



Harris County LGBTQIA+ Commission  
[lgbtqia.harriscountytexas.gov](http://lgbtqia.harriscountytexas.gov)

## Meeting Minutes

**Date and Time:** Wednesday March 20, 2024 | 5:30PM

**Location:** Virtual, Zoom

**Current Members:** Brad Pritchett, Brandon Mack, Diamond Stylz, Giovanni Rosselli, Jeremy Edwards, Kylie McNaught, Maria Gonzalez, Ramiro Fonseca, Victoria Cordova, Meghan Fairbanks)

➤ **Call to Order : Call to order at 5:41pm**

Present: Brad Pritchett, Maria Gonzalez, Diamond Styles, Kyle McNaught, Giovanni Rosali, Brandon Mack, Meghan Fairbanks

Absent: Ramiro Fonseca (excused? Not excused?)

➤ **Approval of last meeting minutes**

➤ **Public Comments: (none)**

➤ **Old Business**

➤ **Dr. Pyke Presentation-Gender Affirming Care in Unaffirming Times**

- Terminology First: If we are going to advocate for initiatives it's important to understand the terminology
  - Gender Affirming Care (GAC)- the most encompassing term in this area of health care (the umbrella term); includes behavioral, social, psychological, medical, surgical care
  - Restrictive policy has a chilling effect on providers (aka scared to do the right thing in fear of facing negative consequences).
  - Hormonal Replacement Therapy (important to note all are reversible)
  - Gender Affirming Surgery (GAS)
    - Should not quantify surgeries as way to determine being "trans-enough". Especially if this is being considered when people are seeking certain treatments;
    - Insurance companies have language the sets a "standards" before it will cover certain treatments.
- Public Payor Is Key (Federal and State)
  - Federal (Medicare, Ryan White) coverage is broader (certainly do cover HRT)
  - State (Medicaid is state funded and administered)
    - Texas does not cover HRT or GAS
- Harris Health's vision supports GAC
  - Working on getting entire system on a gender affirming model
  - Providers work hard to find different routes to fill their needs if not provided by Harris Health
- Discrimination
  - Every treatment and procedure mentioned before are totally acceptable in cis gender (ex: breast augmentation, removal) but it's only an issue when requested by trans folks.
- Obstacles and Opportunities

- Obstacles: Cost, patient enrollment, legislative uncertainty, information overload
  - Opportunities: increased education/ outreach; increased coalition building with private payors and other public/non-profit; legislative advocacy; robust workforce education
- Change at HHS
  - It's such a large entity that it will take time
  - Goal is to have gender affirming model training in onboarding
- QA
  - Texas HHS adding language restricting drug and surgery. Why add this language if it's not even covered here in Texas?
  - A: Probably to further deter providers, especially those that take Medicaid.
  - To not rely too much on the top down strategy, where in hospital could we start
    - Nursing, doctors, pharmacist, patient services folks
  - In terms of uncertainty of law, do you suspect the use of use of things like "pronouns" for better or for worse is being used against patients?
    - Yes. Definitely. Not only in health. But also in workplaces

## ➤ New Business

### I. Creation of Committees (section 12 of bylaws)

- Communications, Advocacy, Community Engagement
    - Members agreed these will be the committees
  - Q: what are restrictions on socials, media, especially regarding on county folks
  - A: there is no issue with them creating their own accounts; all official statements will be have to approved by majority.
  - Q: Anyone willing to lead the communications committee?
  - A: Victoria interested in the writing portion; but also comfortable with posting. Meghan has Canva account;
- Comms committee will be: Victoria, Diamond, and Meghan
- Advocacy will be: Maria Gonzalez; Gio (because of policy background) and Kyle
- Community Engagement will be: Jeremy (leader), Brandon, Kyle
  - Here is where we can ask for volunteers; Meghan will create an interest google form
- Any other concerns regarding committees?
  - What about "constituent" driven work? A place where we can connect people to services?
  - A: maybe a "case book"; or use a current org like Equality Texas, who has constituent resources representative.

### II. Community Engagement Planning

- Let's complete the directory of organizations (because previous meeting we mentioned we wanted the Commission to be a convener of organizations)
- Large-scale Town Meeting #3
- Smaller town hall
  - WE NEED TO MAKE MORE ABOUT PUBLIC COMMENT. We need folks to come out.
  - Townhalls will be all over the county.
  - And will become regular items PRIOR to meetings
  - Next meeting is in May so let's aim for townhall will be July and use Pride month to promote it.
- Townhall proposed calendar
  - Frequency= one small townhall per month
- The large townhall will be at the end of November

### III. Pride Events

- Ask orgs if they will give us space at the festival

### IV. Upcoming events/miscellaneous

➤ **Adjournment-** meeting adjourned at 7:41(with tiny gavel)

- Meeting adjourned 7:25PM