resources to handout to future committees. It would be helpful to have each group email their process of conducting panels or forums to incorporate into a guide for future committee members that partake in similar activities. Emails can be sent to Mr. Danfoura. Mr. Danfoura also volunteered the work group to participate in doing media outreach for events, such as, formulating press releases or contacting media about particular events. If such help is needed, email Mr. Danfoura or Poonam.
Samer Danfoua reported that the outreach work group will be meeting less frequently. If the LGBTAC decides to have meetings in the community rather than in the HRC building, then the Outreach work group would help identify venues for meetings.

**BISEXUAL INVISIBILITY:**

Lindasusan Ulrich reported that the work group completed the draft. Ms. Ulrich plans to meet with Nadia for last bit of feedback on the draft. Hopefully, the draft will be done next week and then the completed draft will come to the committee in July for approval before it is presented to the Commission. Commissioner Chung advised that the City and County of San Francisco has a policy to standardize all the material. The report will have the City and County seal on it. Ms. Ulrich added that this report will be the first report of its kind in the country from a government body. This could be groundbreaking on a national level. Commissioner Chung suggested the work group have some speakers speak on the issues (experts) when they are ready to present to the Commission. Commissioner Chung then explained that in order to make the report an official document, it must be approved by the entire Commission.

7. **Commissioner Report:**

Commissioner Chung said the Commission will continue to meet in the community. Next meeting is in the Richmond District on June 10th from 6-8 p.m. at the Jewish Community Center on California and Masonic. Commissioner Chung encouraged committee members to attend the meeting.

Commissioner Chung reported that the Commission meeting had a pretty good turnout in Chinatown. Chinatown is experiencing some challenges, so there were quite a few members from the southeast corridor of the community who provided testimonies and comments at the meeting.

8. **Staff Report:**

Nadia Babella reported that the HRC is going to have two summer interns. The interns will work on special projects and help the HRC catch up on certain things. One intern will be working with the LGBT unit and the other will be working in the Housing unit. But there will be overlap. Ms. Babella also reported the HRC has been doing a lot of community relations work. One of the issues the HRC will be working on is a hearing with the Police Commission to look at issues affecting the Arab/Muslim/South Asian community with respect to surveillance, spying and first amendment activity. There is talk of restarting an intelligence unit in the city and there is concern what starting this unit means for privacy rights and racial/religious profiling. There is a history involved in this from the 80s and 90s when all sorts of organizations from the far left or far right had informants/infiltrators. The hearing will address community concerns and allies of the community. HRC is also looking at issues in the Bayview/Visitacion Valley involving crime relations with the African American and Asian American communities. HRC also looked at the Arizona law and Safer Community laws, which deals with fingerprinting and immigrant rights, and how it affects our Sanctuary City Ordinance.

Commissioner Chung commented that ICE and the local police department signed a Memorandum Of Understanding, which allows fingerprints from the police department to be sent directly to ICE. ICE will then use the fingerprints and cross match it to existing databases including the No-fly lists, FBI list etc. Even people who go in for misdemeanors will be subject to this MOU. It has the potential to turn into a witch hunt. It becomes effective on July 1st. Supervisors are currently looking for ways to opt out of that agreement.
Mr. Danfoura commented that in the 80s his parents went to a protest for Palestinian rights. In the late 80s or early 90s they got a letter of apology from the City because they were infiltrating the protests and they had a file on his parents. Mr. Danfoura was excited that the hearing will address this issue.

9. **Old/New Business:**

None

10. **Announcements:**

Announcement 1:

Dominique Leslie announced that last weekend that she and Ms. Laureano participated in the transgender leadership conference. This was the first ever transgender advocacy day. They had four talking points, including: employment rights, healthcare, mental health for at-risk youth who are competent to seek care w/o parental consent (SB543 – Minor Mental Health Act), and (A1878 – Date of Inclusion Act) state forums department including questions about sexual orientation, gender identity, and domestic partnership status on the voluntary demographics sections of governmental forms. There is already information on ethnicity, religion and so forth, but is important to take information about sexual orientation, gender identity and domestic partner status because a lot times public services are built off of these demographics.

Announcement 2:

Donna Sachet announced that Saturday, May 22, is Harvey Milk Day. Many activities coincide with the day and she urged committee members to go to www.milkday.org for a listing of San Francisco events. She’s involved with the Diversity Brunch this weekend. Ms. Sachet also encouraged all to understand Commissioner Chung’s position better by meeting with her outside of the HRC. Have coffee with her, she doesn’t bite!!

Announcement 3:

Joseph Peralta announced that he attended a rally to urge congress to finish ENDA. Commissioner Chung commented that right now there are organized actions to urge congress and the senate to bring ENDA up for a vote.

11. **Adjournment:**

The meeting was adjourned at 7:00 p.m.