



WASHINGTON STATE  
**LGBTQ**  
COMMISSION

## **Executive Director's Report**

May 19<sup>th</sup>, 2023

By J. Manny Santiago

Commission Meeting  
Seattle, King County, WA

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**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.**

## Executive Director's Report May 19<sup>th</sup>, 2023

Below is a summary of the activities of the Commission staff from mid-March through mid-May 2023, including legislative advocacy and community outreach.

### 1. STAFF AND COMMISSIONERS ACTIVITIES

**Staff:** The staff of the Commission met with over a dozen applicants for the open positions for Commissioners. The pool of candidates was quite strong and diverse. After the meetings, recommendations were submitted to the Office of Boards and Commissions for consideration. Currently, three Commissioners are seeking reappointment, and two Commissioners have expressed their intention to finish their second full terms.

Recently, we also met with a prospective intern coming to us from the University of Puget Sound. Tracey is currently finalizing the details to bring this intern for the summer.

Commissioners continue to engage in community work. Commissioner Coleman has continued to engage the La Center School Board and their superintendent. They have participated of public meetings and reached out to each School Board member individually. Commissioner Coleman has also engaged with community members concerns with books removed or banned from a local public library in Clark County.

In Jefferson County, Commissioner Serinus has reached out to community groups and individuals. He has engaged with LGBTQ seniors to hear about their needs and ideas on how to address their needs. Commissioner Serinus has also engaged youth and students to hear their concerns and present ideas on how to best address these concerns to the Commission.

#### **Outreach:**

- **Bill Signing Ceremony:** I was invited and attended the signing of several bills addressing reproductive and gender-affirming rights for Washingtonians on April 27<sup>th</sup>.

- **Celebration of Life for John & Rudy:** On Sunday, April 2<sup>nd</sup>, I had the opportunity to join the Pierce County LGBTQ community to celebrate the lives of John McCluskey and Rudy Henry. John and Rudy were the first same-sex couple of obtained a marriage license in Pierce County once marriage equality was legalized in the state. I had met and shared with them since moving back to WA and learned a lot about the history of LGBTQ people on this side of the state. Rudy and John were great advocates for LGBTQ Washingtonians, and they even were part of the groups that founded Tacoma Pride. As they transitioned from this life to join our LGBTQ ancestors, it was important for our community to take time to celebrate their lives and commit ourselves to keep on their legacy of advocacy.

Community and official events attended and relationship with grassroots groups:

- **Administration of Children and Families - Department of Health and Human Services:** attended and presented in panels at the National Convening on Building an Inclusive Human Services System in Maryland. I was also on the national planning committee for this conference.
- **Public Sector Network:** continued meeting with this international government innovation group. I was also invited to be part of their national advisory board, where I serve with two other colleagues from WA state government. Currently helping with the final details regarding the WA Government Innovation Conference scheduled for June 8<sup>th</sup> in Tacoma.
- **American Veterans for Equal Rights:** met with the WA chapter president to talk about collaboration and mutual support.
- **Spectrum Center Spokane:** after the last public meeting of the Commission, staff and Commissioners joined the Two-Spirit and Indigiqueer program of Spectrum Center to learn more about their projects and their work. It was a fantastic time learning about reclaiming of traditions and the history of work with Two-Spirit and Indigiqueer communities.
- **Rainbow Center Tacoma:** met with their new Executive Director, Quincy Taylor, and other staff to continue building relationship.

- **Lavender Rights Project:** have engaged in communication with their Executive Director to address concerns from the community regarding the erasure of trans and gender expansive people in certain areas.
- **Goodwill of the Puget Sound and Olympic Peninsula:** attended their centennial celebration luncheon and award ceremony.
- **Maryland State LGBTQ Commission:** during my trip to DC, I had the opportunity to meet in person with the Director of the Maryland State LGBTQ Commission. We shared stories, ideas, challenges, and continued finding ways to support each other's work in our respective jurisdictions.
- **Entre Hermanos:** I recently met with their new Executive Director, Edgar Longoria, to talk about partnerships and what support the LGBTQ Commission can offer the organization.
- **WA State Fathers Network:** met with the new Director of this network, Matthew Rickmon, who is looking to make the organization more inclusive and expansive, as well as exploring ways to address the specific needs of trans masculine and transgender fathers and parents.
- **Office of Michigan Governor Whitmer:** met with policy advisors from the Governor's office to discuss their plans to create a statewide LGBTQ Commission in MI.

## 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:

- **Office of Financial Management:** I have met with staff of OFM for different things such as:
  - **State HR:** continued the conversation on expanding the definition of family for family leave. The work is pretty much moving forward at a great pace, and we might have some concrete plans on how to implement this next year.
  - **Budget Office:** continue meeting regularly with state CFO and staff to discuss operating budget for the Commission

- **OFM Human Resources:** continued meetings with HR consultant to discuss personnel compensation changes and staff evaluations
- **Governor's Interagency Council on Health Disparities:** in addition to regular communication, reviewed and provided feedback on foundational documents and proposed charter changes. The Council is looking to become more inclusive and is proposing to add the LGBTQ Commission as a voting constituent of the agency.
- **Department of Children, Youth, and Families:** met with staff from the foster care division, to discuss ways in which we can address the urgent needs of LGBTQ children and youth in foster care. Conversations continue, including coordination of a series of town halls to address these issues throughout the state.
- **Office of Financial Management:** have engaged in preliminary conversations regarding contracts as it relates to the funding approved to conduct a comprehensive survey of the LGBTQ community in the state.
- **WA Department of Archeology and Historic Preservation:** met with my colleague Allyson Brooks, director of the department, to discuss joint projects regarding LGBTQ spaces in the state. We are currently planning for submitting grant proposals and budget provisos to conduct archeological research to identify important, historic spaces of the community.
- **Governor's Subcabinet on Business Diversity:** participated of a meeting to relaunch this group. The subcabinet is exploring ways to make the LGBTQ Commission an official member of the group.
- **Office of the Governor:** met with regional representative to go over the details regarding the Flag Raising Ceremony on June 1<sup>st</sup> at the Capitol Campus.
- **Poverty Reduction Workgroup:** met with the coordinator for the workgroup to talk about changes to this group. Also participated of the day-long meeting of the group to strategize about next steps after the final report was already submitted to the Legislature.
- **Commission on Hispanic Affairs:** regular check-in meetings with Director Sigüenza.
- **Department of Enterprise Services:** continued conversations about supplier diversity and the inclusion of LGBTQ-owned businesses.

- **Office of Minority and Women’s Business Enterprises:** continued conversations with leadership on the need to expand LGBTQ certification for small businesses. Currently have a meeting scheduled to discuss LGBTQ certification.
- **Washington State Patrol:** met with staff once more to discuss challenges regarding recruitment of minoritized communities, including LGBTQ people, and some challenges the agency is facing implementing DEI principles. I also discussed the implementation of the “Safe Space” program through WSP locations and service areas.
- **Office of Equity:** in addition to the regular meetings with the Office of Equity and ethnic and Women’s Commissions, met with staff from the Office to discuss the Commission’s participation at their monthly “Real Talk” podcast addressing LGBTQ issues.
- **Joint Legislative Audit and Review Committee:** I have been part of the committee’s group of stakeholders who offer input, feedback, and help plan questions to assess the implementation of legislation and its impact on minoritized 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.
- 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 people around the state. Meet regularly with our policy advisor, Dontae Payne.

Other – Policy and Budget Update

Great news! Out budget requests were fully funded! The Commission will not be able to conduct a comprehensive survey of the community, establish an LGBTQ Youth Advisory Board for the Governor’s Office, and hire an additional full-time member of the staff.

3. BUDGET REPORT

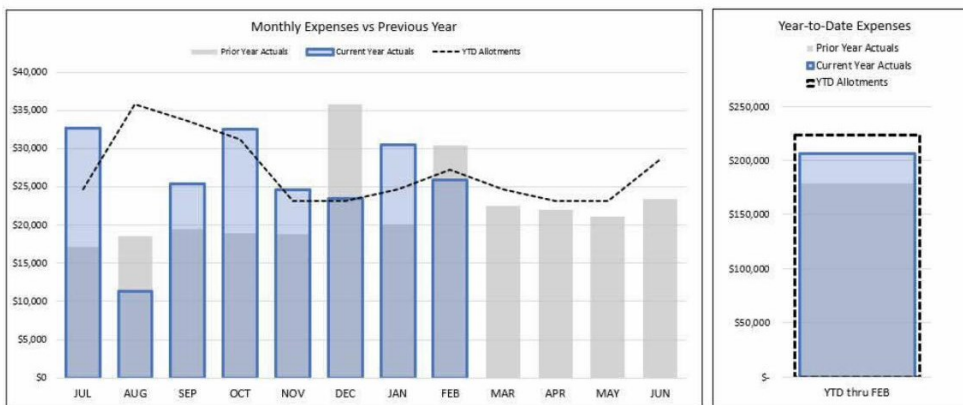
LGBTQ (016) - Salaries and Expenses

Fund 001 General Fund: 011/012

Expenses	FM13 to FM17 JUL thru NOV	FM18 DEC	FM19 JAN	FM20 FEB	YTD Actuals	YTD Allotments	Variance	Total Annual Allotments	Notes
A / Salaries and Wages	76,690	15,338	15,338	15,494	122,860	122,704	(156)	184,056	
B / Employee Benefits	25,347	5,074	5,079	5,118	40,617	40,688	71	61,032	
C / Professional Service Contracts	-	150	4,213	-	4,363	-	(4,363)	-	
EA / Supplies and Materials	726	678	552	-	1,956	2,400	444	3,600	
EB / Communications/Telecomms	879	89	90	90	1,147	1,152	5	1,508	
EC / Utilities	1,487	144	-	-	1,630	1,658	28	1,658	
ED / Rentals & Leases - Land & Bldg	4,348	1,087	1,262	1,242	7,939	8,696	757	13,044	
EF / Printing & Reproduction	-	-	8	-	8	-	(8)	-	
EG / Employee Prof Dev & Training	-	-	-	611	611	-	(611)	-	
EH / Rental & Leases - Furn & Equip	1,997	-	160	-	2,157	400	(1,757)	400	
EM / Attorney General Services	556	239	557	735	2,087	4,500	2,413	7,500	
ER / Other Contractual Services	47	(0)	-	-	47	-	(47)	-	
EY / Software Licenses and Maint	5,250	-	1,260	-	6,510	6,504	(6)	6,756	
EZ / Other Goods and Services	12,459	-	39	-	12,498	17,000	4,502	17,000	
G / Travel	8,330	701	2,017	2,574	13,623	18,000	4,378	27,000	
S / Interagency Reimbursements	(11,590)	-	-	-	(11,590)	-	11,590	-	
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>126,523</b>	<b>23,500</b>	<b>30,574</b>	<b>25,865</b>	<b>206,462</b>	<b>223,702</b>	<b>17,240</b>	<b>323,554</b>	

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#### **4. COMMISSION EVENTS CALENDAR**

*Rainbow Flag Raising on Capitol Campus:*

- Thursday, June 1<sup>st</sup> – Capitol Campus, Olympia at noon

*Public meetings:* The Commission will be meeting on the following dates in 2023:

- Friday, July 21<sup>st</sup> – Walla Walla County
- Friday, September 15<sup>th</sup> – Thurston County
- Friday, November 17<sup>th</sup> – Skagit County