

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 8, 1980

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

NB: THE COUNCIL WILL MEET NEXT ON OCTOBER 4, 1980 AT THE PRIDE '80 CONFERENCE AT 11:00. HELEN SEAGER AND LOUISE ONCLEY WILL PRESENT ON SEXUAL HARASSMENT.

MINUTES

September 8, 1980

Attendance: Alfred Wadley, NAACP, Building T7-1, Fort Indiantown Gap, Annville, Pa, 17003, Dr. Belford (Representing Harry Smith of Corrections), John Case, Sylvia Waters, Leslie Phillips, Gloria Guard.

In Tony's absence Gloria Guard chaired the meeting. The next meeting will be held October 4, 1980 at the Gay Pride '80 Conference in Harrisburg.

1. Report from Welfare by Gloria Guard

The Welfare Subcommittee has met twice and has decided using the attached priority list for their goals in the near future. The subcommittee was happy to report that the Affirmative Action Bureau in DPW will handle complaint resolutions and is in the process of developing a training program. The most recent discrimination complaint has been resolved with the assistance of DPW's Legal Office.

Sexual minority training will be available to DPW's Children and Youth facilities on an as-need basis.

A social work student will be working with Tony and Gloria to review all pertinent language about non-discrimination in DPW regulations, policy, procedures, and guidelines. She will also be available to work on the employment committee and other council activities.

2. Health report by Sylvia Waters

Tony and Sylvia met with Dr. Muller and the Deputy Secretary for Administration of the Health Department. He expressed his support for a training program within the Health Department. Sylvia reports that that training should take place before the end of the calendar year. The Secretary also discussed the priorities for the Health Department for the future.

Tony Henry asked whether the Health Department makes the pamphlets on sexually transmitted diseases for gay men available to local health offices, since some Philadelphia officials were unfamiliar with the pamphlet. Sylvia Waters agreed to draft a letter for the Secretary's signature that would go to the independent county health departments stating that such pamphlets were available upon request.

3. Foster Care - report by Tony Henry

The Eromin Center is now a licensed foster care placement agency for Philadelphia. Tony Henry announced that the Philadelphia black gays will have a forum on September 16th to inform the community about the Eromin program and to ask if there are members who would consider being foster parents. He reported that New Jersey has a similar program that has been quite successful.

4. Corrections - report by John Case

Tony Silvestre, John Case, Commissioner Marks, the Deputy Commissioner, and the Director of staff development from Corrections met in August. The major topic of conversation was the need for additional training for members of the Corrections agency. Currently the training does incorporate Council recommendations, but it needs revision and expansion.

Dr. Belford attended the meeting for Harry Smith who will be the Corrections representative at future meetings.

5. ACLU/Governor's Council Booklet - report by Gloria Guard

The booklet on Legal Rights for Lesbians and Gay Men in Pennsylvania is progressing. Funding has been received from the William Penn Foundation. There will be a forum in Philadelphia to announce the booklet's availability.

6. Philadelphia Meeting - report by Tony Henry

On September 3, Tony Silvestre and Tony Henry met with all the Commissioners in the city of Philadelphia at Wilson Goode's request. They presented an overview of the issues in both services and employment for sexual minorities. They also made recommendations for action and answered questions. In general, Commissioners were very supportive. Police Commissioner Solomon restated his recent policy of non-discrimination based on sexual or affectional preference. He also stated that ninety percent of the public reaction to his policy has been supportive.

7. Pride '80

The statewide conference for gays will be held in Harrisburg on October 3 - 5 at the Holiday Inn town. Literature is available from gay switchboards. Those who had attended last were impressed by the programming and the large turnout.

PUBLIC WELFARE (PRIORITY LIST 7/29/80)

Done:

Met with Secretary on problems in Department of Public Welfare (DPW).

DPW issued statements on non-discrimination.

Participated in the planning of and gave input to the White House Conference on the Family.

Spoke with administrators of mental health institutions.

Secured identified person in the Affirmative Action Bureau for complaint resolution and assured confidentiality for all cases.

Developed a complaint procedure in DPW.

Made sexual minority training available to children and youth facilities by inclusion of expert training agencies in the OCYF training directory.

Set up a working group within DPW to address sexual minority concerns.

To Do:

Review and amend all pertinent language about non-discrimination in DPW regulations, policies, procedures, and guidelines.

Publish a resource guide to be used by DPW employees which includes a non-discrimination protection section, and lists community resources. Provide for the use of the resource guide by Title XX Information and Referral providers.

Provide an official overview with available documentation of the range of problems of sexual minorities in DPW's client services, direct and indirect.

Systematically monitor conference and similar activities involving DPW to insure appropriate attention to sexual minorities concerns.

Review child welfare laws, regulations and program practices regarding sexual minorities as foster care and adoptive parents.

Review state plan for Children and Youth, the Blind, Mental Health, Mental Retardation, and Social Services to make sure that the plans reflect the needs of service provisions to sexual minorities.

Review DPW contracts to insure inclusion of non-discrimination language. Review DPW contract compliance procedures to assure non-discrimination against sexual minorities in employment and service delivery.

Provide medical assistance payments for sexual reassignment surgery.