Present: Deirdre Pike, Suzanne Foreman, Joe Whelan, Mike Des Jardins
Also Present: Jane Lee – City of Hamilton
Simon LeBrun

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

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – January 10, 2007

(Des Jardins/Whelan)
That the minutes of the January 10, 2007 meeting of the GLBT Advisory Committee be approved as circulated. CARRIED.

3. PRESENTATIONS

3.1 Linda Lopinski – Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board

3.1.1 Character Education
Linda Lopinski explained the concept of character education as well as the process the Board has followed in narrowing the possible characteristics that will be used by the Board. She noted that the comment date has passed, and that character education will be built into the life of the school community.

3.1.2 Diversity Audit
Linda Lopinski also noted that the Board are working on an employee diversity audit. She discussed a preliminary draft of the audit with the committee to obtain their feedback. She also requested that the committee provide a letter of support to encourage staff of the GLBT community to respond to the audit, once completed.

The committee and guests discussed the audit. They supported the concept of the Board undertaking the audit. The discussion addressed the Gender identity question, noting the need to be flexible in allowing for self-identification; male,
female, transgender, intersex, other. The discussion also noted the differences in gender, sexual identity, sexual orientation. The committee urged the use of easy language. The committee agreed to support the audit initiative, but only to send the letter of support once they had reviewed the final wording of the audit, and were satisfied with the language and questions being asked.

The committee noted the need for an update on the Board’s Equity Policy. Deirdre will request an update from Cole & Heather for the next meeting.

(Whelan/Foreman)
That the Hamilton Wentworth District School Board administration be advised that the GLBT Advisory Committee supports the idea of providing a letter encouraging members of the GLBTQ community to complete the survey for the Board’s diversity audit survey, once the committee has reviewed and is satisfied with the wording of the survey. CARRIED.

3.2 Vilma Rossi – McMaster University
Vilma Rossi and Jonade Naeem of the McMaster GLBT Centre updated the members of the committee with respect to their Positive Space campaign. They noted that they had developed a workshop model, with the target audience being staff, students, and the faculty. The campaign was launched to build an inclusive community. There was a need to meet the needs of students. There had been some incidents of violence, which begins on campus & moves to community. Other Universities had engaged in positive space campaigns in the past. At McMaster there is a 2-hour workshop, required in order to become a “positive space provider”. Once the workshop is completed, the participants get a poster, sticker, or positive space tent card (or all 3) depending on their physical work space, and whether or not everyone in the entire work area has participated. Another piece of the program planned is to bring people together who have gone through the process to discuss follow-up issues. Anyone can register for the program. They also have an ally program, which is more general – wear a pin, you are an ally. They reviewed the details of the orientation session, which includes, Guidelines, an Opening Exercise, Acronym Soup, share personal stories, and discuss a Case Scenario. They choose facilitators based on sound knowledge of community nuances and how to create a mutual environment of respect.

Vilma noted that they wanted participants to come to the session of their own choice, and had concerns about employees who were sent to the workshop, as it is not anti-homophobia training. There has also been some backlash and unintended consequences. She also noted that one of the barriers is a lack of remuneration for the facilitators.

The presenters were thanked for their presentation and the information they had shared with the committee.
4. BUSINESS ITEMS

4.1 Pride Pages Financial Contribution
Joe shared the financial information they had received from PRIDE and the former printer of the PRIDE pages what the costs and revenues had been. He noted ad sales had amounted to $10,300, with discounts and donations being valued at $1,545. Printing costs were $6,895, with additional costs of production approximately $400. In 2007, the PRIDE Committee expects the costs for design & layout to be approximately $2,340, and $7,000 for printing. They expect a loss of $1,017. Joe noted that the community listings comprise about 9 pages of directory, which at the ad rate would be $3,285.

(Foreman/Des Jardins)
That the GLBT Advisory Committee provide a $1,500 contribution to PRIDE for the community listings in the 2007 PRIDE pages. CARRIED.

4.2 VIA Passes
The Committee had further discussions about the VIA passes which were awarded to the committee during the 2006 PRIDE Festival.

4.3 Self-Assessment Tool / Glossary
Item deferred to the March 2007 meeting.

4.4 Canadian Rainbow Health Coalition – Health Funding
Item deferred to the March 2007 meeting.

4.5 Presentation to Committee of the Whole
Item deferred to the March 2007 meeting.

4.6 May 17th Press Conference
Item deferred to the March 2007 meeting.

4.7 Website (standing item)

5. NEW BUSINESS

6. INFORMATION SHARING

7. FOLLOW-UP

8. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 7:15 p.m.