

2010 Seattle LGBT Commission Work Plan

The role of the Seattle LGBT Commission (formerly Seattle Commission for Sexual Minorities) is to advise the Mayor, City Council and departments on issues and concerns specific to the LGBT community. The Commission works to ensure City departments address LGBT concerns fairly and equitably, makes policy and legislative recommendations, and works to bring the LGBT and larger Seattle area community together through long-ranged projects, outreach, communication and awareness.

Since 1989, the Commission has worked to ensure that the needs and views of the LGBT community are represented across the policies, priorities and decisions of city government. During these 20 years, the face and needs of the gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered communities have evolved. The Commission is constantly adapting to meet these needs and has recently engaged in a new dialog about what the Commission represents and how we want to be viewed within the community and city government.

After a year-long research and approval process, we are excited to start 2010 with a new name and the opportunity to reintroduce ourselves to the LGBT community. Over the coming year, we will be engaging in a number of important community outreach efforts and will also be renewing our efforts to build relationships with city government officials. To meet these goals, our Commission work will be completed by three subcommittees: Internal Affairs, Programs & Outreach, and Government Relations.

In 2010 we have also added the ad-hoc Needs Assessment Committee to continue work that began in 2008 on a needs assessment for the LGBTQ community. In initial meetings held in 2008, the top issues identified by community organizations and the Mayor's office were LGBT tourism, support for small businesses, and support for social services. This committee will develop recommendations and a plan of action for continuing the work of 2008 and 2009 on assessing the needs of the LGBT community and how the City can work with the community towards mutually beneficial goals. The Committee will create a memo outlining the work on this project from previous years and outline goals moving forward. Initial plans for 2010 include a community forum to gather ideas from the LGBT community and a community-wide survey to gather input on what the most pressing needs are for LGBTQ people in Seattle. These findings will be compiled for presentation to the Mayor and City Council.

Each committee is responsible for having specific and measurable goals that will work towards the higher goals of the overall Commission. We believe this structure will ensure our community is being positively and adequately served by the city. Work plans by Committee are as follows. With an ambitious work plan, each committee has designated primary goals and secondary goals.

Internal Affairs

The Internal Affairs Committee is tasked with managing the internal workings and business items related to the entire Commission. This committee will handle responsibilities such as adherence to, and updates of, commission bylaws; oversight of Commissioner participation; development of a Commission communication plan; and the management of Commissioner liaison assignments in the public and governmental sectors.

Communications (Primary)

IA will create and implement a communications plan for the Commission that allows for a time efficient and coordinated effort in responding publically to issues in the community and advertising Commission

events.

- a) Develop an internal process that makes the LGBT Commission more nimble and capable of responding to communications needs.
- b) Manage the implementation and continued management of the plan, though we don't anticipate being solely responsible for the communications needs of the sub-committees. Each sub-committee will be responsible for doing their own communications with IA acting in a support role (i.e., supplying a template for press releases, reviewing documents to ensure that they match the tone of previous LGBT Commission communications).
- c) Create an LGBT Commission communications team consisting of one representative from each sub-committee and from the co-chairs. The communications team will be responsible for responding to urgent communications needs and for keeping other members of the team informed about the communications efforts of each sub-committee.

Bylaws review (Primary)

IA will review and update the bylaws as needed. Bylaws will be reviewed on an annual basis, at a minimum, to ensure that they still meet the needs of the commission.

Accountability (Secondary)

IA will track progress of activities of the LGBT Commission and also manage the accountability of each Commissioner's liaison assignments.

- a) For significant Commission activities, IA will develop a tracking system that gives a timeline and narrative of what the Commission goals are, what the Commission has done to achieve them, and what follow up has occurred or needs to occur. For example, with the proposed new quarterly budget report, IA will track what actions the LGBT Commission takes based on that information and what the results of these actions are.
- b) Develop a set of guidelines for the community and governmental liaison pairings so that commissioners know the goals for their liaison assignment and how to meet those expectations. Use these guidelines to help orient new Commissioners.
- c) Create a system of accountability for liaison assignments that requires commissioners to report back on their liaison activities.
- d) Manage the process of matching unfilled liaison assignments with new commissioners.
- e) Assist P&O in the administration of the quarterly newsletter. IA's main role will be in tracking accountability for articles and due dates.

Commissioner relations (Secondary)

IA will plan at least two social events for commissioners and will also plan a social to reach out to commission alumni.

Incoming & Outgoing Commissioner Relations (As needed)

In an effort to get new Commissioners active and engaged as quickly as possible, IA will be working on several projects to improve the orientation of new Commissioners in addition to working on the general recruitment of new Commissioners.

- a) Manage the process of interviewing potential commissioners and moving them through the process of becoming commissioners.

- b) Develop a handbook for Commissioners and collect other relevant materials, such as Commission history and documents, to assist current and incoming Commissioners with their work.
- c) Match new commissioners with mentors and provide guidelines for maximizing the mentor relationship. IA will also follow-up with new commissioners to ensure that they're receiving the necessary support.
- d) Make at least one good faith effort to reach out to exiting commissioners to conduct an exit interview. The goal of the interview will be to identify potential areas of improvement for the commission moving forward and to go over a transition checklist to assist in the continuity of any contacts and liaison assignments.
- e) Efforts will also be made to conduct exit interviews with other key people who aren't Commissioners if they are leaving a position that is particularly important to the Commission's work.

Budget tracking (Ongoing)

IA will work the Commission Co-Chairs to track the budget over the course of the year. This information will be used to ensure that funding is allocated appropriately. The budget numbers will be reported to the commission on a quarterly basis.

Programs & Outreach

The Programs & Outreach Committee (P&O) is responsible for the Commission's external presence including marketing and external communications for the Commission; coordination of all Commission related events; the maintenance and execution on all LGBT community outreach plans; and seeking out opportunities to partner with other organizations, board or city entities.

During 2010, P&O aims to:

1. Clarify the Seattle LGBT Commission's brand and role in the community
2. Reengage the public through event sponsorships and partnerships, and
3. Develop effective lines of communication through quarterly newsletters mailings and social media postings.

Partnerships

- a) Engage Partners - Ongoing (Primary)
 - Bringing more community organizations into Commission meetings, with a goal of having an outside organization present at every other meeting.
 - P&O will be responsible for inviting and confirming these speakers in coordination with the co-chairs.

Public Engagement

- a) Re-launch Commission with new name – 1st quarter (Primary)
 - Branding – Create unified look & feel for Commission communications & materials
 - Develop Materials – Create materials that can be used to promote the Commission and its work such as items for tabling at events.
 - Launch Social Network Presence – Create an online presence for the Commission through various social networking sites.
 - Website - IA will be responsible for updating the official LGBT Commission website and working with the City on any website needs.
- b) Community Involvement and Input - 2nd quarter (Secondary)

- Use new outreach methods and contacts to seek out feedback and input from the community
- c) Respond to City/State Budget – 3rd & 4th quarter (Secondary)
 - Work with partner organizations and identify funding/budget threats to LGBT organizations and work with GR committee to bring these concerns to City officials. P&O's role will be to support the GR Committee in its outreach to the community regarding budget cuts.

Programs

- a) Establish partnerships/sponsorships – Ongoing (Primary)
 - Seek out events or organizations that we can sponsor or partner with to maximize the Commission's visibility, impact or opportunities for meaningful feedback from the LGBT community.
- b) Support Pride 2010 – 2nd quarter (Primary)
 - Partner with SOCR on 2010 Pride Parade and Pride fest activities.

Government Relations

The Government Relations Committee (GR) will act as the conduit between the overall Commission and any governmental and legislative entities. GR will provide information regarding any relevant City of Seattle actions to the Commission to include any recommendations for action; oversee and facilitate communications to the Mayor and City Council; and assign, monitor, and facilitate government relationships for each Commissioner.

Commenting on Government Budgets (Primary)

Focus on health issues i.e. physical, mental, & environmental

- a) Monitoring budgets of agencies
- b) Review City, County and State committee agendas monthly
- c) Alert Commission of significant issues - ongoing
- d) Attend committee meetings of hearings if necessary - ongoing
- e) Prepare written or oral testimony as needed
- f) Coordinate with affected agencies as needed
- g) Coordinate responses with Programs and Outreach
- h) Report monthly at commission meetings and in newsletter
- i) Identify gaps in health issues and how commission can be involved.

Facilitate Formation of LBGT Affinity Groups (Primary)

- a) Meet with Julie Nelson re SEAGL - 1st quarter
(Can groups meet @ city facilities or off-site? Etc)
- b) Inform Mayor and City Council regarding issues for affinity groups - 2nd quarter
- c) Recommend SOCR take lead
- d) Publicize formation of official or unofficial organization – 3rd quarter
- e) Coordinate with 3 other commissions within SOCR

Establish Relationship with Mayor McGinn (Primary)

- a) Meet with SOCR staff regarding options – 1st quarter
 - First preference: invite Mayor to Commission meeting
 - Second preference: Mayor meets with co-chairs
 - Third preference: Mayor meets with all 4 commissions

- b) Preliminary work with Mayor McGinnis' aides - 1st quarter
- c) Meet with Mayor and/or his staff quarterly

Combined Charity Fund (Secondary)

Ensure that LGBT organizations are represented on the City's Combined Charity list.

- a) Survey current lists (City, County, State others) to determine which agencies are receiving Combined Charity funds
- b) Identify organizations not listed
- c) Get LGBT organizations onto list
- d) Invite LGBT organizations to make Combined Charity presentations to City staff
- e) Ensure affinity groups are aware of LGBT Combined Charity agencies

Co-Chairs Lillie Cridland and Christopher Peguero respectfully submit this work plan to the Mayor of Seattle and Seattle City Council for their recommendations, critique and approval.