

**MINUTES
LGBTQIA+ COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING OCTOBER 17, 2023**

Present: Chair Steven Kovach, Vice Chair Jennifer Billingsley, Commissioners, Beth Shapiro, Laura Timmons, Cayes Jarda (arrived at 5:45 pm), Christine Santacroce, Dolly Haddad, Katie Morette, Jesse Nasta, and Assistant General Counsel Christopher Forte.

Members of the Public: Paul Brindimore, Derek Angel Cartagena, Raynier, Anthony DiLizia.

1. **Call to Order.** Chair Kovach called the meeting to order at 5:34 p.m.
2. **Approval of the Minutes for the September 19, 2023 Regular Meeting of the LGBTQIA+ Commission.**

MOTION: Commissioner Billingsley made a motion to approve the minutes. Commissioner Shapiro seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously at 5:34 p.m.

3. **Public Session on Agenda Items.** The Commissioners and members of the public introduced themselves
4. **New Business.**

A. Submitted Applications for Proposed Events.

I. LGBTQIA+ Happy Hour, Thursday, November 16 from 5-7 pm at Conspiracy (Commissioner Kovach).

MOTION: Commissioner Timmons made a motion to recommend approval of the proposed event with a budget of \$950. Commissioner Shapiro seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously at 5:47 p.m.

II. Pride Health Clinic, Monday, November 13 from 1-6 pm at City Hall (AGC Forte).

MOTION: Commissioner Timmons made a motion to recommend approval of the proposed event with a budget of \$500. Commissioner Morette seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously at 5:56 p.m.

If you require special accommodations for any meeting, please call the ADA Coordinator at (860) 638-4540, (voice) or (860) 638-4812 (TDD/TTY), or the Town Clerk's Office at (860) 638-4910 at least ten (10) days prior to the scheduled meeting.

III. Pridesgiving, date TBD, from 5:30 – 8:00 pm at Perk on Main (AGC Forte).

MOTION: Commissioner Timmons made a motion to recommend approval of the proposed event with a budget of \$25 per person. Commissioner Haddad seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously at 6:02 p.m.

IV. Swim with Pride, December 9, 11am – 1 pm, Middletown Recreation (Commissioner Billingsley).

MOTION: Commissioner Haddad made a motion to recommend approval of the proposed event with a budget of \$750. Commissioner Jarda seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously at 6:09 p.m.

B. Middletown Pride Discord Account and Facebook Access (Commissioner Haddad). Commissioner Haddad proposed creating a Middletown Pride Discord account to be moderated by Commissioner Haddad, Commission Billingsley, and one or two members of the public. Will move forward to create and will report back next month.

Commissioners also want to be able to post about their own events and would like the credentials for Facebook and Instagram.

C. Pride Flag Visibility Initiative (AGC Forte). AGC Forte outlined a plan to have more pride flags up around town, including on city buildings, adjacent to the pride crosswalk, and in local businesses. Commissioner Morette stated that smaller flags or stickers could also work. Raynier and Commissioner Morette also expressed an interest in having education about the different flags up on the Pride website and in City Hall.

5. Old Business.

A. Middletown PrideFEST 2024 (Commissioners and Members of Public).

I. Recommend approvals for Middletown PrideFEST 2024.

a. Review of Two Stages and approval of budget for DJ Lady Tita.

MOTION: Commissioner Timmons made a motion to recommend approval of the DJ and cost for the two stages as proposed. Commissioner Nasta seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously at 6:34 p.m.

b. Recommend approval for how to allocate performers between the two stages at the Pride Showcase Concert. AGC Forte stated that in response to feedback from the community, we will all attempt to be more mindful in scheduling acts on the stage. Commissioner Haddad

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suggested setting up a subcommittee to review.

II. New Ideas for Middletown PrideFEST 2024. No updates.

B. Middletown Pride Grant Program. (AGC Forte). No updates.

C. Middletown Pride Scholarship Program. No updates.

D. Middletown Pride Mutual Aid Program (Brianna Skowera). No updates.

E. Middletown Pride Community Event Program.

I. Recap of Karaoke Night at Oh Mama on September 23 from 6 pm – 9 pm (Commissioner Shapiro). Commissioner Shapiro and Haddad stated that this was a fantastic event with over 40 people in attendance.

II. Recap of Queer Speed Dating at Relish, 5-8 pm (Commissioner Jarda). Commissioner Jarda stated that while this event had a smaller group than last time, it was a wonderful time.

III. Recap of Star GAY-zing at Van Vleck Observatory, 7-9 pm. (AGC Forte). AGC Forte stated that this was an out of this world event, with approximately 100 people in attendance. The Wesleyan Astronomy Department did a wonderful job, including organizer Rewa Bush, and was told that they would like to make this event an annual event.

IV. October 21—Queer Youth Open Mic at Downtown Trick or Treat, 11am-2pm on the South Green (Mel Cordner). Will be postponed due to rain.

V. November 2023—Gayme Night, Back Again Board Games, 6-9 pm (Commissioners Haddad and Santacroce). Event will take place on November 13.

VI. November 13—Pride Health Clinic (AGC Forte)

VII. November 16—LGBTQIA+ Happy Hour (Commissioner Kovach)

VIII. November 2023—Transgender Day of Remembrance Event (Commissioner Timmons)

IX. November 2023—Pridesgiving (AGC Forte)

X. December 15, 2023—Happy Hour (AGC Forte and Commissioner Kovach)

XI. January 2024—Gayme Night, Back Again Board Games, 6-9 pm (Commissioners Haddad and Santacroce)

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XII. January 2024—Flower Arranging at Wild Orchid (AGC Forte).

XIII. February 2024

**XIV. March 2024—Gayme Night, Back Again Board Games, 6-9 pm
(Commissioners Haddad and Santacroce)**

XV. April 2024

**XVI. May 2024—Gayme Night, Back Again Board Games, 6-9 pm
(Commissioners Haddad and Santacroce)**

**XVII. June 2024 (Connecticut Trail Days Event, June 2, 2024 Update
(Commissioner’s Shapiro and Haddad).**

**F. Safety for LGBTQIA+ Community in Middletown (Commissioner Timmons
and Mangiafico).** Commissioner Timmons reported that an arrest had been made by
the Middletown Police in the North End destruction of pride flags.

G. Middlesex Health and Middletown Pride (Commissioner Jarda). No further
action needed.

6. Adjournment.

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