MINUTES
LGBTQIA+ COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING MAY 17, 2022

Present: Commissioners Anthony Mangiafico, Jennifer Billingsley, Christine Rebstock, Dan Barry, Sandy Aldieri, Laura Timmons, Cayes Jarda, Christine Santacroce, Steven Kovach, and Beth Shapiro (arrived at 5:36 pm). Staff: Assistant General Counsel Christopher Forte.

Members of the Public: Haley Stafford, Robert Crowley, Captain John Lozefski, and Officer Botsacos.

1. Call to Order by Chair. Chairperson Mangiafico called the meeting to order at 5:32 p.m.

2. Approval of the Minutes for the April 19, 2022 Regular Meeting of the LGBTQIA+ Commission.

MOTION: Commissioner Rebstock made a motion to approve the minutes for the April 19, 2022 meeting. Commissioner Kovach seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously at 5:32 p.m. Commissioner Shapiro was absent for the vote.

3. Public Session on Agenda Items. None.


   A. Invitation for Commissioners to attend Pride events around the state.
      1. Pride Resolution at Common Council Meeting (June 6, 2022). Chair Mangiafico stated that he will be presenting a pride resolution at the June 6, 2022 meeting of the Common Council at 7 pm and invited the LGBTQIA+ Commissioners to attend in-person or virtually.
      2. New Britain Pride Flag Raising (June 6, 2022 at 9:30 am at New Britain City Hall). Commissioners Rebstock, Santacroce, and Mangiafico are interested in attending.
      3. Pride in the Park (June 11, 2022 from 12-8 pm at Matthews Park, 295 West Avenue, Norwalk, CT). Commissioners Rebstock, Kovach, and Timmons are interested in attending.
      4. Juneteenth (June 18, 2022, from 12-6 pm at Smith Park, Middletown, CT). Commissioners Timmons, Shapiro, Mangiafico, Rebstock and Jarcia are interested in participating.

5. Old Business.

   A. Safety for LGBTQIA+ Community in Middletown (Commissioner Timmons). No updates. This item will be postponed until after Middletown Pride.
B. Update on Commission Initiatives.

1. **Q+ Partnership Update (AGC Forte).** Q+ and Middletown Pride have started the bi-weekly youth group this past month. Events are held on the second and fourth Fridays of each month at First Church, Middletown, CT, and is for teens aged 13-19. More information can be found on Middletown Pride’s website [www.middletownpride.org](http://www.middletownpride.org) under the Programs page.

C. Planning for Middletown Pride 2022.

1. **Way Off the Rack Art Exhibit on Monday, May 23 from 6-8 pm at City Hall (AGC Forte).** The event is in partnership with the New Haven Pride Center and the Middletown Commission on the Arts. It will take place at City Hall, 245 deKoven Drive, and will feature 7 of our local Middletown drag performance artists. Food will be provided.

2. **Pride Flag Raising and Kick-Off on Wednesday, June 1 from 9am-noon (AGC Forte).** At 9 am we will meet at Middlesex Health for their flag raising. Middletown Pride’s Kick-Off of Pride month will be at 10am at the Pride Crosswalk on Main Street. From there, the event will move to City Hall (11 am) where the City will raise the Pride Flag, and the Mayor will issue a proclamation for Pride Month.

3. **Middletown Pride Charity Event on Friday, June 3 at 9pm at Jerry’s Pizza (Mia).** Hosted by Middletown’s own Astra S’Lay, with DJ Ambrosia Black, together with a great lineup of performers, Middletown Pride will be raising money for the state’s two pride centers, the Triangle Community Center in Norwalk, and the New Haven Pride Center in New Haven. The event is free to attend, but donations will be encouraged.

4. **Middletown PrideFEST on Saturday, June 4 from 2-10pm, on Main Street, Middletown (AGC Forte and Middlesex County Chamber of Commerce).** Hailey Stafford and AGC Forte provided updates on the status of PrideFEST.

   Roads will be closed down in the north end at 12:30pm, so please get to the City early in the day.

   The Pride March will run from 2-4 pm, the Pride Rally will run from 4-6:30 pm, and the Pride Showcase Concert will run from 7-10 pm. ASL interpreters will be provided during the Pride Rally and the Showcase Concert to make them as accessible as possible. There will be a parking lot that is ADA accessible, so if someone needs an accommodation, please have them reach out to info@middletownpride.org.

   A thank you to Perceptions Photography and Commissioner Sandy Aldieri for providing photographer coverage for our Pride events again this year!
Commissioner Rebstock asked whether we should invite first responders from around New England and New York City to march in our Pride March to be inclusive of all. Commissioners Billingsley, Jarda, and Barry spoke against on the grounds that we are a local pride event and need to focus on our community. Commissioner Aldieri stated that we need to be inclusive and keep a level head, and that the first responders protect us during pride events. AGC Forte stated that a large majority of Middletown Police Officers will be working on June 4. Middletown Pride does not specifically invite any groups to participate in our Pride March, instead, Middletown Pride is welcoming and inclusive. If a group would like to register in our Pride March, they are able to do so by getting in touch with Middletown Pride or signing up online. No action was taken.

5. **Middletown Pride Band Night on Thursday, June 9, from 5-9 pm at the Wadsworth Mansion (AGC Forte).** Middletown Pride’s first-ever movie night will take place on June 9 from 5-9 pm at the Wadsworth Mansion and will feature 4 incredible bands—The Carrie Ashton Band, Love N’ Co, the Barbie Stigma, and Sister Funk! There will be food trucks, a cash bar, and vendors at the event.

6. **Middletown Pride Movie Night on Thursday, June 23 at Wadsworth Mansion (AGC Forte).** Middletown Pride’s second movie night at the Wadsworth Mansion. There will be a Drag Queen Story Hour that starts at 7 pm, and a “rainbow fish” art event in partnership with Abrakadoodle.

   This year, Middletown Pride is partnering with OutFilmCT for the movie, and we will be showing Dramarama, which is a teen coming of age film. The movie will start around 7:30 pm.

7. **Wesleyan Movie Night on Friday, June 24 at 9 pm at Foss Hill (AGC Forte).** Middletown Pride’s first-ever movie night at Wesleyan! Join us at 9 pm as we show The Adventures of Priscilla Queen of the Desert. The movie is rated R.

8. **Downtown Main Street Cleanup with Cinder & Salt on Saturday, June 11, from 10am-12 pm. (Russell Library).** Engage in some post-PrideFEST activism to clean up downtown. For the third year in a row, Middletown Pride is partnering with Cinder+Salt for this wonderful event. Meet at Cinder+Salt at 10 am, but please register online on the Facebook Event since space and t-shirts are limited!

9. **Drag Artist Story Hours update (Russell Library)**
   1. **June 1 at McCutcheon Park at Crystal Lake.** The event starts at 6 pm.
   2. **June 23 at Wadsworth Mansion.** See above under Agenda Item #6.
10. Events with Q+ (Russell Library). AGC Forte updated the Commission on the status of these events.

1. Silent Disco (June 12 at 6-8 pm at First Church). Please register with Middletown Pride since there is a cap of 50 people for the space.
2. Youth Open Mic Night (June 26 at 6 pm at Harbor Park). This event includes drag performers and a DJ!
3. Craft Night (June 22 from 6-8 pm at Crystal Lake)

11. Event to Honor Activists during Middletown Pride on June 30 (Commissioner Rebstock and Middlesex County Historical Society). Commissioner Rebstock and Jesse Nasta from the Historical Society are collaborating on the event. More information at our next meeting.

12. Transgender and Intersex Panel (Russell Library, Commissioners Timmons, Rebstock and Jarda). Commissioner Timmons updated the Commission that this will be a fall event.

13. Self-Defense Classes for the community (Commissioners Santacroce and Barry). 360 Defense will be provided a Fight for Your Rights self-defense class for the LGBTQIA+ community on June 10 from 6:30 pm – 8:30 pm.

6. Adjournment.

MOTION: Commissioner Kovach made a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Billingsley seconded the motion. Motion was approved unanimously at 6:20 p.m.