

LGBT History Project of the LGBT Center of Central PA

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Title: Governor's Council for Sexual Minorities Meeting Minutes

Date: January 19, 1978

Location: LGBT-001 Joseph W. Burns Collection

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THE NEXT COUNCIL MEETING IS ON MARCH 2 IN HARRISBURG, ROOM 812
HEALTH AND WELFARE BUILDING. PLEASE MAKE EVERY EFFORT TO ATTEND.
THE TIME REMAINS 1:30 PM.



COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
PENNSYLVANIA COUNCIL FOR SEXUAL MINORITIES
238 Main Capitol Building
Harrisburg, Pennsylvania

JANUARY 19, 1978

MINUTES

Attendance: Conrad Jones, Christopher Markey, Marilyn Hewitt, John Whyte, Kenneth George, Rose Weber, Lisa White, Jean Becker, S.L. Rodriguez, Karen Snider, Art Duprat, Walter Lear, Joann Hunter Farr, Gerald Brennan, Arthur C. Warner, Greta R. Aul, Rachel MacLachlan, Dana Garcia, Robert Snyder, Randal G. Forrester, Jay Snyder, James Huggins, Tony Silvestre.

1. The meeting opened with an introduction of Joann Hunter Farr, newly appointed by Governor Shapp. Dr. Farr of State College, is a clinical psychologist and sex therapist specializing in family and marriage counseling. Dr. Farr, a Phi Beta Kappa and published researcher has been a long time supporter of a rational and humane approach to sexualtiy. She will be replacing George Smith Ph.D. as a community representative from central Pennsylvania.
2. Prison Project Tony reported on his meeting with Major Jack Case, director of the Pennsylvania Prison Society. They concluded:
 - a. It is unlikely that sionificant prison rforms affecting gay prisoners will occur in Pennsvlvania in the near future.
 - b. Homosexual relations are often used to control prisoners.
 - c. Homosexuals are often the target of prison rape.

In light of these facts, the tactics suggested to the Council include drawing attention to the problem of rape, making it clear that rape is an act of aggression and not of sexuality, and suggesting reforms to lesson rape.

The method for gaining these obiectives would be holding a national conference on the topic. Sponsoring groups could include the Council, The Pennsylvania Prison Society, the American Friends, and the American Corrections Association. Before contacting these groups and seeking funding, the Council will prepare a proposal. A student at Penn State under the direction of Tony Silvestre and Julia Rux will carry out the research for such a proposal as his practicum. It is expected that the proposal will be ready in two months.

The Council voted unanimously to accept the report and to support a national conference.

3. Child Molestation

Rose Weber raised the point that a similar strategy might be very effective as a tool for educating the public on child molestation.

It was decided to explore the issue. Gordon Johnson of DPW will be asked to send the Council information on child molestation in Pennsylvania as well as on other agencies involved in the area.

4. Membership

All Council seats are open at this time. Most members are willing to serve another term. Resumes have been received and are being reviewed for openings. The major consideration in all appointments of sexual minority representatives is their ability and willingness to work effectively on Council projects. The minimum time expected is one full day a month on Council work.

5. Public Information

Jim Guthrie has sent letters to all broadcast media in the state offering Council facilities and personnel for their public affairs programming. This is especially timely since the stations are now involved with license renewals.

A brochure describing the Council's history and functions, prepared by Randal Forrester, has been sent to all media in the state. Copies were distributed to all Council members at the meeting. Any suggestions for future revisions should be sent to Jim Guthrie at our Council address in Harrisburg.

Randy made the point that each committee chair is responsible for sending press releases to the PIO as soon as possible. Old news is not news and will not be picked up.

6. COUNCIL POLICY ON TRANSEXUALITY

As a result of a number of Council meetings on transsexuality a list of suggested policies and goals were distributed to Council members. After some discussion, it was agreed that the list was reflective of a desired direction. Each committee will review the goals outlined for its jurisdiction and decide on their feasibility. Committees will report back to Council. Council members who wish to receive a copy of the policies should contact Tony.

Joann Hunter Farr made the point that mental health clinics do not deal with the issue of transsexuality in any effective way. Most clinics have no information and cannot make even simple referrals. Dr. Farr suggested that the Council put together a packet of information that could be sent to the clinics. There will be a meeting in State College to prepare the packet.

7. Announcements

Barton Fields, Secretary of State in Pennsylvania, made several supportive statements about gays at a recent meeting of the NAACP at State College. He suggested to his audience that they should listen to all people since no one could predict where the next Martin Luther King would come from.

A number of announcements were made about the Pride '78 conference. (We now know that the conference is postponed until April 7,8,9. All Council members are urged to attend or at least make a contribution to the Conference. The snow cost the committee money. Please encourage others to attend, announce it where possible and send a contribution. You can write to them at: Pride '78, PO Box 552, Lancaster, Pa. 17604.

8. After the break, Marilyn Hewitt chaired the meeting

9. Health Committee: Walter Lear

Walter reported that the regulations for hospital licensing have been promulgated. These regs. include equal treatment for sexual minority patients, but do not cover employment.

10. Employment: Marilyn Hewitt

Marilyn reported that the Bureau of Affirmative Action has our concept proposal for training AAO's in sexual minority concerns. Dan Sawyer has indicated that he sees no problem with getting it approved. (Since our meeting AA has announced that they are putting together a proposal for an entire training program for AAO's and that our training might be part of the package.)

11. Welfare: Jay Snyder

Jay reported that the Justice Dept. has removed sexual minorities from two Welfare Dept. proposals. He does not know how and why this has happened. Bob Rains will be asked to look into this. Jay also distributed copies of the 1976 Child Abuse Report from the Dept. It does not break down any of the statistics on sexual minorities.

12. Education

The Council voted to ask PDE for a copy of the pamphlet for each Council member. Conrad will pursue this request and also find out what the status is for official release of the pamphlet.

The meeting adjourned at 4:00 PM