



LGBTQ QUALITY OF LIFE ADVISORY COMMISSION

RECOMMENDATION 20220328-3A-4
EXECUTIVE-LEVEL LGBTQIA+ COMMUNITY LIAISON

WHEREAS, among the key themes and requests resulting from the LGBTQIA+ Quality of Life study are to support the LGBTQIA+ community's essential needs including access to housing, education and culturally appropriate healthcare as well as the desire to achieve economic stability; and

WHEREAS, another key topic requiring immediate consideration concerns our transgender and gender-expansive community members. Threats and attacks to basic human rights of transgender youth and their families by State representatives require City officials and staff to make critical decisions and take immediate action to ensure their safety. It is encouraging that gains in social understanding and approval for LGBTQIA+ people over the past several decades have improved, yet as a result of the State's recent hostile political climate, LGBTQIA+ community members continue to face extreme levels of intolerance. Adding an executive level LGBTQIA+ liaison to provide public support might reassure vulnerable members experiencing discrimination that their city will serve and protect them. An LGBTQIA+ liaison located in the City Manager's office will review city policies and services through an LGBTQIA+ lens to determine if a policy or service might exclude or harm LGBTQIA+ people. This position would also be known as a receptive ear to constituents who want to bring LGBTQIA+ related issues directly to city government but may be fearful they might be dismissed or misunderstood; and

WHEREAS, limitations have been placed on the City's financial resources and LGBTQIA+ services are provided by an array of City departments and contracted providers, services are not monitored collectively for the community as a whole. Therefore the effectiveness, necessity or possible redundancies of services currently being funded cannot be determined. The liaison will actively coordinate and perform an analysis of current City and contracted services assuring all needs of the community are successfully addressed and may result in reassignment of resources to better use; and

WHEREAS, the City of Austin has the nation's third largest LGBTQIA+ population per capita. The internationally recognized organization, Human Right Campaign (HRC), sets industry standards for ranking cities for LGBTQIA+ Quality of Life. In its annual report, [Municipal Equality Index 2021](#), one measure for municipalities to achieve status as a "highest scoring city" states there must be present an individual residing in the City Manager's or Mayor's office working as a liaison on LGBTQIA+ issues as well as a separate liaison stationed under Law Enforcement to provide related community engagement (APD has 1 FTE); and

WHEREAS, nationwide, the vast majority of current executive level LGBTQIA+ Liaison positions reside within their municipality's City Manager's Office this noted position will directly report to the City Manager or the CMO's Chief of Staff. A few of the 110 cities with LGBTQIA+ staff liaisons include: [Santa Monica](#), [Philadelphia](#), [Scottsdale](#), [Atlanta](#).

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the LGBTQ Quality of Life Commission recommends to City Council to include in the FY 2022-23 Budget funding for one FTE



position with the title of LGBTQIA+ Community Liaison (or similar) through reallocation of a current vacant position. The position will provide guidance on LGBTQIA+ policies, perform government relations functions, programming, contract and expenditure recommendations, and other relevant business functions. Requirements include relevant educational degree(s), professional experience and qualifications. The position should reside within the City Manager's Office and report directly to the City Manager or the City Manager's Chief of Staff.

VOTE

Date of Approval: March 28, 2022

Record of the Vote: Adopted without objection on a 9-0 vote.

Present:

1. Arteaga
2. Curette
3. Curry
4. Dowling
5. Dreke
6. Gonzales
7. Jones
8. Taylor
9. Wollerson

Attest: _____

Ryn Gonzales

Ryn Gonzales, Chair