

LGBTQIA+ Advisory Committee

Agenda

Monday, January 27, 2025

6:30 p.m., Virtual Microsoft Teams

In attendance:

Committee Members: Samantha Perez, Liz Erion, Laura Tinter, Laman Ben-Trahouret, TJ Flavell, Tom Villa, Sam Barnes, Freddie Lutz, James Fisher, Kaitlyn Goyal, Sam Jane

Staff: Elizabeth Matlock, Destiny Esper, Kimberly Baldini, Candice Lopez, Diane Kresh, Lizzi Alarcon, Jennifer Weber

Additional Attendees: Kymberli Moore, Kellen MacBeth

- I. Welcome
- II. Approval of Minutes from October 21, 2024 Meeting
Laura Tinter moves to approve, Freddie Lutz seconds.
- III. Public Comment
 - a. *Kellen MacBeth of Equality Arlington spoke about their effort to urge the County Board to pursue legal options to combat discrimination and unconstitutional attempts to take away LGBTQIA+ rights. Kellen also expressed a desire that the County would step up planning for WorldPride. Tom Villa asked if community has drafted specific list of threats or actions they imagine might be coming that we would like researched. Kellen responded that Equality Arlington is working on that in collaboration with statewide and national partners, but they are hoping for a bit more analysis of the potential threats first.*
- IV. Remarks from the Chair (Samantha Perez)
 - a. *Expressed thankfulness for group and the importance of its work in the current political environment.*
 - b. *Detailed plan to create a shared contact sheet.*
- V. Discussion: WorldPride 2025
 - a. *The Committee discussed what is currently happening: Kimberli Moore from Polished Kreative noted that there is a group established, meeting on Wednesday, to work on planning in collaboration with DC group. The group is currently considering the cost of their ideas. Destiny Esper, associated with the Arlington Convention and Visitors Service (Arlington Economic D indicated that individuals from across the county (within government and outside partners) are a part of this group. There are not events*

planned at this point specifically from Arlington County, but Arlington Economic Development (AED) could support planning if the Advisory Committee has ideas. Samantha Perez discussed how Arlington is a spillover location for the festivities in Washington, DC, noting that it would be helpful if the County did something visually (public art, welcome banners, rainbow crosswalks) and if there were a central place to advertise the events being hosted around the County. Destiny responded that she would check on what could be added to StayArlington page to advertise events.

Tom Villa noted that the Capital Pride Alliance allows partners and organizations in community to post community events on their calendar.

Laura Tinter suggested that Progress Pride flags fly outside all Arlington County government buildings, schools, community centers, etc.

Freddie Lutz discussed how the National Landing BID is beginning to look at what they can plan.

James Fisher noted that all should focus on what can be done in their own community, and how each person can have impact in their own neighborhood while the rest of the world seems beyond help. He hoped that Arlington could contrast itself with the current DC mood.

Freddie Lutz said that Crystal City is the welcome mat, since many fly into Reagan International Airport, so it could be a focus of effort.

Laman Ben-Trahoire suggested that one effort could be to put a face to Arlington, giving some history about how the County has become more inclusive, including data and testimonials. Laman asked how WorldPride would be a protest this year.

Tom Villa asked about any statewide effort, perhaps tying in Virginia is for Lovers or a website resource for events in the state, noting that statewide planning could help with messaging from entry methods/points (airports, WMATA, local bus systems, etc.).

James Fisher asked how to clearly communicate the County's support and celebration during the event. Visual cues near where you land would be helpful, but James asked if there was some another easy avenue to engage people (through hotels, Visitor's Bureau, another way?).

Kaitlyn Goyal supported the idea of hosting events where individuals could participate and talk about the work the community is doing.

Sam Barnes referenced a public artist off of Columbia Pike that would be great in featuring faces of Arlington. Art could also come from local high schools.

Diane Kresh indicated that there had been no conversation between the County Manager and department directors, so Diane offered to talk to County leadership about planning efforts. Diane agreed with Freddie about National Landing being the gateway, but suggested that each BID (Ballston, Columbia Pike) should be contacted to get on board with planning. Diane offered that the Library has flexibility with hosting, displaying banners, etc., but suggested that the group focus on efforts that would have the maximum interest and impact.

Candice Lopez suggested a WorldPride theme for the Arlington Art Truck.

James Fisher noted that messaging should reinforce that Arlington County is a safe space. He had previous conversations with County Board members interested in County planning efforts.

Samantha Perez reiterated the following action items:

- i. Diane Kresh will bring up planning efforts at next department director meeting*
- ii. Freddie Lutz will meet with BIDS and discuss what each BID can do*
- iii. County staff will report out on what is discussed on the large call*

VI. Discussion: What can be done to support and protect the LGBTQIA+ community with the new administration? What are the biggest concerns, and what are potential actions we could consider?

a. Individuals began discussing concerns.

- i. Samantha Perez expressed concern over the availability of information, HIV/PrEP access and gender affirming care and related documentation. Samantha also was concerned about the impact on minors and trans youth and overall morale.*
- ii. James Fisher spoke about what Arlington Community Foundation is discussing, with particular concern for trans youth and their families. James discussed the intergenerational understanding of current events and their context – particularly understanding how rights were attained initially, a history of LGBTQIA+ issues, and how it pertains to what is concerning younger people*
- iii. Liz Erion spoke about the experience as a parent of a trans youth. Parents would like some understanding of the legal options available to them. Any pro bono legal help with basic questions about what they should do with documentation, etc., would be beneficial. Candice Lopez suggested LSNV as a potential resource. Liz praised the Arlington Public Schools and their commitment to inclusive policies. Liz would appreciate similar messaging from the County Board.*
- iv. Kaitlyn Goyal asked if there are attorneys who have specific expertise in this area who could help. Tom Villa added that Equality Virginia has hosted legal resources events before. Sam Barnes just went to event in Fairfax related to this from NOVA Prism Center, so they might be good resource. Tom Villa noted that the Pride Center of Maryland has ongoing clinics.*
- v. Samantha Perez suggested drafting a formal request for a more vocal statement of support from Arlington County. Candice Lopez added other commissions may want to support that request.*

b. Samantha Perez reiterated the following action items:

- i. With regard to medical access issues, the Department of Human Services will keep pulse on changing availability of programs and will ensure that County website resources are updated.*
- ii. With regard to documentation questions, the Committee could consider supporting a legal clinic and resource page.*
- iii. With regard to supporting youth, Candice Lopez reminded the Committee about the teen clinic, understanding that capacity may become an issue as pressure mounts.*

iv. With regard to seeking support from County leadership, Samantha Perez will work on writing letter to the County Manager.

VII. Meeting Wrap-Up - *Laura Tinter moved to adjourn. Sam Barnes seconded.*