MINUTES
LGBTQIA+ COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING FEBRUARY 15, 2022

Present: Commissioners Anthony Mangiafico, Christine Rebstock, Dan Barry (arrived 5:34 pm), Sandy Aldieri, Laura Timmons, Dolly Haddad, Cayes Jarda, Beth Shapiro, Christine Santacroce, and Steven Kovach. Staff: Assistant General Counsel Christopher Forte

Members of the Public: Chief Erik Costa, Haley Stafford, Jennifer Billingsley, Robert Crowley, Jill Echevarria, and Adam Hushin.

1. Call to Order by Chair. Chairperson Mangiafico called the meeting to order at 5:22 p.m.

2. Approval of the Minutes for the January 18, 2022 Regular Meeting of the LGBTQIA+ Commission.

MOTION: Commissioner Rebstock made a motion to approve the minutes for the January 18, 2022 meeting. Commissioner Shapiro seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously at 5:33 p.m. Commissioner Barry was absent for the vote.

3. Public Session on Agenda Items. None.


A. Nominations for Grand Marshal (AGC Forte). AGC Forte thanked the Commissioner for their excellent nominations for grand marshal for PrideFEST 2022, and informed the Commission of the results of the Commissioners votes to rank the Grand Marshal nominations:

1 Mel Cordner;
2 Jesse Nasta;
3 John Pepe;
4 Karleigh C. Webb;
5 Scott Haney;
6 Kenya Mone Heart; and
7 Kenya Muzzanni.

Commissioner Timmons and Jennifer Billingsley stated that this year the nominees were a “deep bench” and were all very deserving and outstanding candidates. AGC Forte stated in years past, the Commission selected one drag entertainer and one community member to be grand marshal.

MOTION: Commissioner Shapiro made a motion to recommend that Mel Cordner and Kenya Mone Heart be selected as grand marshals for Middletown Pride 2022, and if they should be unable to serve, to offer the spot of grand marshal in order according to the list
above. Commissioner Aldieri seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously at 5:50 p.m.

B. Sign-Ups for LGBTQIA+ 101 Training. AGC Forte informed the commissioners that the City of Middletown is requiring LGBTQIA+ 101 training for its staff, and has strongly encouraged the members of the City’s appointed boards and commissions to attend. AGC Forte will send around the sign up link tomorrow morning for the commissioners to sign up.

C. Safety for LGBTQIA+ Community in Middletown (Commissioner Timmons). Commissioner Timmons will be setting up a listening session to determine priorities. No other updates at this time.

5. Old Business.

A. Update on Commission Initiatives.

1. Q+ Partnership Update (AGC Forte). AGC Forte reported that all documentation has been signed with Q+ and that they are working towards a start date of March/April 2022.

2. Middletown Pride Ice Skating Event (Commissioner Timmons). Commissioner Timmons stated that there was some light participation in February, and would like the event extended through February, and maybe have an ice skating and picnic event each Saturday in March. AGC Forte stated he would confirm with the recreation department and would add the event to the City’s Community Calendar for February.

3. Spring Event (Russell Library). AGC Forte informed the Commission that the Russell Library on behalf of Middletown Pride and in conjunction with the Public Works and Recreation Departments will be hosting an Earth Day Spring Event on April 23 from 10am-12pm at Harbor Park. There will be a city-wide cleanup initiative, a traditional drag story hour, as well as a drag performer led craft and activity for 6-12 year olds.


B. Planning for Middletown Pride 2022.

1. LGBTQIA+ Artist Takeover of City Hall (AGC Forte). AGC Forte updated the Commission that Middletown Pride may be working with the New Haven Pride Center on this event. No other updates.

2. Pride Flag Raising and Kick-Off on June 1 (AGC Forte). Commissioner Rebstock stated that it would be great if the event could start at 11 am. No other
3. **Middletown Pride Charity Event on June 3 (Mia).** Mia updated the Commission that this event will be at Jerry’s Pizza and will raise money for a selected charity and will be a good show. AGC Forte asked the Commission to think of charities that they would like the event to raise money for, and the following organizations were mentioned:

1. Trevor Project;
2. Scholarship Fund;
3. Rainbow Railroad;
4. Mental Health Services;
5. GLAM Center;
6. Trans Lifeline;
7. GLSEN, CT

No decision was reached, and AGC Forte stated that the Commission will be voting on this at their next meeting.

4. **Middletown PrideFEST on June 4 (AGC Forte and Middlesex County Chamber of Commerce).** Haley Stafford from the Middlesex County Chamber of Commerce updated the Commission on the current planning for PrideFEST.

5. **Middletown Pride Band Night on June 9 (AGC Forte).** AGC Forte stated that he is circling back with the Wadsworth Mansion to go over details, and that there should be more information next month.

6. **Middletown Pride Move Night on June 23 (AGC Forte).** AGC Forte stated that Middletown Pride will be partnering with OutFilm CT for the movie night for this year. AGC Forte stated that he is circling back with the Wadsworth Mansion to go over details, and that there should be more information next month.

7. **Wesleyan Movie Event (AGC Forte).** No update.

8. **Open Mic Night at Perk (AGC Forte).** AGC Forte stated that Perk is open to hosting an open mic, and that AGC Forte will work with them to pick a date and time.

9. **Downtown Main Street Cleanup with Cinder & Salt (Russell Library).** No update

10. **Events with Q+ (Russell Library).** No updates.

    1. Silent Disco
    2. Open Mic Night
    3. Craft Night
11. Event to Honor Activists during Middletown Pride (Commissioner Rebstock and Middlesex County Historical Society). AGC Forte informed the Commission that he will be meeting with Jesse Nasta from the Middlesex County Historical Society to discuss this event this month. Will report back next month.

12. Transgender and Intersex Panel (Russell Library and Commissioner Timmons). No update. Commissioner Timmons has put some feelers out and will report back next month. Commissioner Jarda stated they are interested in participating in the panel.

13. Self-Defense Classes for the community (Commissioners Santacroce and Barry). No updates.

6. Adjournment

MOTION: Commissioner Rebstock made a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Jarda seconded the motion. Motion was approved unanimously at 6:27 p.m. Commissioner Santacroce was absent for the vote.