

**MINUTES
LGBTQIA+ ADVISORY COMMITTEE
REGULAR MEETING OCTOBER 20, 2020**

Present: Chair Beth Shapiro; Committee Members Dan Barry, Philip Pessina (left at 5:56 p.m.), Christine Santacroce (left at 6:15 p.m.), Dolly Haddad, Sandy Aldieri, and Laura Timmons.
Staff: Assistant General Counsel Christopher Forte

Public: Matthew LaRose (Madison Sapphire Duchannes), Haley Stafford, Kaya Cook, Kitty Guo, Steven Kovach, and Jennifer Billingsley.

1. Call to Order

Meeting was called to order by Staff at 5:34 p.m.

2. Approval of the Minutes for the September 15, 2020.

No approval of the minutes for September 15, 2020 was needed, because no meeting was held on such date due to lack of quorum.

3. Public Session on Agenda Items.

Members of the Middletown High School GSA informed the Committee of their amazing activism, in that they worked on a presentation that they gave to the faculty at Middletown High School regarding the LGBTQIA community. The presentation included the definition of the acronym—LGBTQIA, and the difference between an ally and an advocate.

4. New Business:

A. Update from Staff. Assistant General Counsel Forte informed the Committee regarding two Pride related events that came up during the past month. The first, was a collaboration between local breweries and Middletown Pride, to serve as a fundraiser for GLSEN during the month of October, which is Pride History Month. The second was a potential collaboration between Middletown Pride and Sky Casper events to have a holiday themed dinner and show during the month of December. The Committee discussed both events and agreed that the Committee would not want to host in-person events that are indoors during the COVID-19 pandemic, especially because cases are increasing both locally and nationally. Assistant General Counsel Forte informed the committee that Middletown Pride is selling pride masks and memorabilia packs as a fundraiser for Middletown Pride.

B. Update from the Russell Library. Jennifer Billingsley came up with an idea about approaching the local coffee shops for a pride hot chocolate event during winter, and discussed how we should wait and see the next few months to see if would be safe.

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- C. Update from Wesleyan University.** None.
- D. Update from the Middlesex County Chamber of Commerce.** Haley Stafford informed the Committee that she will be posting about the fact that Middletown Pride is selling masks, so the Committee members can share information about it. She also informed the Committee that Middletown Pride announced its new date, June 5, 2021. She explained that while Pride has occurred for the past two years on the third Saturday of June, this year, Middletown Pride was moved so that it would not fall on Juneteenth to allow for a celebration of that day to occur. Haley also discussed her efforts in reaching out to sponsors, and that the Chamber will be sending out sponsorship letters to local and statewide businesses.
- E. Update from the Sponsorship Subcommittee.** Committee Member Santacroe detailed the subcommittee's efforts in reaching out to new sponsors, getting outreach together, and their intent to create a virtual sponsorship package to provide to potential sponsors.
- F. Update from the Entertainment Subcommittee.** Madison informed the Committee that performers for Pride 2021 are excited, and that Madison is working with local drag queens to create events and fundraisers both during Pride 2021 and in the months leading up to Pride.
- G. Update from the Digital and Virtual Outreach Subcommittee.** Jennifer Billingsley informed the Committee that the Subcommittee met in early October and discussed ways to get feedback from the public on Pride. Jennifer stated that the first planned social media event from this Subcommittee is planned for Tuesday, October 27 from 4-6 p.m., and will be an open forum on Zoom and will allow the public to provide input on Pride 2021. Jennifer also informed the Committee that the Russell Library partnered with the Middletown High School GSA during Solidarity Week for a social media campaign that was successful.

5. Old Business.

- A. Planning for Pride 2021.** None.

6. Adjournment.

The meeting was ended at 6:30 p.m. by Staff.