PRESENT: Rob Brown, Kerry Cranston, Deirdre Dixon, David Gunton, Gord Jackson, Marlon Picken, Michelle Poirier, Renee Wetselaar, Debbie Wooldridge

ALSO PRESENT: Jane Lee, May-Marie Duwai-Sowa (City of Hamilton) Jae Adams (The Well) Sandra Wilson, Community Liaison; John Pauls, Downtown Detachment; Jay Turner, Action Team (Hamilton Police Service)

REGRETS: Kristeen Sprague (LoA)

1. WELCOME & INTRODUCTIONS

2. DECLARATION OF INTEREST
None declared.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

(D.Dixon/D.Wooldridge)
That the minutes of the September 15, 2011 meeting of the LGBTQ Advisory Committee be approved as circulated. CARRIED

4. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Additions to the agenda under New Business:
6.1 Trans Day of Remembrance co-sponsorship request (Dixon)
6.2 Workforce Census (Jane)

The agenda was approved as amended.

5. BUSINESS ITEMS

5.1 Hamilton Police Services
Marlon gave background to HPS regarding the request for them to attend advisory meeting to help committee to understand signage at Dundurn and other area parks, as well as, curfew at public parks & trespass signage.

Sandra Wilson addressed advisory committee concerns that had been provided to HPS prior to the meeting as follows:
a) HPS does not gather statistical information concerning the gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, etc of individuals who receive tickets for trespass

b) curfew is 11:00pm- HPS officers are to approach everyone in public parks after this time

c) HPS has two kinds of patrolling; pro-active which includes general patrolling of public parks and active-driven, which are patrols in response to complaints from the public (noise, etc). The action an individual is engaged in & their interaction with HPS will determine change whether a warning, charge or ticket is issued

Jay Turner noted the police are too busy to target individuals. They check their beat between calls & target “bad guys” and “the criminal element”.

Sandra Wilson asked if the committee had received specific complaints about police over-patrolling of parks or specific problems of ticketing of LGBTQ community members

David addressed committee concerns identifying that old protocols of past police chief are still a concern for some community members. Signage is to be increased at public parks to warn of curfew. He asked if HPS are receiving more complaints about park activity after hours from the public.

John Pauls noted there are no specific stats on each park. He noted that RBG parks/parking lots are patrolled due to complaints by RBG members about cars parked in lots without proper permits. HPS collects stats for RBG, but just number of tickets issued, no specifics. Most tickets issued at RBG are for car/parking infractions & it’s a trespass ticket.

Kerry noted that the impression the committee is getting is that LGBTQ community members feel they are being approached as “bad guys”. David noted that Project Rosebud is still fresh in the minds of many gay men in the community.

Jay Turner noted that police officers approach anyone with officer’s personal safety being a foremost concern, and they cannot help it if LGBTQ community members perceive this in a different way. He noted that Project Rosebud is not something HPS want to revisit.

A discussion took place about the current by-law signage; it was noted that the curfew signage is too wordy & confusing; poorly located; insufficient for large park areas; need large signs just listing curfew hours. It was noted that the signage was crowded because it listed all by-law requirements for liability and enforcement reasons. Sandra Wilson offered HPS help in addressing signage issue if requested.

In other discussion, it was noted that the block training of HPS being conducted by Hamilton Positive Space Collective/ The Well was receiving very positive feedback from officers and civilian staff (training component mandatory for all.)
The Hamilton Police Services and the Hamilton AIDS Network community meeting is being held on November 2nd; everyone is welcome.

(D.Wooldridge/K.Cranston)
That a letter be sent to the Parks and Recreation Divisions requesting simplified signage to address the park curfew separate and apart from signage noting other park regulations. CARRIED

5.2 Jae Adams from the Well re: Suicide Prevention

Jae Adams attended the meeting to give committee members a better understanding of the background of the Suicide Prevention Strategy and LGBTQ community response. He noted that he was attending the meeting and speaking as a representative of the Well, not as an individual member of the community roundtable for Suicide Prevention. The Suicide Prevention Council developed the strategy in 2010 in collaboration with police and mental health organizations, with very little community consultation. The strategy is very focused on mental health issues. Dr. Albina Veltman, who provides counseling services at the Well, was asked to inform the Suicide Prevention Council of LGBTQ content needs late in game. Some of the feedback Albina provided was incorporated into report with the rest to be addressed at a later date. The Suicide Prevention Council has passed the strategy around to various community organizations and requested declarations of support to be signed. The Well, the Hamilton Positive Space Collaborative (HPSC) and members of previous LGBTQ City Advisory Committee declined to sign declaration due to missing LGBTQ-specific content. The Suicide Prevention Council set-up a side project to stay informed of LGBTQ community input, but members of LGBTQ community have been frustrated by the process. The Well is interested in forming a committee to address LGBTQ-specific suicide concerns such as social/political issues, drugs, school bullying, police, etc. and are speaking to the HPSC, Rainbow Health, McMaster University. The LGBTQ Advisory Committee is also invited to participate.

General discussion ensued. It would be helpful to get background of report and views of other LGBTQ community organizations. The Well has created programs such as bi-weekly coffee nights, RADAR youth group weekly meetings & “It Gets Better” initiative, sexual health programs, support groups, etc as part of a suicide prevention strategy. The committee questioned what Rainbow Health Ontario position would be on suicide prevention strategy. It is difficult to know where to send someone who is at risk for suicide that would be LGBTQ-positive.

Committee members also questioned whether the Suicide Prevention Council had undertaken consultation with seniors, First Nations representatives and racialized communities. It was also noted that Bills C297 and C300 regarding a National Suicide Prevention Strategy currently before parliament. Hamilton is ahead of many other cities in terms of suicide prevention services, but there is still much more that needs to be done.

The idea of forming a volunteer-based equity subcommittee of LGBTQ, senior and racialized community members to address mutual concerns about the Suicide Prevention strategy was suggested to approach the Suicide Prevention Council as a united group. The Well was suggested as the group to facilitate
such a group. Marlon noted that the LGBTQ Advisory Committee could assist
with the process.

It was also suggested that the Advisory Committee connect with the Public
Health Department to find out about the City’s involvement in the strategy and
implementation.

(M.Pickens/D.Gunton)
That Jackie Candlish from Public Health be requested to attend the November
Advisory Committee meeting to outline the City’s involvement in the suicide
prevention strategy and implementation. CARRIED

(D.Dixon/D/Gunton)
That Kerry Cranston be appointed as the LGBTQ Advisory Committee
representative to Well’s Suicide Prevention subcommittee. CARRIED

5.3 Curfew Sign Placement at Dundurn Park
See Item 5.1

5.4 2012 Budget

(R.Wetselaar/D.Wooldridge)
That the 2012 budget submission be approved. CARRIED

5.5 Feedback of Needs Assessment
The committee briefly discussed the 2008 Needs Assessment and the 2010
information on the update. It was noted that the previous discussion indicates
that Advisory committee members agree that the Needs Assessment clearly
indicates the need for an LGBTQ community space, and that the
recommendations in the Needs Assessment is worthy of endorsement.

The committee provided feedback on the draft staff report to Council on the
Needs Assessment. It was noted that the main body of the report doesn’t list the
programs created or training conducted by LGBTQ organizations & individuals to
address some of the other concerns outlined in the Needs Assessment, and that
it would be helpful to state at the beginning of report that the community has
invested in addressing some concerns outlined in report, but require assistance
with larger items such as community space. This kind of statement would
illustrate that the community is being proactive. Members were asked to submit
information to staff about the programs and initiatives in place.

5.6 Pre-Planning for Hamilton Pride
Kerry advised that she had not yet heard back from all groups contacted about
Pride plans, however, did receive confirmation that the Well applied for a funding
grant for a couple of Pride events & applied for the parade permit prior to City
deadline. Discussion took place about the need to look into the banner/flag
permissions soon, and the members agreed that the Advisory Committee needs
to focus on the City’s support of Pride. One suggestion was to see about a
notice in the Newspaper from the City recognizing this event. Jane was asked to
clarify with the City.
5.7 Speak-Out Training
Tabled.

6. NEW BUSINESS

Due to time restrictions Dixon & Debbie needed to leave the meeting early. Item 6.1 as moved up in agenda but is recorded in sequence.

6.1 Trans Days of Remembrance
Dixon advised that the trans support group at the Well would be planning an event to mark the Trans Day of Remembrance in November (date to be confirmed). It was noted that in the past, the LGBTQ Advisory Committee has partnered with the Well and contributed $250 for this event. Renee suggested involving street youth in program. Michelle noted that McMaster Equity dept is planning a Trans Day of Remembrance event & could perhaps work with the Well.

(K.Cranston/M.Poirier)
That the LGBTQ Advisory Committee partner with the Well and contribute $250 for the Trans Day of Remembrance program. CARRIED.

6.2 Workplace Census
It was noted that the City now had results from the Workforce Census and that the Manager of Organizational Development in HR would be attending the November meeting to discuss results with the committee.

7. INFORMATION SHARING

7.1 Rob is looking forward to attending the Suicide Prevention conference during the week of October 24th and will report back to the committee at the November meeting.

7.2 Kerry noted a request from Hamilton Positive Space Collaborative about a possible meet & greet event of LGBTQ community members to compare mandates & projects to avoid overlap. The request was whether the Advisory Committee would be interested in attending, co-sponsoring, or assisting with funding. Marlon advised the committee that he had requested further information re: date, etc from HPSC but expressed support for the idea & possible donation of funding. Renee stated a declaration of interest and didn’t participate in the discussion.

7.3 Committee members noted it would be nice to arrange for an event to introduce the LGBTQ Advisory Committee to the community. An open house in lieu of the December meeting was suggested to invite the community to meet committee members.

Michelle & David were selected to form a social subcommittee to plan the December Open House. May-Marie will act as the liaison with the City. An outline for event will be added to the November agenda.
8. ADJOURNMENT

On motion, the meeting adjourned at 7:15 p.m.