



WASHINGTON STATE  
**LGBTQ**  
COMMISSION

## **Executive Director's Report**

November 17<sup>th</sup>, 2023

By J. Manny Santiago

Commission Meeting  
Bellingham, Whatcom 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

November 17<sup>th</sup>, 2023

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

### 1. STAFF AND COMMISSIONERS ACTIVITIES

**Staff:** This has been a season of change at the LGBTQ Commission. In August we welcomed Sawyer Tuttle as our Executive Assistant. In October, Tracey Carlos' appointment as Program Manager ended. Currently I am working with the Human Resources team at OFM to start recruiting a new Program Manager. I expect to have a Program Manager in place by the end of the calendar year. During the transition, Sawyer and I have been sharing responsibilities related to programs to ensure continuity.

During Hispanic Heritage Month, the Consulate General of Mexico extended me an invitation to represent the state at a special celebration of their country's independence. After receiving authorization from the Office of International Relations and Protocol, I had the honor of attending the special reception and concert on behalf of Governor Inslee and the state of Washington government.

Early in October I traveled to Nevada for a national conference for community and technical colleges trustees hosted by the national Association of Community Colleges Trustees. During this conference, I had the chance to meet 2SLGBTQIA trustees from throughout the USA and its territories. As a result of conversations with other trustees, especially those in areas of the country where repressive policies are being implemented, we are now working on establishing a national caucus of 2SLGBTQIA community and technical colleges trustees.

On October 28<sup>th</sup> I attended the annual "Dia de los Muertos" Gala for Entre Hermanos, where the agency presented me with their "Latino Leader of the Year" award. I am grateful for the recognition and, as I shared with the audience, this is not *my* work, but *our* work. I am grateful to have the opportunity to serve my communities and to learn from and with every person I encounter in my life journey.

Recently, Representative Skyler Rude (R – Walla Walla), informed me that he asked not to be reappointed to the LGBTQ Commission as has not been able to attend meetings and does not expect to be able to attend meetings in the future. The loss of Rep. Rude means that the Commission currently does not have any legislative advisors from the Republican caucuses in either Senate or House. I asked Rep. Rude to share the names of any of his colleagues who might be interested in being appointed as legislative advisors to the Commission.

Finally, as the Inslee administration prepares for the transition after the general elections of 2024, the Chief of Staff and Deputy Chief of Staff are meeting with agencies to discuss transition plans. The LGBTQ Commission meets with them right before our public meeting and thus, any updates will be shared during that time.

#### **Outreach:**

- **RAIN Agency Awards Celebration:** Each year, RAIN presents the Agency Awards to state agencies that work to improve their support for 2SLGBTQIA employees. I was a speaker at this year's celebration, held on Thursday, October 19<sup>th</sup>. Three agencies were presented with the award: Department of Licensing, Office of the Corrections Ombuds, and Washington State Parks.
- **Equity Summit:** the WA State Equity Office held its second Equity Summit on Tuesday and Wednesday, October 24-25<sup>th</sup> in Tacoma. Both Sawyer and I attended most of the meetings on Tuesday, and part of the meetings on Wednesday.

Community and official events attended, meetings, and relationship building with grassroots groups:

- **PCAF:** In early summer PCAF was facing challenges getting paid for contracts with the WA Department of Health. Their (now former) CEO reached out to the Commission to inquire about this issue and to help check on the status of contracts to provide services to people living with HIV in Pierce, Thurston, and Lewis counties. During our inquiry, I also met with staff from PCAF in Thurston County as they were working to expand their reach to Lewis County's 2SLGBTQIA communities.

Simultaneously, members of the Clients Advisory Board reached out to the Commission to share some concerns about internal matters that were affecting the continuity of care for people living with HIV, particularly, members of the 2SLGBTQIA community. Our policy advisor and I found information that helped clarify the status of the contracts, as well as the plans DOH had to cancel their contracts and move the clients into DOH direct care. This situation has impacted hundreds of people living with HIV in Pierce, Thurston, and Lewis. Moreover, the cancellation of contracts and mismanagement of funds have impacted Oasis Youth Center, which serves 2SLGBTQIA youth in Pierce, Kitsap, and Mason counties. (As well as having an impact on our own co-chair, KB Kelly-Barroga, who is a senior staff with Oasis.) Both our policy advisor, Dontae Payne, and I have continued to engage DOH and others to ensure the continuity of care for clients, especially those directly impacted.

- **Trans Protections Coalition:** I had the opportunity to meet with the convener of the coalition to talk about the next legislative session and our approach to advocacy for trans and gender-expansive folk in WA.
- **GSBA:** In addition to the regular communications regarding LGBTQ certification for small businesses, I was also a speaker at their “Supplier Diversity Forum” on September 19<sup>th</sup>. I also attended their legislative convening in early November.
- **AHAT Homecare:** Partly as result of the situation with PCAF in Pierce County, I have also met regularly with the Executive Director and staff of AHAT Homecare in Tacoma. This agency provides housing services and medical case management for people living with HIV.
- **Seattle Times:** I met and interviewed with a reporter who is working a story on the transgender-affirming policies implemented in Washington state.
- **Lavender Rights Project:** Met with their Executive Director to learn about their recent move to a new office space in Seattle, to hear about their legislative priorities, and to strategize for the next legislative session and beyond.
- **QLaw:** I met with their policy director to discuss strategies for the next legislative session.

- **University of Washington Tacoma:** I attended their annual Latine Awards Ceremony, which honors Latin/a/x/o folk in Pierce County who have made significant contributions to their communities.
- **Entre Hermanos:** I met with their Executive Director to discuss their legislative priorities for the next legislative session. Also, as mentioned, I had the opportunity to attend their annual gala.
- **WA Library Association:** I attended a meeting between the WA library association and Senator Yasmin Trudeau (D – Tacoma) to discuss possible legislation to prevent book bans and anti-2SLGBTQIA policies in public libraries.
- **Sound Outreach:** I attended their annual luncheon in Pierce County, where they shared about their work advancing economic opportunities for individuals and families throughout the Puget Sound region.
- **Northwest Immigrants Rights Project:** I met with the President of the Board of Directors of this agency to discuss possible partnerships and outreach to 2SLGBTQIA immigrants and refugees in the area.
- **Legal Voice:** As part of the planning for legislative session, I met with representatives of this agency to talk about advocacy for funding to do capacity building to implement some of the 2SLGBTQIA legislation passed in the current years.
- **Bellingham Queer Collective:** After their visit with us for our last public meeting, I met with their Founder and Director to learn about their group and extend an invitation to present at the November public meeting.
- **Northwest Youth Services:** Upon recommendation from the Bellingham Queer Collective, I met with the Director and staff of this organization to learn more about their services for 2SLGBTQIA youth in Whatcom County.
- **Rainbow Center:** I had the chance to attend their 21<sup>st</sup> Black & White Gayla, along with RAIN representatives.

## 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 the Lieutenant Governor:** The staff and I attended a statewide convening on “civic health” to learn and share strategies to help with reduce the polarization that currently exists in public discourse.
- **Washington State Department of Transportation:** Staff of the Commission attended the quarterly meeting between the WSDOT and the Commissions.
- **City of Gig Harbor – City Council:** met with a council member to discuss the city’s policies regarding pride flag display and challenges to pass ordinances and orders to raise the flag on city property.
- **Office of Financial Management:** I continue meeting with staff of OFM for different things such as:
  - **Budget Office:** continue meeting regularly with state CFO and staff to discuss operating budget for the Commission. (Updated budget reports are now part of my bimonthly reports to the Commission. You can find them at the end of this document.)
  - **OFM Human Resources:** continued meetings with HR consultant to discuss personnel evaluations, recruitment and onboarding of new staff, and address other personnel matters.
  - **Contracts Office:** I met several times with staff from the Contracts Office to go over the proposals to conduct a comprehensive LGBTQ survey.
  - **BRGs Coordinator:** there are two regular meetings with OFM staff regarding BRGs and leadership. These meetings are designed to address the most common challenges that members of the BRG leadership teams face.
- **Department of Enterprise Services:** Since the unfortunate event of the cutting of a memorial tree honoring the late Cal Anderson, I have met several times with Director Smith to provide feedback and guidance. I am also part of their workgroup to determine next steps to honor Cal Anderson’s life and work.
- **Office of Equity:** Sawyer and I attended part of the two-day Equity Summit hosted by this agency. I also attend the regular meetings between the Office of Equity and the different commissions, committees, and agencies that serve minoritized communities. These

meetings help in coordinating a unified voice to advocate for justice and equity in our state.

- **Governor's Interagency Council on Health Disparities:** I continue engaging the staff to provide feedback on their work. Commissioner Hill-Meyer is the official representative from our agency to this group.
- **Washington State Women's Commission:** I continue meeting regularly with their Director and staff.
- **DHSH Language Access Work Group:** I continue participating of biweekly meetings of this work group to provide feedback on LGBTQ-affirming language for medical interpreters.
- **Employment Security Department:** I recently met with DEI staff from the agency to discuss outreach to 2SLGBTQIA constituents.
- **Governor's Subcabinet on Business Diversity:** The Commission is now a full member of the Subcabinet, and I will continue attending meetings and receiving updates on their progress.
- **Policy Office – Office of the Governor:** I continue to regularly meet with our policy advisor to discuss policy matters related to book bans, access to gender-affirming care for young people, and other policy issues.
- **Poverty Reduction Workgroup:** The official representative from our agency is Commissioner Ebo Barton, and I receive regular updates from the staff of this workgroup on the status of the implementation of the policies.
- **Commission on Hispanic Affairs:** I continue the regular check-in meetings with Director Sigüenza.
- **Department of Children, Youth, and Families:** I am currently in conversations with the Secretary and the AG Office regarding the impact of federal policies that impact 2SLGBTQIA children in foster care.
- **Health and Human Services Sex and Gender Coalition:** This group is currently not meeting regularly as the staff implements some of the guidelines already approved. However, they send regular updates to the members of the coalition. The group will convene again in 2024.
- **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.

*Other – Policy and Budget Update*

- a) LGBTQ Comprehensive Survey: after a thorough process, a contractor has been identified. Washington State University was selected as the agency to contract with to conduct the survey. We are currently in the process of reviewing the contract and signing. It is expected that the contractor will start their work in early December. Commissioners Jason Victor Serinus and Tobi Hill-Meyer joined me as the proposal evaluation committee.
- b) LGBTQ Youth Advisory Council: the taskforce continues to meet regularly. We also confirmed that youth who are part of the taskforce are eligible for compensation according to the rules authorizing stipends for members of boards and commissions.
- c) LGBTQ Business Certification: the decision package was submitted and accepted. It is currently part of the budget package presented by the Office of Minority and Women Business Enterprises. We are also in conversations with the LGBTQ Legislative Caucus and The GSBA to coordinate a study session with legislators on the subject of certification.
- d) The staff of the Commission attended the annual Legislative Convening organized by GSBA on November 7<sup>th</sup>. We had the opportunity to hear some of the ideas, needs, and plans from our community partners for the 2024 legislative session, as well as to offer an update on the legislative pieces the Commission is working on.

**3. BUDGET REPORT (AS OF JULY 2023)**

**LGBTQ (031) - Salaries and Expenses**

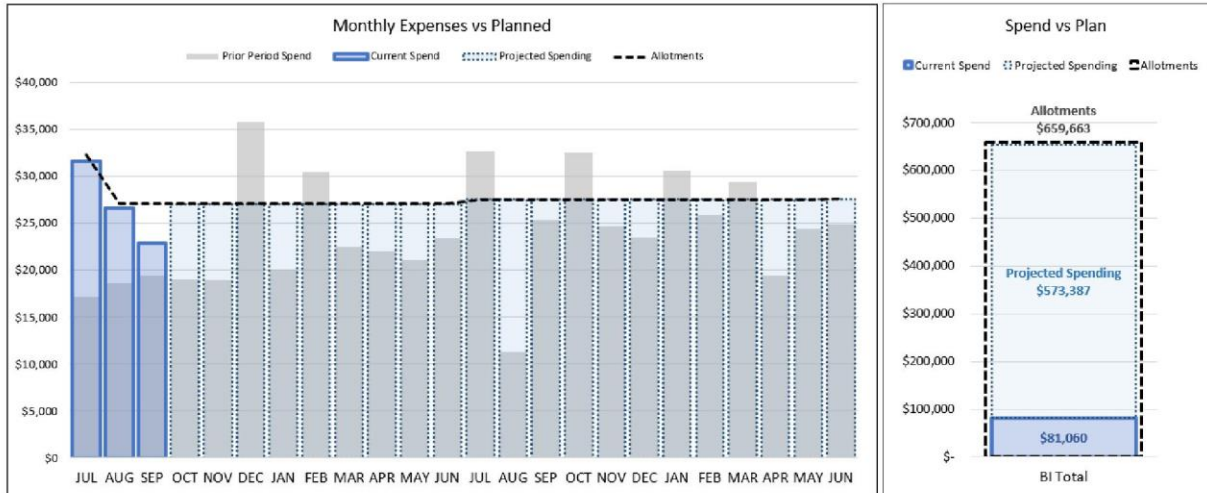
**Fund 001 General Fund: 011/012**

Expenses	FM01 JUL	FM02 AUG	FM03 SEP	YTD Total	YTD Allotments	Variance	Total Annual Allotments	Total Annual Projections	Projected Variance	Notes	
A / Salaries <small>Chart Area</small>	-	19,598	18,785	14,431	52,794	51,858	(939)	195,418	198,358	(939)	Tittle moved to PI 00033
B / Employee Benefits	-	5,024	5,552	4,818	15,394	16,075	681	60,580	59,899	681	
C / Professional Service Contracts	-	-	-	-	-	1,125	1,125	4,500	3,375	1,125	
EA / Supplies and Materials	-	312	-	214	526	651	125	2,600	2,475	125	
EB / Communications/Telecommunications	-	-	247	132	379	375	(4)	1,500	1,504	(4)	
EC / Utilities	-	-	-	311	311	876	565	3,500	2,935	565	
ED / Rentals and Leases - Land & Buildings	-	1,087	1,087	1,087	3,261	2,451	(810)	9,800	10,610	(810)	
EF / Printing and Reproduction	-	-	-	-	-	24	24	100	76	24	
EG / Employee Prof Dev & Training	-	395	595	-	990	249	(741)	1,000	1,741	(741)	
EH / Rental & Leases - Furn & Equipment	-	-	-	-	-	549	549	2,200	1,851	549	
EM / Attorney General Services	-	-	426	218	644	600	(44)	2,400	2,444	(44)	
ER / Other Contractual Services	-	-	-	140	140	1,476	1,336	5,902	4,566	1,336	
EY / Software Licenses and Maintenance	-	-	-	-	-	1,650	1,650	6,600	4,950	1,650	
EZ / Other Goods and Services	-	-	-	-	-	3,249	3,249	13,000	9,751	3,249	
G / Travel	-	4,935	(86)	1,319	6,188	5,070	(1,118)	20,300	21,418	(1,118)	
J / Capital Outlays	-	-	33	-	33	-	(33)	-	33	(33)	
N / Grants	-	200	-	200	400	-	(400)	-	400	(400)	
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	-	<b>31,551</b>	<b>26,639</b>	<b>22,870</b>	<b>81,060</b>	<b>86,276</b>	<b>5,216</b>	<b>329,400</b>	<b>324,184</b>	<b>5,216</b>	



## LGBTQ (031) - Salaries and Expenses

### Fund 001 General Fund: 011/012



OFM 10/24/2023

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#### 4. COMMISSION EVENTS CALENDAR

- *Public meetings:* The Commission will be adopting a calendar of meetings during the November public meeting.
- *Community time:* after the November public meeting on Friday, November 17<sup>th</sup>, leaders of the 2SLGBTQ community in Bellingham are inviting the Commissioners to join them at a local restaurant.
- *Commission Office closure:* The LGBTQ Commission office will be closed from December 25<sup>th</sup> – January 2<sup>nd</sup>.