- Revised MINUTES -
GLBT Advisory Committee
Wednesday, September 3, 2008 – 6:00 p.m.
Room 207, Hamilton Convention Centre, 1 Summers Lane

PRESENT: Simon Lebrun, Lyla Miklos, Councillor Bob Bratina
REGRETS: Deirdre Pike
ALSO PRESENT: Christine Tedesco, Jae Adams

1. WELCOME & INTRODUCTIONS
Members and guests were welcomed.

2. DECLARATION OF “CONFLICT OF INTEREST”
None declared.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES
Some amendments to July 2008 minutes are required. Minutes will be passed at next meeting.

4. BUSINESS ITEMS

4.1 City Equity & Inclusion Policy – Second Round of Consultation
Simon reviewed the consultation process from the last meeting. A second round of consultation may take place in the coming months. We will get clarification on the goal and context of the consultations to ensure that we get the right representation and provide the best feedback. Possibly do a community consultation.

4.2 Community Centre
Councillor Bratina clarified the instructions given to the Real Estate staffer to investigate sites in the downtown core that would be suitable for a community centre. This request has been postponed due to other priorities over the summer.
It was suggested that this request is really a future long-term goal of The Well, and there is a more immediate need to explore using existing spaces for LGBTQ-oriented programming (e.g. a community centre space). This could be a partnership with existing City programming, or looking at using City spaces for new programming.

Further, it was suggested that a visit to the 519 Community Centre in Toronto would help Councillor Bratina to understand the long-term goals and how Toronto has modeled its programming in a City-run facility that appeals to the local LGBTQ population. Lyla will coordinate a visit to the 519 for her and Councillor Bratina. They will report back to the committee. Items to investigate include funding model, governance model, programming offered, community partnerships that are working, recent capital renovation and fundraising needs.

At a later time, Councillor Bratina can facilitate a walk-through of sites in the core to keep that discussion going for a long-term search. Before this, the committee should obtain input on what parameters and conditions would be essential to achieve success in a community centre site.

Finally, questions were raised about the City's Recreation Public Use Facility Study. Councillor Bratina indicated that this was more about the building infrastructure than about specific community needs, although he will consider whether the report needs to be viewed through a "queer equity lens".

4.3 Follow up on concerns re: parks and patrolling (police)

Questions have been sent to the GLBT Police Task Force to find out what the nature of the park patrols were, an explanation of why they are done, and a report on what occurred this summer.

4.4 Gender-neutral washrooms

It was suggested that we bring suggestions to Planning for future consideration on renovation or construction projects within the City. University of Victoria recently provided a list of 18 sites with single-stall, fully accessible washrooms, considered safe for the trans community.

It was suggested that the committee obtain feedback from the trans community to determine what approach would be best for our community (e.g. single stall vs. communal). It was noted that a recent trans community forum discussed the issue of safe washrooms and is currently producing a list of sites with trans-safe washrooms. The committee will obtain input from this group to assess what is considered "safe".
5. OTHER BUSINESS

5.1 Committee Goals – Issues, Representation and Timelines

Questions have arisen about how this committee can operate proactively rather than waiting for issues to be brought before us or to Council. Councillor Bratina encourages us to make delegations before Committees, including Board of Health, Customer Service, Emergency and Community Services, Social Services, Planning, etc.

Can we also invite representatives from those Committees to our table to inquire about programs and services that affect our community (e.g. ask the Medical Officer of Health about PHS’s Sexual Health programs).

The committee needs to establish priority areas and validate through some community engagement or consultation. The first half of the next meeting will be devoted to this discussion.

There are vacancies at this table that could be filled. Are we reflecting our community, or are there people missing? Possible candidates for this committee include Will Rowe (HIFY), Ryan Francie (Mac-QSCC). We could also get the word out to Mohawk (Lyla will place an ad) and LGBTQ-friendly faith groups (Centenary, First Unitarian, Christ’s Church, etc.) and Councillors neighbourhood distributions.

5.2 Public Health / HIFY – support for health initiative

Simon attended a meeting with HIFY and the City’s PHS (as a representative of The Well). This meeting explored opportunities for new program funding for a gay men’s healthy relationships pilot project. A similar project ran in BC called Totally Outright. If successful, the project could be expanded to include women and trans relationships. HIFY may seek support from this committee.

On a related note, the Rainbow Health Coalition is seeking to operate regional chapters, including one in Hamilton.

5.3 Discussion re: community grants

It was noted that it would be helpful for this committee to understand the community grants process and to determine what funding decisions have been made in the past 3 or 4 years. This will help us to understand what is possible through this program and also whether we need to provide input on how this program affects our community through the provision (or lack thereof) of programming towards the LGBTQ community.
5.4  Relationship to HPSC

An overview was provided of the Hamilton Positive Space Collaborative that started out of the LGBTQ Community Needs Assessment recommendations. The GLBT Advisory Committee has a space at the HPSC and other committee members are encouraged to attend as important matters from the Needs Assessment are being discussed and action plans are being developed.

6.  INFORMATION SHARING

6.1  Pink Triangle Day

A space at Temple Anshe Sholom has been tentatively booked for another event on February 14. Some discussion took place about whether this type of event is best hosted by a group like The Well, with the City’s committee participating as a partner.

6.2  Harvey Milk movie premiere

Lyla is inquiring to the distributor of this film, to explore the possibility of doing an event around its release. Again, this event might fit well with The Well’s Queer Movie Nights project and could be a great fundraiser for them.

6.3  Upcoming AGM’s

The AIDS Network: Wednesday, September 23 (at The AIDS Network offices)
Hamilton Pride Festival: Thursday, September 24 (at The AIDS Network offices)

6.4  The Well’s social and support groups

The Well is currently operating a trans peer support group and a lesbian/bi-women peer support group. The Well will be starting two new groups: a social group for youth and a social group for the mature (40+) LGBTQ community. The first youth group meeting will be at The Well on Friday, September 26 at 7:00 p.m.

7.  ADJOURNMENT

The next meeting will be Wednesday, October 1 at 6:00 p.m.