



WASHINGTON STATE
LGBTQ
COMMISSION

Executive Director's Report

September 16th, 2022

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Commission Meeting
Vancouver, Clark County, WA

The Washington State LGBTQ Commission envisions a state where every lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, two-spirit, and intersex Washingtonian of any age feels safe, supported, and empowered.

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Below is a summary of the activities of the Commission staff from July through mid-September 2022, including legislative advocacy and community outreach.

1. STAFF AND COMMISSIONERS ACTIVITIES

Staff: The Commission said goodbye to our fierce interns, who did a fantastic job researching and updating our list of resources, as well as working in collaboration with the Department of Archeology and Historic Preservation to identify locations of historical significance for the LGBTQ community in King County.

Tracey and I also held an onboarding meeting with new Commissioners to go over their role, responsibilities, and requirements as appointed members of the Commission.

Outreach:

The following outreach events were hosted or co-hosted by the LGBTQ Commission:

- **MPV and LGBTQ Community Roundtable:** I joined Dr. U. Shah, Washington Secretary of Health, for a roundtable with LGBTQ community members in Seattle to discuss the impact of MPV on the community and find ways to stop stigmatization while also spreading information on prevention.
- **New Commissioners Onboarding:** Tracey and I held an onboarding meeting with new Commissioners.
- **Meeting with LGBTQ Delegation from Kazakhstan:** Tracey, Commissioner Kelly-Barroga, and I had the opportunity to meet with a group of LGBTQ leaders from Kazakhstan. This group is part of a leadership program with the US Department of State. We had the chance to hear about their work and share more about the work of the LGBTQ Commission in Washington.

Community and official events attended and relationship with grassroots groups:

- **Pierce County LGBTQ Leaders:** I met with LGBTQ leaders from Pierce County – PCAF, AHAT Homecare, Oasis Youth Center, and Rainbow Center – to discuss the state’s response to MPV.
- **South Park Senior Center:** staff met with leadership team of this organization to share information on services to LGBTQ elders.
- **WA Library Association:** the Governor’s policy staff and I have been meeting with members of the “School libraries” section of the WA Library Association to discuss best ways to address the anti-LGBTQ policies being considered in school boards throughout the state.
- **Village Plan Spokane:** met with staff from this organization to discuss services for LGBTQ elders and their caretaking family members.
- **United Way of Pierce County:** was invited to be part of United Way’s advisory committee for Hispanic Heritage Month.
- **Pacific Northwest Black Pride:** participated of PNW Black Pride celebration and shared the Governor’s proclamation with the group during their pride festival.
- **Maryland LGBTQ Commission:** the Executive Director of the newly established Maryland LGBTQ Commission reached out to us and we had a wonderful meeting to discuss our respective work and explore partnership opportunities.
- **A.L.A. Consulting:** met and recorded an interview with this business to highlight the work of the Commission and celebrate Pride season.

2. ADVOCACY AND LEGISLATION

Government Agencies

The Commission has the mandate to engage government agencies and offer support and feedback on issues related to LGBTQ inclusion. Currently, I have met or being involved in work with the following agencies to discuss matters related to LGBTQ inclusion:

- **Department of Health:** continue working with DOH to address concerns regarding the state’s response to MPV health emergency. In addition to the community meeting with LGBTQ leaders, I have collaborated with DOH on a press conference, reviewing outreach and prevention materials, and recording an informational video for the community.

- **Department of Transportation:** Tracey has been meeting with WSDOT and a coalition of Commissions to help WSDOT's equity and belonging efforts.
- **WA Legislature:** I had the opportunity to speak with the Legislative Scholars group for the Legislature to share about the work of the Commission and leadership opportunities in the state.
- **Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction:** I have helped the OSPI to review policies and guidelines related to LGBTQ students.
- **Office of the Education Ombuds:** in addition to regular meetings to discuss matters related to LGBTQ students in schools, I have participated of meetings to help the OEO develop their PEAR strategy.
- **Results Washington:** recently met with new Director Mandeep Kaundal to discuss collaborative work and share ideas for improvement of outcomes for state agencies.
- **Washington State Patrol:** participated of discussions with WSP regarding hiring and retention practices and needs.
- **US Department of Health & Human Services:** have met with representative of Region 10 to discuss outreach to LGBTQ communities in WA, and connect them with local grassroots organizations outside of the metro Seattle area.
- **Washington Resiliency Workgroup:** this interagency group is currently finalizing budget and legislative proposals to implement systemic changes that will benefit service delivery to citizens.
- **Department of Archeology and Historic Preservation:** continued work with the Department on mapping the history of LGBTQ historically significant places in Seattle/King County.
- **Office of Equity:** currently in ongoing conversations regarding collaboration and implementation of the statewide equity plan. The Commission, along with other partners, has been engaged in every aspect of the work: from identifying areas of growth to participating of interviewing panels for new staff.
- **Department of Licensing:** continued meeting and engaging in conversations with the Director of the DOL to discuss issues of equity and inclusion for LGBTQ employees and clients.
- **Legislative Poverty Reduction Workgroup & Governor Poverty Reduction Workgroup:** continue participating of meetings with this

- group to discuss ideas to address poverty in Washington and generate ideas on how to reduce poverty and support vulnerable communities.
- **Health and Human Services Sex and Gender Coalition:** an interagency workgroup to address the need to update forms, applications, and systems to best record and get information on people's gender identity in way that would both provide them options to self-identify and get services that only recognize the gender binary. I participate of meeting with the Coalition every other week.
 - **Office of Financial Management:** OFM hosts monthly meetings with the executive sponsors for the state's business resource groups and I have attended all meetings this year. I also met with staff from OFM to discuss budget provisos and requests.
 - Minority Commissions – **Commission on African American Affairs, Commission on Hispanic Affairs, Commission on Asian Pacific Islander Affairs, and Women's Commission:** participated of regular calls with colleagues to support cross-agency work. Additionally, I have met with the leads of these agencies regularly to ask for feedback, offer support, or work on specific projects.
 - **Rainbow Alliance and Inclusion Network (RAIN):** as their Executive Sponsor, I meet with the leadership team monthly for three hours to go over plans, offer support, listen to concerns, help develop programs, and serve as an advocate for the group with the Governor's Office and OFM.
 - **Governor's Policy Office:** continue meeting with representatives from the policy office to strategize on policy ideas to support LGBTQ youth throughout the state.

Other – Policy and Budget Update

The Commission submitted three preliminary requests for consideration of the Office of Financial Management and the Governor's executive team. Two proposals were pre-approved and one was put on hold, pending guidelines from the Office of Equity. The pre-approved proposals are:

1. *LGBTQ Youth Advisory Council:* requesting \$250,000 to, in collaboration with the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, create a

statewide youth advisory council to work on policy ideas to keep LGBTQ youth protected in schools.

2. *Washington LGBTQ Community Survey*: requesting \$500,000 to contract with a state research institution to develop and conduct a statewide comprehensive survey that will help identify the needs of the LGBTQ community in the state as well as have a clearer picture of the demographics of the community in Washington.

The proposal on hold is:

- *Lived Experience Stipends*: requesting an increase of \$20,000 to the general operating budget of the Commission to comply with SB5793 to provide appropriate compensation to people serving on boards and commissions sharing their lived experience.

3. COMMISSION EVENTS CALENDAR

Public meetings:

- Friday, November 18th from 10:00 am – 5:00 pm (officers elections during this meeting)

In addition to the events and opportunities shared here, I have also engaged in other important work that I would like to share with the Commission. Recently, the Council for Latino Workplace Leadership informed me that they had selected me as one of the recipients of this year's Latino Leadership Award. This award recognizes Latino/a/x and Hispanic leaders in the USA and is presented at the National Latino Leadership Conference which this year will be held in Miami, FL. The Council also extended an invitation to participate as a panelist at the conference to share about the experience of being an LGBTQ Latino executive leader. I am looking forward to sharing with my community from throughout the USA this coming week!

I also had the opportunity to meet with a fellow state employee who is exploring the creation of a business resource group to attend to the needs of first-generation employees – employees who are the first in their families to attain higher education or being employed by the state. I am also supporting the work and mentoring a group of state employees who are working on expanding the definition of “family” for State HR.