



WASHINGTON STATE
LGBTQ
COMMISSION

Staff Report

March 15, 2024

Commission Meeting
Everett, Snohomish County

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.

Staff Report

March 15th, 2024

Below is a summary of the activities of the Commission staff from mid-January 2024 through mid-March 2024, including legislative advocacy and community outreach.

1. STAFF AND COMMISSIONERS ACTIVITIES

Staff:

Former Executive Director Manny Santiago served his last day with the Commission on January 31st, 2024. We are so thankful for Manny's time as the inaugural director of the Washington State LGBTQ Commission and are sad to see him go, but wish him all the best in his future endeavors! Governor Inslee has appointed Sheri Sawyer as Acting Director of the Commission while applications are being reviewed for the Director position. Sheri serves as the Deputy Director of Policy & Outreach for the Governor's Office. Staff of the Commission have been working closely with Sheri since her appointment and are so excited to welcome her to the team! An update on the search to fill the permanent position will be given at the March public meeting.

Sam has been working diligently on establishing the Youth Advisory Council (YAC). The application launched on March 11th, 2024, and will remain open until May 15th, 2024. Appointments to the council will be made in June. The YAC will seat 12 2SLGBTQIA+ youth in WA. Staff have outlined a communications plan and have already started to distribute the application link to organizations throughout Washington. Staff have also started outreach to organizations that might have the capacity to host an application party with the Commission, where youth can receive assistance with their application. Sam has also been working with the WSU Survey Team while they develop survey questions and staff were given the opportunity to take the survey for the first time and provide feedback. Commissioners will also be able to provide feedback on the survey prior to and during the March public meeting.

Sawyer has been working on various administrative duties such as reorganization of internal files, communications, and website maintenance. This includes beginning to go through all the resources on the Resource tab of the website to ensure all links and contact information is accurate and creating a

consistent schedule to update various portions of the website, like the career opportunities page. They are hoping to continue working on the website page by page and welcome suggestions to improve our website's function and design. They have also started building the Commission's Instagram account back up and are aiming to post at least 3 times a week. This is a great way for the Commission to stay engaged with the community, keep aware of events happening, and provide quick information to constituents. Sawyer has also been building several internal trackers for the Commission so that staff can easily see strategic goal progress. All Commission staff have been evaluating Commissioner applications for the vacancy by Commissioner Franco. We are also going to begin evaluating applications for the next round of Commissioner appointments in April. Staff have also been working on establishing new Commissioner onboarding materials and reference materials and will send these out for feedback prior to onboarding new Commissioners.

While this has been a period of transition for the LGBTQ Commission, staff have remained committed to continuing our outreach and presence within the community. Commission programs like the Youth Advisory Council and Comprehensive LGBTQ Survey are well underway and moving along very well despite changes in staff. We have been working on organizing and preparing for a new Executive Director to come in and are looking forward to continuing to work on Commission projects with whomever that may be!

Outreach:

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

- **Cocoon House:** Sam and Sawyer reached out to Cocoon House as part of their Snohomish County outreach and met virtually with Joe Alonzo, CEO of Cocoon House, to learn more about the services they provide to homeless youth in Snohomish County. We discussed the large disparity of 2SLGBTQIA+ youth in need of shelter and discussed future partnerships with the Youth Advisory Council. Cocoon House was invited to speak at our March public meeting.
- **Snohomish Pride:** Sam and Sawyer reached out to Snohomish Pride as part of their Snohomish County outreach and met virtually with Soren

Stone, Snohomish Pride Committee Chair. Snohomish Pride will be having their 2nd celebration this summer and are excited to continue growing their presence in the community. Snohomish Pride is a committee within the Historic Downtown Snohomish Association. We invited Snohomish Pride to come share about their work in the community at the March public meeting.

- **Pride Foundation:** Sam met with Emily Lai with Pride Foundation to discuss collaboration with the Youth Advisory Council and to let them know about the upcoming comprehensive survey.
- **Pizza Klatch:** Sam and Sawyer met with Tel Rose, Board President of Pizza Klatch to discuss collaboration with the Youth Advisory Council.
- **General Organization Outreach:** Sam and Sawyer have started community outreach for the Youth Advisory Council and are reaching out to organizations that work with 2SLGBTQIA+ youth to host application parties around the state, where Commissioners or Commission staff can be present with youth to answer questions and help with the application process.

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, staff have met or being involved in work with the following agencies to discuss matters related to LGBTQ inclusion:

- **Office of the Governor:** Sheri has been providing staff and the Executive Committee with hiring updates from the Governor's office and assisted in coordinating the Intersex Progress Pride Flag raising at the Capitol on June 13th at 12pm. We will continue coordinating with them, and RAIN, for this event.
- **Governor's Policy Office:** Through Sheri's other role as Deputy Director of Policy & Outreach for the Governor's Office, she is able to keep the staff very up-to-date on legislative priorities and agency policy work.
- **DES Cal Anderson Memorial Workgoup:** Sawyer represented the Commission at a walkthrough of 3 potential sites for the Cal Anderson

Memorial on the Capitol Campus and gave input into which would honor Cal's legacy the best.

- **Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife:** Sheri, Sawyer, and Sam met with Chris Korsmo with Copper Strategic, a social impact advising group working with the WDFW to conduct listening sessions to better understand how to improve opportunities for use of WDFW water access areas among underserved communities. The Commission will continue to work with them to connect them with the 2SLGBTQIA+ community in WA and help them with this project.
- **Office of Financial Management:** Staff continue meeting with staff of OFM for different things such as:
 - o **Budget Office:** Sawyer and Sam have joined in on monthly budget meetings along with Sheri and have been in communication with the budget team regarding survey contract reimbursement and the YAC budget.
- **Office of Equity:** Sheri, Sam, and Sawyer 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. The Commission also participated in the Office of Equity "Equity in Session" videos to discuss the Commission's legislative priorities.
- **Washington State Women's Commission:** Sam and Sawyer met with the WSWC staff to meet and discuss future collaborations.
- **Washington State Commission on Asian Pacific American Affairs:** Sam and Sawyer met with the CAPAA staff to meet and discuss future collaborations.
- **Washington State Legislative Internship Program:** Sawyer represented the LGBTQ Commission at a panel with representatives from CHA and CAPAA to talk to interns about what it is like to work in Commissions.
- **Poverty Reduction Workgroup:** The official representative from our agency is Commissioner Ebo Barton, and staff receive regular updates from the staff of this workgroup on the status of the implementation of the policies.
- **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):** Sam and Sawyer met with RAINs project manager, Aylis Lind, to begin planning for the pride flag raising ceremony at the Capitol. Sawyer has been assisting RAIN with website administration as RAIN works to identify a member that would like that role. The Commission continues to support RAINs efforts.
 - **Maryland LGBTQ Commission:** Executive Director Jeremy Browning of the MD LGBTQ Commission reached out to staff to connect and discuss future collaborations between our states' respective commissions. Director Browning also connected us with some of the MD Commissioners who are doing work with LGBTQ Surveys. We were also connected with the MA LGBTQ Youth Commission and will be meeting with them soon!
 - **University of Puget Sound:** The LGBTQ Commission will be participating in the University of Puget Sound Summer Fellowship Internship Program, where we will have an intern serve in our office from late May through July! We are looking forward to evaluating application materials and working with University of Puget Sound on this.

Other – Policy and Budget Update

- a) **LGBTQ Comprehensive Survey:** Dr. Traci Gillig and the WSU Survey Team have created the draft questionnaire and Commissioners are able to complete the feedback form for that draft questionnaire by March 15th. The survey team is hard at work taking in staff and Commissioner suggestions and is also establishing an Advisory Panel which will meet for the first time on March 15th. They have also started outreach for the Survey and have several opportunities lined up in the future to promote this survey. The Commission and the survey team continue to meet monthly to collaborate with each other on this important project.
- b) **LGBTQ Youth Advisory Council:** The YAC application has been released and is available until May 15th. We are hoping to start conducting interviews in May with appointments occurring in June. Sam is working on planning a 2-3 day retreat for youth appointed to the Council to establish their operating

agreements and plan out their first year. For a more comprehensive report of YAC activities please see additional YAC report.

- c) **LGBTQ Business Certification:** This project now resides within the Office of Minority and Women Business Enterprises. This budget ask was included in the final budget passed by the Legislature! The Commission will work with OMWBE as they implement this program and help get word out to the community.
- d) **Summer Fellowship Internship Program:** Sam and Sawyer have met with the University of Puget Sound and created a job description for a future intern to serve with the LGBTQ Commission this summer. In the upcoming weeks we will be evaluating applications and working to create internship materials, training, and a list of projects/tasks for the intern to work on.

3. BUDGET REPORT (AS OF FEBRUARY 2024)

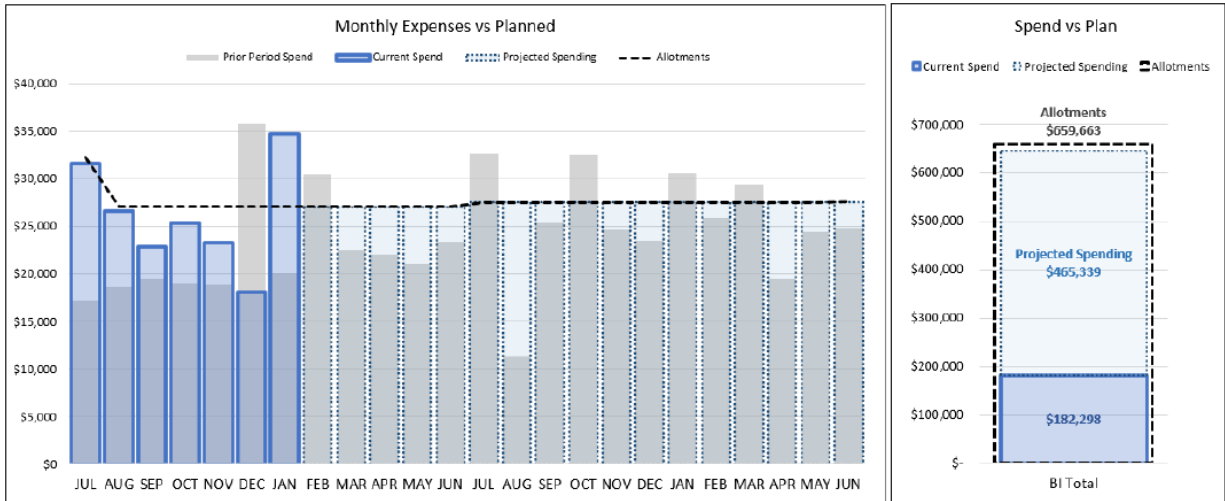
LGBTQ (031) - Salaries and Expenses

Fund 001 General Fund: 011/012

Expenses	FM01 to FM04 JUL thru OCT	FM05 NOV	FM06 DEC	FM07 JAN	YTD Total	YTD Allotments	Variance	Total Annual Allotments	Total Annual Projections	Projected Variance	Notes
A / Salaries and Wages	89,392	14,002	11,407	25,727	120,528	115,664	(4,864)	195,418	200,282	(4,864)	\$9,500 Terminal Leave
B / Employee Benefits	20,590	4,746	3,140	4,735	33,211	35,855	2,644	60,580	57,936	2,644	
C / Professional Service Contracts	-	-	-	-	-	2,625	2,625	4,500	1,875	2,625	
EA / Supplies and Materials	753	142	-	190	1,085	1,519	434	2,600	2,168	434	
EB / Communications/Telecommunications	469	46	90	173	778	875	97	1,500	1,403	97	
EC / Utilities	421	94	126	159	800	2,044	1,244	3,500	2,256	1,244	
ED / Rentals and Leases - Land & Buildings	4,348	1,087	1,087	1,087	7,609	5,719	(1,890)	9,800	11,690	(1,890)	
EF / Printing and Reproduction	30	7	2	5	44	56	12	100	88	12	
EG / Employee Prof Dev & Training	990	-	-	-	990	581	(409)	1,000	1,409	(409)	
EH / Rental & Leases - Furn & Equipment	199	48	398	48	693	1,281	588	2,200	1,612	588	
EK / Facilities and Services	41	62	45	46	214	-	(214)	-	214	(214)	
EM / Attorney General Services	825	-	-	-	825	1,400	575	2,400	1,825	575	
ER / Other Contractual Services	187	47	46	-	280	3,444	3,164	5,902	2,738	3,164	
EY / Software Licenses and Maintenance	-	-	-	63	63	3,850	3,787	6,600	2,813	3,787	
EZ / Other Goods and Services	1,500	-	250	-	1,750	7,581	5,831	13,000	7,169	5,831	
G / Travel	6,188	1,980	1,447	1,597	11,212	11,830	618	20,300	19,682	618	
J / Capital Outlays	33	-	-	33	66	-	(66)	-	66	(66)	
N / Grants	400	950	-	800	2,150	-	(2,150)	-	2,150	(2,150)	
TOTAL EXPENSES	106,366	23,231	18,038	34,663	182,298	194,324	12,026	329,400	317,374	12,026	

LGBTQ (031) - Salaries and Expenses

Fund 001 General Fund: 011/012



OFM 2/21/2024

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4. COMMISSION EVENTS CALENDAR

- *Public meetings:*
 - Friday, May 17th, 9:00 am – 5:00 pm: Yakima County
 - Friday, July 19th, 12:00 noon – 5:00 pm and Saturday, July 20th, 9:00 am – 12:00 noon: Jefferson County
 - Friday, October 18th, 9:00 am – 5:00 pm: Thurston County
- *Commission Events*
 - Thursday, June 13th, 12:00 pm: Intersectional Progress Pride Flag Raising with Governor Inslee
 - Youth Advisory Council Application Parties: TBD, Statewide through April and May. More details to come!