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Title: *General Meetings Memo*

Date: January 17 & February 21, 1993

Location: LGBT-080 Peg & Delma Welch Collection

Contact:

LGBT History Project
Archives & Special Collections
Waidner-Spahr Library
Dickinson College
P.O. Box 1773
Carlisle, PA 17013

717-245-1399

archives@dickinson.edu

General meetings in conjunction with potluck suppers were scheduled for the above dates, at the YWCA in York. The January meeting was held when and where scheduled, and no major business was considered other than our strategies to encourage adoption of the "gay rights" ordinance proposed by Mayor Althaus to the York City Council. Discussion was lively without being heated or divisive, and decisions were made by consensus rather than by motion and vote.

Much had already happened by the time of the meeting. The York Daily record first reported on 22 December that Mayor Althaus might propose the law, and on the 29th, his decision to do so. By the first week of January, Rev. Jim Grove of Loganville had announced plans to bring Paul Cameron to York to address council and otherwise oppose the law-- it appeared that a substantial conservative-fundamentalist campaign was developing. Peg and Delma (both YAL members, and Peg about to be appointed YAL treasurer) invited interested parties to meet at their home on 10 January for discussion of events and strategy. This was not officially a YAL meeting, although a majority of those present were YAL members or officers. We felt that it would be better to confront and deal with Cameron than to ignore him. Peg and Randy volunteered to obtain information about Cameron's past record and tactics and to distribute it to council and the media-- which they did very expeditiously. I suggested-- and the group agreed-- that a special edition Lambdan might be used to inform and mobilize our people. Our official Position Statement was discussed, revised and approved by telephone conference among the Board by 13 January, and was included in the special edition Lambdan dated 15 January and distributed widely that weekend. So by the time of the 17 January general meeting, and without formally convening a Board meeting, much had been accomplished.

Discussion and planning at the general meeting focused on two main topics: strategy for the council meeting on the 19th, and a signature ad for publication in the newspaper. Council President Murphy had announced against the law, and members Smallwood and Crenshaw for it. Members Rohrbaugh and Amoros had not yet publicly committed, but were believed to be leaning for. After initially agreeing to allow Cameron an hour or more to address council, President Murphy received numerous requests-- many of them from city residents-- to speak. He decided that the first ten people signing in at the meeting would be allowed to speak for 3 minutes each. Certain of our members expressed a desire or willingness to speak. Anticipating a large and early crowd of opponents, we planned to get as many people there early as we could. It was also decided to revise the pink triangle cut-outs included in the Lambdan for supporters to wear to the meeting by down-sizing them and adding a rainbow ribbon. Peg handled this. Peg and Randy prepared a brief statement supporting the law, and the forms on which signatures would be obtained for use in a newspaper ad. These were approved and distributed.

Because of snow, I was unable to get to the meeting of 21 February, which was moved to Jim and Doug's house because the YW was closed. Because a quorum did not exist, no official business was conducted; various matters were discussed and events were planned for March and April. Doug provided me with an outline of the meeting. These matters were discussed:

- Information and flyer regarding the bus to the April March on Washington
- Voters' Guide. Questionnaire for candidates for mayor and council will ask how to enforce ordinance, and position on referendum. Will be sent out about 1 March, asked to be returned by the 14th.
- Possible adoption of a new logo
- Gay map for '93-94
- Picnics. Will aim for 2nd Sunday each month. Doug and Frank will do.
- Progressive Dinner, 13 March. Appetizer at Dan and Lee's, Entree by Renee and Cheryl at Access, desserts possibly at Kate and Rita's- to be confirmed. Limit to 25-30, deadline Monday, 8 March.

(Over)

(21 Feb.- planning session, contd....)

- Sunday evenings at Ponderosa continued through March. 6 p.m.
- 20 March, Sat.- Game night at Peg/Delma's, bring munchies. List only phone # in newsletter
- 21 March, Sun.- Potluck/Gen. Meeting at YW. Possible Steve Bush of City Human Relations Commission to speak on ordinance, etc.
- 4 April, Sun.- Brunch at Isaac's, 12:30 pm
- 18 April, Sun.- Potluck/Gen. Meeting at YW. Eat at 6, meeting 7:30
- 25 April, Sun.- March on Washington
- Possible special issue (of newsletter?) on candidates & elections
- Article for March/April issue- where to register, by when.
- Letter to editor thanking signers for names ad. From the Board. Mention thanks for money, signers, late signers, support, school kids, mayor/council, citizens, churches, those who attended meetings.
- Film festival ad- by 1 April

ADDENDUM:

I believe that these Minutes, as an ongoing record of the plans and projects of this organization, should record that a majority of those addressing the City Council of 19 January and of those in attendance favored the adoption of the ordinance, and included many YAL members. Our Position Statement, read by Kate Williams as her statement to the Council, was well-received, and President Murphy complimented those attending for their dignity and decorum. At this meeting as throughout this effort, many people helped in many different ways. But I feel that two of our members deserve specific commendation and thanks for their courageous and heartfelt statements to council- Theta Grimaud and Doug Warner. And I feel that Randy and Peg deserve thanks for working hard and fast to obtain the background information on Paul Cameron. Thanks to their effort, council was better informed about Mr. Cameron, and the Dispatch devoted a long editorial to a dismissal of his standing.

Media coverage of the ordinance was extensive and mostly positive-- and ranged beyond the ordinance itself to begin to deal with us as people. Certainly, many York Countians became better informed-- if they allowed themselves to be-- of who we really are, and the fair treatment that we seek.

The signature ad that we sponsored was published in the York Sunday News on 14 February, and contained the names of 372 signers. Probably 200 or more others signed the statement, but declined to be included in the ad or we declined to use their names for some reason. A major part of the \$768 cost of the ad was received in contributions earmarked for the ad specifically, or for the campaign in general.

On 16 February, after hearing additional comment for and against, the Council voted 4-1 to adopt the ordinance. Mayor Althaus signed it into law almost without notice. An effort to overturn the measure failed, when the petition gathered only 389 of the required 1,252 signatures.

We can be glad for the outcome, and I believe we can feel that we helped to bring it about. But more than anything, I believe we can be proud of the way we did it. Many people helped the effort in many different ways. Some of us became more open and public in the process-- some of us probably more than we intended or expected, before it began. Not once did I hear anyone complain about others not doing more, or about others becoming very public, or about others not feeling able to become more public. Sometimes people are strengthened by defeat. Sometimes victory, or the effort to achieve it, drives them apart. I believe we have a right to be proud of the way we made this effort.

Respectfully submitted,
R. Franklin Williams, Secretary
20 May 1993