LGBTQIA+ Advisory Committee

Virtual

Monday, October 27, 2025

6:30 p.m.

In attendance: James Fisher, Samantha Perez, Laura Tinter, Sam Barnes, Sam Jane, TJ Flavell, Elizabeth Matlock, Cynthia Liccese-Torres, Paul Battaglia, Candice Lopez, Luis Marcano, Lizzi Alarcon, Jennifer Weber, Diane Kresh, Kellen Macbeth

Agenda

1. Welcome
2. Approval of Minutes – Laura Tinter moves to approve, James Fisher seconds.
3. Public Comment
    a. Kellen Macbeth spoke talking about progress Equality Arlington has made with DHS, working on policies which protect the rights of LGBTQIA+ youth in foster care and in the juvenile detention center. Kellen noted that the Office of Human Rights is undergoing a transition of leadership and encouraged the Committee to work with new office to ensure that their work encompasses and focuses on LGBTQIA+ rights. Kellen spoke of ideas to reduce barriers to forming LGBTQ+ businesses, including offering support with tax documentation, a revolving loan fund for all small businesses, and having AED promote the development of LGBTQIA+-serving and -owned businesses in our community.
    James Fisher offered assistance with Office of Human Rights Commission. Kellen noted James would be valuable member on hiring panel.
    Diane Kresh shared that Anna Maynard is acting OHR director, and the Committee members might want to meet with her.
4. Housekeeping: One Year Review
    a. Importance of committee: Elizabeth Matlock highlighted the importance of the work of the Committee to the County, noting that it is one of the few Manager-appointed committees established by County Manager Mark Schwartz
    b. Reporting to Manager every year: Elizabeth then noted that, as a part of the Committee's charter, there is an annual report to the County Manager.
    c. Two year appointment: Elizabeth reviewed that members and the chair/vice chair are appointed for two years.

d. Attendance and participation are important: Elizabeth highlighted the importance of attendance from Committee members. Laura Tinter requested more in person meetings.
e. Role of staff: Elizabeth reviewed the role of staff in the meetings – not as Committee members but as references and connections if needed. Committee members should be the primary drivers of Committee activity.
f. Vice Chair: Elizabeth noted that the Committee needed to select a new vice chair. SC nominated themself. James Fisher moved to appoint SC for remainder of term. Laura Tinter seconded. SC's appointment was unanimously approved.
g. Meeting Schedule: Elizabeth reviewed the following meeting schedule and opened up discussion about whether this was what worked best for individuals.

    i. Monday, October 27, 2025 | 06:30 PM - 07:30 PM
    ii. Monday, January 26, 2026 | 06:30 PM - 07:30 PM
    iii. Monday, April 27, 2026 | 06:30 PM - 07:30 PM
    iv. Monday, July 27, 2026 | 06:30 PM - 07:30 PM
    v. Monday, October 26, 2026 | 06:30 PM - 07:30 PM

    The Committee generally agreed that shifting to Tuesdays would probably work, and 6:30pm time works well. However, it was agreed that the Committee would seek additional feedback via email in the following weeks.

h. Open seat on committee: Elizabeth noted that there was an open seat on the Committee, should anyone know of anyone who may be interested.
i. James Fisher complimented Diane Kresh for Library events for LGBTQIA+ History Month.

5. Subcommittee Report-Out
    a. Culture and Community Development
        i. Diane Kresh encouraged group to consider 250th anniversary of the United States, noting that the Library will be highlighting Bill of Rights, including community events and oral histories.
        ii. Candice Lopez noted that Arlington Historic Society is leading efforts to commemorate the 250th for the County.
    b. Policy and Equity
        i. Laura Tinter shared that they have no updates.
    c. Health, Safety, and Wellness
        i. Candice Lopez mentioned that SC is leading the subcommittee.

        ii. Sam Barnes shared that they have drafted a charter for their subcommittee. They have identified priority items, including updating and verifying all resources on LGBTQIA+ Resources page.
        iii. Draft charter: *The Health, Safety, and Wellness Committee is committed to ensuring Arlington fosters an inclusive, affirming, and safe environment that prioritizes the physical, mental, and emotional well-being of LGBTQIA+ individuals. We advocate for equitable access to health resources, promote awareness of unique challenges faced by the community, and cultivate a culture of respect, resilience, and empowerment. Through advocacy and education of service providers and outreach to the community, we strive to eliminate barriers to care, support holistic wellness, and ensure that every LGBTQIA+ person feels seen, heard, and valued*.
6. Pride 2026 Planning: Cynthia Liccese-Torres reported on the status of planning at this point, noting that:
    a. Other jurisdictions are claiming dates. The Office of RACE was willing to help in Arlington planning efforts, but in partnership with others, particularly given limited funding availability.
    b. Some ideas included procuring furniture for the mural area, getting a sidewalk decal/signage to explain the mural, and expanding the spotlight poster series. The County would need to rely on partnerships to pull off expanded events.
7. Comprehensive Plan Focus Group Review: Samantha Perez asked for feedback from anyone who had participated in the Comprehensive Plan Focus Group. Kellen Macbeth expressed frustration that County had not planned on doing the LGBTQIA+ focus group in advance. However, Kellen had heard that it was good discussion and that County staff were interested in the focus group's input. Kellen did not want the County to rely on Equality Arlington to do outreach.
   Cynthia Liccese-Torres noted that broader public engagement is happening now, if there are specific questions or comments that Committee members would like to share. Cynthia noted that the Planning Department is doing their best to cast a wider net to reach the population.
8. Other Business (as needed)
    a. Samatha Perez discussed the annual report to the Manager, asking for any ideas on what to include, and noting that it could be reviewed and approved in January's meeting. Potential topics for inclusion in the letter included:
        i. Subcommittee structure
        ii. A state of the union on subcommittee topics.

iii. James noted that the letter could be structured around subcommittees and the Committee's related goals, highlighting community priorities.
iv. Diane Kresh suggested that the letter covered what has been done and what the Committee wants to accomplish, particularly leaning into policy areas where the Committee wants to make a difference.
v. Samantha Perez asked for comments over the next month, with a writing subgroup to meet and create a shared document to present in January. James Fisher volunteered to assist with writing.
vi. Diane Kresh and Candice Lopez linked this Committee's discussions to the Child and Youth Wellbeing Plan, noting that there could be some combined efforts or collaboration.

b. On OHR, Samantha Perez recommended asking the County Manager that at least one member of the Committee be a part of hiring process. James Fisher moved to support that request, Laura Tinter seconded. Diane Kresh recommended writing a formal request directly to the County Manager.
c. James Fisher praised the County for the Arlington Pride t-shirts, saying he gets numerous compliments on his.

9. Closing. James Fisher moved to adjourn; Sam Barnes seconded. It was approved unanimously.