



George Latimer
County Executive

WHEREAS, the term of Sammy Gomez-Despain, as a member of the Westchester County LGBTQ Advisory Board, has expired:

NOW, THEREFORE, I, George Latimer, County Executive of Westchester County, in accordance with the terms and provisions of the Westchester County Charter, reappoint Sammy Gomez-Despain, 67 S. Division Street, New Rochelle, New York as a member of the Westchester County LGBTQ Advisory Board, for the term January 31, 2024 to December 31, 2027.

Given under my hand
and seal this 31st day
of January, 2024.



George Latimer
County Executive

Office of the County Executive

Michaelian Office Building
148 Martine Avenue
White Plains, New York 10601

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Westchester County

George Latimer
County Executive

January 31, 2024

Sam Gomez-Despain
67 S. Division Street
New Rochelle, NY 10805

Dear Sam,

It is my pleasure to reappoint you to serve as a member of the Westchester County LGBTQ Advisory Board, effective today, Wednesday, January 31, 2024, pursuant to the Laws of Westchester County §277.1001. This appointment is for a term to expire on December 31, 2027.

Your reappointment is subject to confirmation by the Westchester County Board of Legislators, but your service begins immediately. You must complete the attached Oath of Office and file it with the County Clerk prior to the next LGBTQ Advisory Board meeting, and provide this office with a copy within 30 days. Please contact Steve Bass of my office at (914) 995-2914 for the date, place, and time of the LGBTQ Advisory Board's upcoming meeting for your participation.

When you have filed your Oath of Office, a Resolution to confirm your reappointment will be submitted to the County Board of Legislators. As part of the confirmation process, you may be called before the Board to be interviewed.

Pursuant to Local Law, as a member of a Westchester County Board and/or Commission, you are responsible for adhering to the requirements of our Code of Ethics.

Warmest wishes for a successful tenure.

Very Truly Yours,



George Latimer
Westchester County Executive

GL/ts

cc: Honorable Board of Legislators
Steve Bass, Director of Intergovernmental Relations
Joan McDonald, Director of Operations

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Minutes for LGBTQ Advisory Board Mtg., Wednesday, 1/25/23

Attendees: Chris Oldi (chair), Robyn Schlesinger (recorder), Joann Prinzivalli, Michael Sabatino, Sam Gomez, Copernicus Crane (County) Erika Pierce (Legislator), Jim Stenerson, Daniel Charles (guest), Valerie Daniele (Human Rights Commission), Tejash Sanchala (Human Rights Commission).

Chris Oldi called the meeting to order at 7:33 pm, after it was determined by Steve Bass (County) that a quorum was actually present.

Introductions of all in attendance.

Human Rights Law: Valerie Daniele of the County's Human Rights Commission ("HRC") presented on the new human rights law, with revised definition/language regarding sexual orientation. She requested the Board's review and feedback. The HRC will come back with provisions regarding discriminatory harassment. Joann Prinzivalli noted that the Board can write a letter of support for this language. Erika Pierce added her support for the changes and suggested using examples.

Department of Corrections Forms: Chris Oldi is checking to see if the changes made in the review/revision by Robyn Schlesinger and James Young in 2019/2020 have been reflected in their current version.

Pride: Chris Oldi asked us to keep this in mind, as spring is quickly approaching. Copper Crane inquired about whether we will again be honoring youth groups, and noted the need for early coordination of this process.

Other Board member suggestions, ideas for presentations: Erika Pierce suggested that we could pivot to libraries in the County. Joann Prinzivalli suggested a presentation about The LOFT's TSHV: *Trans Services of the Hudson Valley* program.

Sam Gomez described a new program for LGBTQ+ youth in New Rochelle. The program will be a collaboration between the City and VIA, and provide the Latinx and BIPOC populations with dedicated services. Open house to be held soon.

Chris Oldi announced that he would be leaving Legal Service of the Hudson Valley to take a new position as executive director of a legal services agency in Massachusetts in early March. As a result, he will be relocating to that area and no longer be able to serve on this board due to the Westchester residency requirement.

The Board expressed its excitement for Chris's wonderful opportunity as well as sadness that we would be losing our long-time leader. Congratulations, Chris!

Motion to **approve minutes** of November 2022 meeting made by **Joann Pronzivalli**, seconded by **Jim Stenerson** and approved unanimously.

Motion to adjourn by **Joann Prinziavalli**, second by **Michael Sabatino** and approved unanimously. **Meeting adjourned** at 7:35 pm.

Next meeting is Monday, February 27, 2023, 6 pm (social), 6:30 pm (business).

Minutes for LGBTQ Advisory Board Mtg., Monday, 2/27/23

Attendees: Chris Oldi (chair), Robyn Schlesinger (recorder), Joann Prinzivalli, Sam Gomez, Justin White (from Legislator Erika Pierce's office), Jim Stenerson, Daniel Charles (guest), Rachel Simon, Max Gerozissis (County), Bruno S Villazhinay Matute, Steve Bass (County).

Chris Oldi called the meeting to order at 6:31 pm.

Introductions of all in attendance.

January meeting minutes: Joann Prinzivalli proposed approval of the minutes, seconded by Jim Stenerson. Unanimously approved.

County Executive ("CE") Order on LGBTQ+ Hate: James Young started work on this project. Joann Prinzivalli has drafted. It will be the CE's next order. James did a formal draft which Joann enhanced with language from prior similar orders. Needs to be done asap (before June). Next steps are to review draft that Joann has prepared. Robyn Schlesinger and Chris Oldi volunteered to review, with deadline this coming Monday, March 6, then send to the County Attorney. Max suggested that this be ready for TDOV on March 31, as County will want to maximize publicity associated with that occasion.

Pride: We need a schedule of all the Westchester County events, as there are many in addition to the central White Plains once that is organized by this board and The LOFT. Lewisboro Pride is on June 25 this year. In order for this Board to table, we will need a tent. Justin White offered one that he has. We also need swag to get people to our table. How about those great calendars, where the Advisory Board and friends at the Playland Pride Flagraising in 2021 is the centerfold! Or Westchester County merchandise, such as postcards, pens, maps, etc.? Chris Oldi asked people to indicate where (at which Pride events(s) they wanted to table, in advance.

Member News: Joann Prinzivalli spoke about the Bench Card that the 9th Judicial District Access to Justice LGBTQ+ Subcommittee created has been adopted by the NYS courts and approved by the ABA. Rachel Simon announced that PrideWorks takes place at Pace University on 3/15. Sam Gomez volunteered to table there for the Board. 500 LGBTQ+ youth will participate. Registration is 8-9, lunch is 11:30-12:30

Motion to adjourn by **Joann Prinzivalli**, second by **Jim Stenerson** and approved unanimously. **Meeting adjourned at 7:20 pm.** Next meeting is Tuesday, March 28, 6 pm (social), 6:30 pm (business).

Minutes for LGBTQ Advisory Board Mtg., Wednesday, 4/26/23

Attendees: Chris Oldi (chair), Robyn Schlesinger (recorder), Copernicus Crane (County Intergovernmental Affairs), Joann Prinzivalli, Sam Gomez, James Young, Daniel Charles, Catherine Cioffi (County Communications), Scott Havelka, (The LOFT), Max Gerozissis (County Intergovernmental Affairs), Michael Sabatino, Rocco Pozzi (County Corrections), Karen Pasquale (County Corrections), Mary Frasello (County Corrections), Bruno S Villazhinay Matute, Steve Bass (County Intergovernmental Affairs).

Chris Oldi called the meeting to order at 6:31 pm.

March meeting minutes: Chris has not yet prepared them, so they will need to be voted on at a subsequent meeting. (*Note: We are missing another set of minutes from a prior month during the fall/winter. Chris, please check your notes.*)

Copper Crane indicated that the Advisory Board needed to take several immediate steps to plan for the Pride 2023 Flag Raising, since no work/planning had been done to date. A meeting of the Pride Subcommittee would follow this regular Advisory Board subcommittee to continue the planning process. Among the outstanding matters for which actions/decisions would be required: What elements would comprise flag raising program (Anthem, Pledge, etc.); Who should receive awards; Who would emcee/speak; Who will prepare “run of show,” etc. **Catherine Cioffi** noted that a Save the Date needed to be sent NOW, so we needed to approve its content at this meeting. Catherine also shared a rendering of the Pride Month panels at the County Center. **Robyn Schlesinger** indicated that the flags depicted in those panels do not include the Intersex Flag, so the design of the panels will be changed to incorporate that element.

Several members indicated support for honoring County libraries after other awardees were suggested. Copper and **Max Gerozissis** agreed to follow up with Terry Kirchner (Westchester Library System) to determine the libraries that were most active in supporting the LGBTQ+ community over the past year. Among those suggested by the Board included: Katonah, Tarrytown, Scarsdale, Greenburgh, Dobbs Ferry, New Rochelle, White Plains, Irvington, Ossining and Bedford Hills.

County Dept. of Corrections: Mary Frasello, Karen Pasquale (liaison to County Executive) and Rocco Pozzi (Commissioner) presented on the Woodfield Cottage youth housing project that is in the planning stages for the Advisory Board’s input.

Woodfield is a 24-bed juvenile detention center for violent felony offenders. The team was seeking our design suggestions as they are working with OCFS and NYS PUC in planning the new building. Of particular concern was accommodating the need for

diverse gender identities among the incarcerated population. The Advisory Board emphasized the need for the ability to change space around to adjust to changing circumstances. **Robyn Schlesinger** noted that the Board would be happy, as it has done in the past, to review policies and procedures for Woodfield Cottage staff, which can really make a difference in how smoothly the facility runs in terms of SOGIESC. In addition, Robyn offered training to staff as another service that the Board and its members provide. The Corrections team thanked the Board for its input.

Chris Oldi announced that he would be formally resigning his position as Chair of the Advisory Board due to his recent relocation to MA effective 7/1/23.

Motion to adjourn by **Joann Prinziwalli**, second by **Sam Gomez** and approved unanimously. **Meeting adjourned** at 7:29 pm. Next meeting is Monday May 22, 6 pm (social), 6:30 pm (business).

Minutes for LGBTQ Advisory Board Meeting, Tuesday, 5/23/23

Attendees: Chris Oldi (chair), Robyn Schlesinger (recorder), Copernicus Crane (County Intergovernmental Affairs), Joann Prinzivalli, Sam Gomez, Daniel Charles, Jade Watts, Erika Pierce (Board of Legislators), Bruno S Villazhinay Matute.

Chris Oldi called the meeting to order at 6:37 pm after a quorum was present.

April meeting minutes: Joann Prinzivalli moved to approve, Bruno Villazhinay seconded, approved unanimously.

Flag raising discussion: In the event of rain, the ceremony will take place inside the lobby. Steps are being painted next week by DPW. Rachel Simon bringing 20 rainbow sashes. Steve Bass has some also.

Advisory Board leadership: Rachel Simon will become chair on July 1, 2023. Chris Oldi thanked her for taking over the position.

Board tabling/representation at upcoming Pride events/celebrations:

New Rochelle flag raising June 2: Sam;

New Rochelle Pride June 10: Robyn/Sam;

Westchester (White Plains) Pride June 4: Sam/Daniel/Robyn;

Bedford flag raising June 3: Bruno/Robyn;

Yorktown Pride June 3: Sam/Daniel;

Yonkers Pride June 10: Chris/Michael;

Mount Vernon Pride June 22: Robyn;

Peekskill Pride June 24: Daniel.

Member News:

Sam Gomez is being honored by the Westchester County Board of Legislators on June 5. Congratulations, Sam!

Joann Prinzivalli discussed the recent NY State Dept of Labor TGNCNB employment experiences forum in which she and Robyn (among other members of the community) participated.

Jade Watts noted that **Hudson Link** is celebrating its 25th anniversary.

Motion to adjourn at 7:16 made by Joann Prinzivalli, seconded by Sam Gomez, approved unanimously.

Next meeting will take place on Wednesday, June 28 at 6:00 pm for socializing, with business meeting beginning at 6:30 pm.

Westchester County LGBTQ Advisory Board Meeting

Tuesday, September 26, 2023

In attendance: Rachel Simon (Chair), Joann Prinziavalli, Max Gerozissis (County), Sam Gomez, Steve Bass (County), Jim Stenerson, Chris Oldi, Erika Pierce (County Legislator), Bruno Villazhinay-Matute, Robyn Schlesinger (recorder).

Meeting called to order at 6:38 pm.

Follow up with FairChester Pride coalition (Leonard-Litz Foundation-organized group): Safety resources discussed regarding threats and attacks against LGBTQ+ targets in region (e.g. Peekskill, Yorktown, New Haven, CT). New Haven CT Pride Ctr recently had a bomb threat. Peekskill site had drag event canceled due to threats. What is Board's response? Steve suggested contacting Tejas (Westchester HRC). Erika suggested contacting the Westchester DA's office. Max noted that the DA will be coming to present at this meeting at one of next 2 meetings. Erika noted that we need to report these incidents to DA's office when they happen in order for the system to work. Robyn noted that she will be meeting with Rob Wingate (Greenburgh Pride) who has been involved with DA's office on several threats to follow up this Friday (September 29). Jim S. inquired about getting the AG's office to present/answer questions.

LOFT Gala 9/22/23: Steve Bass thanked attendees for honoring CE Latimer and noted that this Board deserves much credit for progress made with LGBTQ+ initiatives in the County.

This Board will hold 2 in-person social hours per year, which was consensus based on feedback requested. Chris noted that the Monday of the December meeting had traditionally been the time this had occurred in years past (prior to pandemic) or the week following. Monday November 11/27 will be the date of this social hour, with December 12/11 as the backup if the DA's office presents to this Board at the November meeting.

The Triangle Community Center Gala will take place on Saturday October 21. Rachel is Center's new executive director, so please come and show support for this outstanding and effective organization in the region.

Member News

Bruno noted that Westchester Medical Center's Office of DE&I will be having Cultural IQ Series presentation on October 19, session 3 called "Cured" for LGBTQ+ History Month with panel discussion. Also, NY Medical College "Allies in Medicine" LGBTQ curriculum is being developed with the LGBTQ+ student group.

Robyn mentioned 2 upcoming WJCS Center Lane events: Youth Pride on 10/14 and the Trans Forum on 11/17. Also, The LOFT will hold a Coming Out Day Rally on 10/11;

Steve will request that Catherine Cioffi have the County illuminate our County Center LGBTQ+ panels for the month of October. He also noted that there is no need to change any promotional materials yet given the County's email changes.

Intake forms for DSS and Corrections: What is the status? Max to reach out to these County departments to get copies of current ones for us to review.

Motion to adjourn made by Sam, seconded by Joann. Meeting adjourned at 7:03 pm.

Next meeting is Monday, October 23.

**Westchester County LGBTQ Advisory Board Meeting
Tuesday, August 29, 2023**

In attendance: Rachel Simon (Chair), Max Gerozissis (County), Sam Gomez, Steve Bass (County), Jim Stenerson, Chris Oldi, Robyn Schlesinger (recorder).

Note: No quorum was present so these are notes, not official minutes.

Chair Rachel Simon noted that meetings will take place on the fourth Monday of the month unless there is a Monday holiday, in which is the case the meeting will be on Tuesday. In September, the fourth Monday is Yom Kippur, so next meeting is Tuesday, September 26.

Fairchester Pride Coalition email list produced the next several items:

Greenburgh Pride: Outreach to police. Discussion of how to address the proposed study. Robyn (Board liaison to Police Reform Task Force) will contact the folks from Greenburgh.

Peekskill Drag Event cancellation: Steve Bass suggested reaching out to Tejas Sanchala (who is an ex officio member of this Board.

Board meetings/schedule: Should we meet in person several times a year? Jim Stenerson believes that we should meet in person at least twice. Is video required under Open Meetings Law? Should the 30-minute socializing period remain? Sam Gomez suggested reducing to 15 minutes. Consensus was to keep it from 6:00- 6:30 pm.

Announcements:

Job posting for Anchor Health.

Reminders about LOFT Gala 9/22 and TCC Gala 10/21.

Rachel is the new Executive Director of the Triangle Community Center in Norwalk, CT. Yaaaaay!!!

Robyn will send link for tix to LOFT Gala for those interested in being part of Board table at the event.

Chris Oldi noted that the Board website needs updating.

Steve Bass announced that Cade from John Jay HS will be the student rep.

Steve also mentioned that the DA's office's hate Crimes Unit is interested in coming to speak to us.

Meeting ended.

Westchester County LGBTQ Advisory Board Meeting Minutes

Monday, October 23, 2023

In attendance: Rachel Simon (Chair), Max Gerozissis (County), Sam Gomez, Jim Stenerson, Chris Oldi, Joann Prinziavalli, Cade Schwark, Ellie Randles (for Legislator Erika Pierce), Michael Sabatino, Robyn Schlesinger (recorder), Catalina Blanco Buitrago (Westchester Cty DA's Office), Christina Alston (Westchester Cty DA's Office), Tejas Sanchala (Westchester Cty Human Rights Commission), Julia DePersia (Westchester Cty Human Rights Commission).

Chair Rachel Simon called the meeting to order at 6:32.

Joann Prinziavalli moved that the minutes for the September meeting be adopted, seconded by Jim Stenerson, approved unanimously.

Westchester Cty DA's Office Hate Crimes Unit Presentation

Catalina Blanco Buitrago is ADA and Christina Alston is Sr Crime Analyst. Catalina presented, noted that DA Mimi Rocah's priorities included consistent and thorough prosecution of hate crimes throughout the County with their stated positions and the Hate Crimes Unit. They seek to prosecute and take action by tracking bias throughout the County and label hate as hate; recognize it! Build trust by meeting with community leaders and enlist help in this effort. Please understand that they cannot always discuss pending matters. They can sometimes help with non-crime matters, however. There is a hotline with voicemail for incidents/crimes of bias/hate: 914-995-TIPS, press #2. Also, complaint forms available through the DA's office. They aim for 24-48 hour responses to these. Their office also does training of police and community leaders. They partner with Tejas and the HRC at schools to do training/outreach.

Jim Stenerson asked question about the kinds/frequency of police training. It is done 4 times/yr. at Police Academy. Recruits are trained once/semester plus supervisor training and case-by-case trainings. County-wide training done in October. Information shared on curriculum used with law enforcement. Rachel Simon inquired about what crimes are being reported most. Answer: Race/Sexual orientation/Ethnicity & national origin are the ones mostly being reported. Question re: which police departments are receiving training. County-wide, those that utilize Police Academy.

Human Rights Commission Presentation

Tejas Sanchala and Julia DePersia represented HRC. They have done training with LGBTQ+ Bar Assn of NY (Shain Filcher) which was very successful. Noted that police are trained by fellow officer who is lesbian, Pam Sgroi. Robyn Schlesinger asked what came of Police Reform Task Force recommendation that community member join with LGBTQ+ member of police department to do these trainings? Tejas will check and get back to us. Noted that police departments have hate crime units because of PRTF.

HRC role is not criminal prosecution/enforcement; rather, make people aware. Do cultural competency training. Some HRC investigations can form the basis of lawsuits for employment/housing discrimination lawsuit or discriminatory harassment investigation. HRC builds relationships with community groups to catch issues before they escalate with training. They handle discrimination issues

beyond LGBTQ+, and reporting (unlike DA's office) can be anonymous. DA's office noted that they do respect decision not to move forward if complainant decides and not prosecute.

Guide Sheets for Community

Rachel asked whether Advisory Board would consider producing Guide Sheets for affected members of the public on matters of concern, e.g. rights of gender expansive students, banning books, etc. What are the priority topics? Would subcommittees be formed to work on these? Some members suggested looking at currently available resources to see if there were some that were already done. Could HRC partner? Tejas agreed that looking for other organization's materials was a good idea. Julia DePersia suggested the NYSED for materials re: school issues. Joann mentioned 9th JD Access to Justice Work on bench card as prototype. Michael Sabatino noted that some libraries already have standards for removing books (Yonkers). Rachel suggested that "Your Rights as a Student" would be a timely topic and Cade Schwark agreed. Joann noted that the Civil Liberties Union might already have materials on this. Michael said that he would look for materials on Internet between now and next meeting.

Robyn added that we might want to look at reviewing/enhancing Advisory Board membership to enable us to form subcommittees such as this one that would be able to perform work between meetings because at present there are too many inactive members. Rachel agreed to look into this matter with Max Gerozissis and Steve Bass. Sam Gomez noted that some members can work on things between meeting but not attend the meetings themselves.

Intake Forms for DSS/Corrections

Max reported that there was no update because neither department had gotten back to us.

Scheduling

Next meeting Monday, November 27, 2023.

Advisory Board social gathering in lieu of meeting December 4 location/time TBD.

Motion to adjourn made by Joann, seconded by Jim. Meeting adjourned at 7:42 pm.

**Westchester County LGBTQ Advisory Board Meeting
Monday, November 27, 2023**

In attendance: Rachel Simon (Chair), Joann Prinzivalli, Cade Schwark, Max Gerozissis (County), Sam Gomez, Jim Stenerson, Chris Oldi, Bruno Villazhinay-Matute, Michael Sabatino, Robyn Schlesinger (recorder).

Meeting called to order at 6:31 pm.

Meetings now live on Legistar.

Motion to approve October minutes by Joann Prinzivalli, seconded by Jim Stenerson, approved unanimously.

Tejas Sanchala still looking into Robyn Schlesinger's question re: training at Police Academy.

Members not attending: Robyn to reach out to Jade Watts. Sam Gomez to reach out to Daniel Charles to determine if these individuals still want to remain active, because their non-attendance creates quorum issues and leaves fewer members to do the Board's work.

Recruitment: Robyn to reach out to Mia Edwards. Rachel to reach out to Faith Rivers and spouse. Michael Sabatino to reach out to his priest (raised need for clergy representative).

Board will have in-person meeting (social gathering with significant others) on 12/4/23 at Little Drunken Chef restaurant in White Plains.

Member News:

Bruno Villazhinay-Matute mentioned that Westchester Medical Center doing Allies in Medicine event with The LOFT as cosponsor. Michael raised problematic service issue he experienced at WMC.

The LOFT Trans Forum 11/17/23: Joann reported on legislation pending that creates problems for trans community but is being presented as a bill to "protect children." Misleading characterization. Both Joann and Chris Oldi were featured in podcasts over the past month.

The Triangle Community Center is looking for a deputy director.

Motion to adjourn made by Sam, seconded by Chris. Meeting adjourned at 7:03 pm.

Next meeting is Monday, January 29, 2024.

**COUNTY OF WESTCHESTER
OATH OF OFFICE**

For Appointees to County Boards and Commissions

STATE OF NEW YORK)
) ss.:
COUNTY OF WESTCHESTER)

I, Sammy Gomez-Despain do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will support
(Print or Type Name)

the constitution of the United States, and the constitution of the State of New York, and that I will faithfully discharge the duties of the office of LGBTQ ADVISORY BOARD in and for the
(Print or Type Board Name)

County of Westchester, according to the best of my ability.

Date: 2/6/2024 _____
(Signature)

Sworn to and subscribed before me this 6 day of February,
2024.

Regina O'Hare

(Signature)

Regina O'Hare

(Print or Type Name)

Notary Public, State of New York

(Title of Official Administering Oath)

Regina O'Hare
Notary Public, State of New York
No. 01OH5067784
Qualified in Westchester County
Commission Expires Oct. 28, 2026

Mail original Oath of Office to Office to Andrew Ferris, Office of the County Executive, 148 Martine Ave., Room 916D, White Plains, NY 10601 for filing within thirty (30) days of the commencement of the term of office or the notice of appointment.