

LGBT History Project of the LGBT Center of Central PA

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Title: Governor's Council for Sexual Minorities Meeting Minutes

Date: September 10, 1979

Location: LGBT-001 Joseph W. Burns Collection

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COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
PENNSYLVANIA COUNCIL FOR SEXUAL MINORITIES

238 Main Capitol Building
Harrisburg, Pennsylvania

PLEASE NOTE: The Governor's Office has asked that travel vouchers be submitted as soon after the expences are incurred as is possible. More than one trip can be included on a single voucher if the trips are not more than a month apart. Please begin following this new procedure as soon as possible. Vouchers can be obtained from Ms. Rae Neubaum, 624 Main Capitol Building, Harrisburg, 17120.

Members who already have hotel and airline forms should notify Tony as soon as possible.

The next Council meeting is in Pittsburgh at the Holiday Inn at the Pittsburgh airport on October 20 at 12:45 PM.

MINUTES

September 10, 1979
Harrisburg

Attendance: Russell Cardamone, Mary Nancarrow, Walter Lear, Jean Becker, Kenneth George, Joseph Burns, Leslie Phillips, Jeff Britton, David Donaldson, Mary Ellen Dowdrick, Barbara Gittings, James Huggins, Tony Silvestre.

1. The Voluntary Deviate Sexual Intercourse Statute: David Donaldson David reviewed the recent Common Pleas Court decision of Judge Ross in Pittsburgh which declared the statute unconstitutional. Judge Ross based his decision on the right to privacy and unequal enforcement of the law based on marital status. The Pittsburgh DA's office has appealed the decision to the Superior Court.

A number of organizations are filing briefs in support of the judge's decision. These include the ACLU, the National Committee for Sexual Civil Liberties and a Philadelphia organization of lawyers.

The case may remain in the courts for as long as two years. Additional information can be obtained through David.

2. Aging: Dr. Kenneth George

Representing the University of Pennsylvania, Dr. George will be meeting Secretary Black of the new Department on Aging. They will discuss issues of sexuality affecting older people in the Commonwealth.

Speaker's Bureau:

The Department of Education has not yet followed through on the proposed presentation to their staff. Conrad Jones will be asked for an update.

Presentations for staff of the Human Relations Commission, DPW Affirmative Action Staff, and attorneys in the Attorney General's Office have not occurred. Vicky Beardsley, and David Donaldson will be asked to pursue these issues in HRC and Justice. The newly forming Task Force on Gay Issues in DPW will be asked in that department.

Dr. George will work to develop a training proposal for submission to the Governor's Office aimed at Personnel staff. At the same time, he will begin preparing for a second session with the Affirmative Action staff.

3. Alcoholism: James Huggins

Having successfully planned and implemented our training of D & A staff at the summer school run by the Council on Drug and Alcohol Abuse and having planned for sexual minority presence at the Council's November state-wide conference, the committee is organizing for training at D & A's Regional Training Councils. This training will occur during the current fiscal year at the five council headquarters around the state.

Other projects proposed by our Council will be considered in a meeting with Jim and Gloria Martin-Payne and Ellen Shoemaker of D & A.

4. DPW Proposed Task Force on Gay Issues:

The list of priorities for action within the Department of Welfare, have been sent to the Secretaries assistant, Candy Neller.

Ms. Neller will be meeting with members of our committee to discuss the priorities and to formally propose the establishment of an in-house task force. The Secretary may make her decision as early as October 1.

5. Pride'79: Mary Nancarrow

The conference is scheduled for October 19-21 at the Holiday Inn at the Pittsburgh airport. The Council will be meeting at the conference at 12:45pm on Saturday. All Council members are urged to attend and to register for the conference as soon as possible. Members with questions can call Mary at (h) 717 697-3482 and (o) 717 783-2576.

A major part of our meeting will be a panel entitled, "Racism, Sexism, Homophobia".

6. Announcements:

Jeff Britton announced that the Walt Whitman Club is putting up a billboard in Center City, Philadelphia urging gays to register to vote.

Barbara Gittings announced that Frances Hanckle, a former Council member has just published a book, "A Way of Love, A Way of Life." Barbara also passed around information from the Amer. Library Association.

Lellie Phillips announced that a group of lawyers is organizing in Philadelphia. She said that sexual minority issues will be a focus.

Dr. Lear announced that the Gay Caucus of the American Public Health Association will be meeting in NY from November 2-7. Persons interested should call Dr. Lear. The meeting is in conjunction with the regular meeting of the APHA.

Jerry Brown has appointed Steven Lachs as the first openly gay judge in the country. Two additional appointments are expected.

7. Workgroups:

Employment

The group reviewed the Council's actions over the last two years and identified issues needing evaluation and activity.

Mary Nancarrow will be convening a Council committee to examine the following issues: (Council members who are interested in sitting on such a committee should contact her)

Establishing a clearinghouse for job information using resources in the Civil Service Commission and the Affirmative Action Offices in the various agencies.

Planning a meeting with the Secretary of Labor and Industry for the first week in November to deal with issues under his jurisdiction.

Reviewing our work with unions especially to begin discussion with unions having protective clauses on issues around benefit programs and to work with unions without such clauses to work for introducing them into contracts.

To develop with the Council's Speakers Bureau a training program through the personnel offices.

Health

The group discussed the following issues:

It was determined that sexually transmitted diseases remain the major priority of our work in health. The printing of pamphlets and other education material is an essential first step. Pamphlets are ready for publication but a decision on who should do the printing has not been made.

Planning is necessary to establish a training program for department personnel including reprints for distribution. Work will have to be done in the department to prepare for this education.

A questionnaire designed to survey the health concerns of gay people is being prepared by Rose Weber. It is almost completed and a strategy for distribution needs to be developed.

Justice

The following issues will be presented to the Attorney General at a special meeting with Council representatives and through David Donaldson in his capacity as representative of the Department to the Council.

Support for appointment of a Secretary for the new Dept. of Corrections who will join us in working for an end to prison rape and education of Corrections staff on sexual minority issues.

The Alleghany case.

Actions of Attorneys in various state departments and their impact on our Councils goals.

Arranging a seminar within the Department on issues of mutual interest.

The meeting adjourned at 4:15 pm