

Meeting Minutes
Borough of State College
LGBTQ Advisory Committee
Tuesday, July 17, 2018

The LGBTQ Advisory Committee met on Tuesday, July 17, 2018, in the State College Borough Municipal Building, 234 S. Allen Street, Room 241, State College, PA. Vice-Chairman Gutierrez called the meeting to order at 12:05 p.m.

Members Present

Borja Gutierrez, Vice Chairman (via phone); Monica Himes, and Brian Patchcoski

Members Absent

Greg Brauser
Kirsten Burkhart
Susan Marshall
Karen Elizabeth Moroski, Chairman
Michele Hamilton

Others Present

Kevin Kassab, Community Engagement Manager; Thomas R. King, Assistant Borough Manager for Public Safety; and Judy Altieri, Office Manager

Mr. King spoke briefly about the current committee membership, noting all terms were due to expire on August 31, 2018. He indicated he and the Borough Manager had discussed the possibility of staggering the terms, but they would have to see what the Resolution specified for membership. He asked about continuing the three at-large positions, and several appointments from area organizations. He noted Council would still make the appointments, but it would be several weeks before the item could be presented. In the meantime, he asked the current members to make some recommendations.

Mr. Gutierrez suggested allowing the current membership to continue until December 31, 2018, and then start the staggered term representation.

Mr. King noted he would share the recommendation with the Borough Manager.

Public Hour

There was no one that spoke during the public hour.

Approval of Meeting Minutes

Mr. Kassab noted since there was not a committee quorum, they would not be voting to approve on the April 17, 2018 meeting minutes.

2018 Human Rights Campaign

Mr. Kassab indicated the Borough's Human Rights Campaign Municipal Equality Index Scorecard had been submitted. He passed around a copy for the committee members but noted they should not share any of the information. He suggested because the submission was ahead of schedule, the campaign could technically reach back for further clarification, etc. He continued, stating he expected the Borough's score to increase because this year's submission included gender neutral restrooms, the enacted ordinance, the memorandum of understanding with the Aids Resources organization, etc.

Mr. Gutierrez asked about submissions regarding elder care and the homeless.

Mr. Kassab noted he had made several calls to the homeless shelters, but he did not get a response. He noted during the process, the Borough had learned Bellaire Court (income-based housing for the elderly)

was also open to the LGBTQ community.

Mr. Gutierrez then asked about the Borough's gender-neutral bathroom signage. Mr. Kassab indicated he was not able to incorporate the committee's recommendation as the signs (with pictures) had already been ordered.

Lastly, Mr. Kassab noted the results may be back sometime in August and he would distribute the information via email once it was received.

June 2019 Pride Month

Mr. Kassab indicated he wanted to start the discussion, ideas, etc. Would like some events planned in June, but it would be tough because classes would not be in session. He reminded the members present the University held their Pride month in April.

Mr. Gutierrez noted the scope of the Borough June event would be quite narrow unless we try to make it a Centre County activity.

Mr. Patchcoski asked if there was a budget for the event. Mr. Kassab noted the committee did not have a budget that would be supported by the Borough.

Mr. Gutierrez indicated it was important to find sponsors for the parade. He suggested getting some involvement from campus employees, i.e., Sarah Oliver Carter and Ameil Cunningham (both from HR).

Mr. Kassab noted the discussion could continue at the next meeting since nobody was in attendance.

Mr. King asked if the plan was to continue Pride Month in June vs. April when the student population was still in State College.

Mr. Kassab noted the national recognition month was June and the University had the manpower to help with the Borough's efforts.

Mr. Gutierrez indicated he would reconsider April, but he did not know how that might conflict with other Borough and State College activities (PSU Blue/White game, Autism Speaks Walk, ABC Dinner, etc.).

Mr. King suggested two events, one in April geared toward the student population, followed by a countywide opportunity in June.

Ms. Himes noted the potential for conflicts with other larger parades in Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, etc.

Mr. Gutierrez suggested the topic be addressed at the October meeting and asked that Ms. Oliver be invited to the meeting.

Next Meeting

Mr. Kassab noted the next meeting was scheduled for October 16, 2018 at noon.

He continued, noting the Community Diversity Group planned to hold a multi-cultural & Unity Fair on September 22, 2018. The plan was to bring different ethnic groups together and he asked if LGBTQ Advisory Committee wanted to participate. Those present agreed the advisory committee should participate in the fair.

Mr. King asked if there was an argument why they should not participate. Mr. Kassab indicated the majority believe we should be included, since the premise is about inclusion and unity. He added we need a strong presence from the committee, reminding them the Mayor had recently presented a proclamation that specifically talked about sexual orientation. He noted the groups plans to attend and

indicated he would provide additional information via email.

Mr. Kassab continued, noting the Borough had decided to do the crosswalks at Allen Street and Calder Way. He noted the paint was water-based and already fading, but asked if anyone had heard anything (positive or negative) about the crosswalks. He noted the Borough was looking for feedback prior to moving forward with a more permanent fixture.

Mr. Patchcoski indicated the painted crosswalks had been shared on social media, making it one of their most shared posts (over 100,000 likes). He noted they had received great comments from alumni around the word. He added the good comments outweighed the bad comments.

Mr. Kassab talked about an experience he had with a mother and her three children. She told him the crosswalks was one of the greatest things the Borough had every done and it provided her with an opportunity to teach her kids to be accepting of everyone, no matter what their differences were.

Mr. King noted there was a discussion during a recent Council meeting about trying to make them permanent. He noted the Borough Engineer would have to get involved with the PennDOT discussion if the Borough continues to move in that direction.

Mr. Kassab asked if the committee should make a recommendation to Council. Mr. King noted that would be a good idea. He also suggested the Committee start to development their work plan for the next few years (items that will keep the group focused throughout the year).

Mr. Gutierrez suggested some of the items could take quite a bit of time to be implemented; he suggested looking at their original charge to start the discussion.

Mr. King noted the information would be sent to the committee prior to the next meeting and the development of the work plan would be an agenda item at the next meeting.

Adjournment

With no further business to discuss, Vice-Chairman Gutierrez adjourned the meeting at 12:42 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Judy Altieri
Office Manager