

## **SEATTLE COMMISSION FOR SEXUAL MINORITIES** **WORK PLAN 2009**

The role of the Seattle Commission for Sexual Minorities is to advise the Mayor, City Council and departments on issues and concerns specific to the LGBT community. The Commission works to ensure City departments address LGBT concerns fairly and equitably, makes policy and legislative recommendations, and works to bring the LGBT and larger Seattle area community together through long-ranged projects, outreach, communication and awareness.

For the past 20 years, the Commission has worked to ensure that the needs and views of the LGBT community are represented across the policies, priorities and decisions of city government. In 2009, our intention is to create a more cohesive and measureable work plan. To meet this goal, the Commission has restructured our committees into the following:

**Internal Affairs (IA):** This committee will take over many of the responsibilities of the former Recruitment, Administration and Governance (RAG) committee such as adherence to, and updates of, commission bylaws; and oversight of Commissioner participation. Additionally IA will extend its scope to items such as the development of a Commission communication plan and the management of Commissioner liaison assignments in the public sector.

**Programs and Outreach (P&O):** This committee will take over many of the responsibilities from both the former Community Relations (CR) committee and the former Media and Marketing (M&M). Programs will coordinate all Commission related events to include the marketing and communications for each event and the maintenance and execution on all LGBT community outreach plans.

**Government Relations (GR):** This committee will act as the conduit between the overall Commission and any governmental and legislative entities. GR will provide information regarding any relevant City of Seattle actions to the Commission to include any recommendations for action. GR will also oversee and facilitate communications to the Mayor and City Council as well as assign, monitor, and facilitate government relationships for each Commissioner.

When applicable, the Committees will collaborate and provide written recommendations (i.e. recommendations from Forums) to the Commission for distribution to City government.

These new committees will make the process of eliciting information, from the LGBT community and relaying it to city government officials, more informative, effective, efficient and deliberate. Each Committee will have a

chairperson and each chairperson will sit on and advise the Commission's Executive Committee. While each Committee is responsible for specific objectives in order for the Commission to reach its goals, one of the key objectives for 2009 is to increase communication between the committees and subsequently function as a more cohesive unit.

The Commission will accomplish eight overarching goals for 2009, which are:

1. Develop a communication plan that specifically outlines how the Commission will connect with the:
  - a) Mayor of Seattle
  - b) Seattle City Council
  - c) Seattle City Departments
  - d) Greater Seattle LGBT Community
2. Produce a quarterly report on budgets and policies that impact the LGBT Community.
3. Increase the visible presence of the Commission to both the LGBT community and city officials. We will do this by engaging in a minimum of 3 events in 2009 (estimated outreach of 300 community constituents) and providing updates of these activities and the Commission's involvement.
4. Host, sponsor, and/or coordinate a minimum of 2 events that evoke community interest and ultimately result in Commission input on policy recommendations for the City of Seattle.
5. Proactively solicit a role and participate in the selection process for the replacement of Seattle Police Chief Kerlikowske.
6. Evaluate the need to change the Commissions name to be more inclusive, up-to-date, and without technology related challenges (as currently exists with the name 'sexual minorities').
7. Actively and consistently engage City officials to define more distinct ways in which the Commission can contribute to public policy, safety, health and overall awareness for the LGBT Community.

8. Continue to create, produce and distribute a quarterly, electronic newsletter submitted to the Mayor's Office, City Council, community constituents and other parties the Commission wishes to remain connected to.

Each committee is responsible for having specific and measurable goals that will work towards the higher goals of the overall Commission. We believe this structure will ensure our community is being positively and adequately served by the city.

Work plan by Committee are as follows:

### **Internal Affairs Committee**

The Internal Affairs Committee is tasked with managing the internal workings and business items related to the entire Commission.

#### *Communications*

1. Creation and implementation of a communications plan for the Commission that allows for a time efficient and coordinated effort in responding publically to issues in the community and advertising Commission events.
  - a) IA will develop an internal process that makes SCSM more nimble and capable of responding to communications needs.
  - b) IA will manage the implementation and continued management of the plan, though we don't anticipate being solely responsible for the communications needs of the sub-committees. Each sub-committee will be responsible for doing their own communications with IA acting in a support role (i.e., supplying a template for press releases, reviewing documents to ensure that they match the tone of previous SCSM communications).
  - c) IA plans to create an SCSM communications team consisting of one representative from each sub-committee and from the co-chairs. The communications team will be responsible for responding to urgent communications needs and for keeping other members of the team informed about the communications efforts of each sub-committee.
2. Assisting in the administration of the quarterly newsletter.
  - a) As part of the communications plan, IA will develop a system for gathering content for the quarterly newsletter. The expectation will be that each sub-committee is responsible for sending one article to the newsletter

- coordinator on time. Further work may include developing an 'article bank' with articles that can be plugged into newsletters as necessary.
- b) IA will supply a commissioner biographic article for each newsletter.
3. IA will manage the lists of contacts for SCSM. This will include the distribution list for the newsletter, SCSM alumni list and a media list.
  4. IA will be responsible for updating the official SCSM website and working with the City on any website needs. Our goal for 2009 is to have the work plan posted online and to have each commissioner's liaison assignment posted online.
  5. Name change
    - a) IA will manage the internal process for selecting a new name.
    - b) We will work with SOCR to develop a plan for getting the official name changed with the City.

#### *Accountability*

1. Tracking progress of SCSM activities
  - a) For significant Commission activities, IA will develop a tracking system that gives a timeline and narrative of what the Commission goals are, what the Commission has done to achieve them, and what follow up has occurred or needs to occur. For example, with the proposed new quarterly budget report, IA will track what actions SCSM takes based on that information and what the results of these actions are.
2. Accountability for liaison assignments
  - a) IA will develop a set of guidelines for the community liaison pairings so that commissioners know the goals for their liaison assignment and how to meet those expectations.
  - b) IA will create a system of accountability for liaison assignments that requires commissioners to report back on their liaison activities.
  - c) Once initial assignments are made by the relevant sub-committees, IA will manage the process of matching unfilled liaison assignments with new commissioners.

## *Commission Operations*

### 1. Incoming & Outgoing Commissioner Relations

- a) IA will manage the process of interviewing potential commissioners and moving them through the process of becoming commissioners.
- b) IA will match new commissioners with mentors and provide guidelines for maximizing the mentor relationship. IA will also follow-up with new commissioners to ensure that they're receiving the necessary support.
- c) IA will make at least one good faith effort to reach out to exiting commissioners to conduct an exit interview. The goal of the interview will be to identify potential areas of improvement for the commission moving forward.
- d) Efforts will also be made to conduct exit interviews with other key people (such as Gil Kerlikowske) if they are leaving a position that is particularly important to the commission's work.

### 2. Bylaws review

- a) IA will be responsible for amending bylaws as necessary.
- b) Bylaws will be reviewed on annual basis to ensure that they still meet the needs of the commission.

### 3. Budget tracking

- a) IA will track the budget over the course of the year and ensure that funding is allocated appropriately.
- b) IA will report budget numbers to the commission on a quarterly basis.

### 4. Commissioner relations

- a) IA will plan two social events for commissioners, one of which will be the annual holiday party.
- b) Efforts will be made to reach out to commission alumni to join us for at least one of these events.

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## **Program and Outreach Committee**

The Program and Outreach Committee is tasked with soliciting information including the concerns, problems and hopes of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender community in Seattle.

## *Programs*

1. P&O will create other forums and events as needed to keep abreast of community issues and to maintain community awareness of the commission.
  - a) Create a minimum of one community forum in 2009. This forum will focus on healthy LGBTQ families and their concerns and issues.
  - b) Host a "Meet the Commissioners" event for LGBT Leaders, Business Owners, the Mayor and City Council. This meeting will create an opportunity for dialogue between LGBT leaders, business owners and city government.

## *Outreach*

2. P&O will seek opportunities throughout the year for on-going outreach to the LGBT community in-line with their goal of soliciting formation on issues and concerns of the community. P&O will keep the commission, Mayor and City Council apprised of their findings in a timely manner.
  - a) Produce a quarterly newsletter. The newsletter will include a calendar of events and articles pertinent to that quarter. The Newsletter editor will solicit articles and calendar events throughout the quarter and will work with IA on their proposed "article bank".
  - b) Create an on-line reporting matrix to track our Liaison commitments. This will be coordinated with IA.
  - c) Arrange for at least two opportunities for Commissioners to volunteer at community events in 2009.
  - d) Arrange for at least three opportunities for Commissioners to speak at events in 2009.
  - e) Maintain an internal calendar of LGBT community events for the Commission for the purpose of volunteering, speaking and honoring our commitments to our community liaisons.

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## **Government Relations Committee**

The Government Relations Committee will take solicited information from the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) community and relay the

messages to policymakers and other interested organizations and parties. The Government Relations Committee will also track legislation and budget items related to the LGBT Community.

1. During the March committee meeting we need to make decisions about the political liaison assignment process
2. Involvement in the Police Chief Selection Process
  - a) Open up a dialogue with the Mayor's office to indicate the Commission wants to be included on the selection committee
  - b) Select the SCSM Commissioner who we want to sit on the search to better advocate for a seat at the table
  - c) Alert city council through political liaisons that we want to be part of the selection process
3. Quarterly Reports on Budget & Policy
  - a) Educate Commission on City/County budget processes/cycles
  - b) Monitor City/County Council Agendas for important budget/policy items
  - c) Write the Quarterly Report/Newsletter Article
  - d) Keep Commission apprised of relevant state legislative activities
4. Assisting with Commission Events
  - a) Advertising/Notifying city/state officials of event
  - b) Assigning someone to do a head count, write down people to follow up with on specific questions, and helping identity guests of interest such as policymakers
5. Participate in the Communications Plan: City Dept's, Mayor, City Council and Community
  - a) Committee will write one article for the newsletter
  - b) Topic usually budget/policy report and key council agenda items
  - c) Add 10 emails to the distribution per month

## **Special Project:**

### **Community Assessment**

The 2008 Commission committed to providing Mayor Nickels a “Community Assessment” by creating and working with a “task force” to understand the needs of the LGBT community and how the City of Seattle can benefit through support of this segment of the Seattle population.

The 2009 Commission is determining the scope of this effort and investigating the best way to undertake this monumental task to aggregate the needs of an extraordinarily diverse group. A special project committee consisting of Cristina Dodson, NaaSira Adeeba, Shelley Ho and Jean-Paul Page has been created to investigate resources available to review and outline demographics to establish a baseline and determine next steps.

The Commission commits to providing the City of Seattle the following:

#### **June 2009**

- i. Outline of the new “Special Projects Committee” (SPC)
- ii. SPC will provide the name(s) of resource(s) that will outline the data to guide the SPC scope of work and deliverables.

#### **August 2009**

SPC will provide the Commission recommendations for the next steps on the overall Community Assessment.

#### **September 2009**

- i. The Commission will provide SPC’s scope of work, deliverables and a timeline proposal to the Mayor and City Council.
- ii. The Commission will provide recommendations of next steps and any requests for support to complete the SPC’s scope of work.

Co-Chairs Mauraan C. Schultz and David Beard respectfully submit this work plan to the Mayor of Seattle and Seattle City Council for their recommendations, critique and approval.