

# **LGBT History Project of the LGBT Center of Central PA**

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**Title:** PA Rural Gay Caucus Meeting Minutes

**Date:** May 1977

**Location:** LGBT-001 Joseph W. Burns Collection

**Contact:**

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Minutes--Penna. Rural Gay Caucus (5-7-77)

Caucus held at H.U.B., Penn State Campus, State College  
20 present

Meeting called to order by co-chair Joe Burns  
Human Rights Day flyers distributed to members by David Leas  
Extra copies were made available for statewide coverage

An agenda was culled from the representative membership  
and included interest in SB 83, SB 531, the 3rd World Com-  
mittee, and nominations for a new Sec. ( present term  
expires with June Caucus--NO EXTENSION)

Reading of minutes of previous Caucus by Sam and approved as  
read

Treasurer absent--April balance of \$159.24 accepted and ap-  
proved.

#### Communications and Legislative Committee Reports

A group, the Coalition for Human Rights in Penna., has been  
formed to co-ordinate Human Rights Day and to endorse the pas-  
sage of pro-civil-liberties legislation (inclusive of gay  
rights) in Penna. All interested groups such as local N.O.W.  
chapters and A.C.L.U. locals and others ~~inx~~ are enjoined to  
send endorsement of gay rights to : ~~MAX~~ Mr. Barry Kohn,  
1740 Addison St., Phila., Pa., 19146.

Human Rights Day set for 5-24-77 beginning at 9:00 A.M. and  
headquartered at Friends Meeting House, 6th and Herr, Hsbg..  
Workshops will be held at various locations the weekend be-  
fore to train persons in lobbying technique. There will be  
no picketing or demonstrations planned beforehand. A list of  
our representatives and senators and their views re: gay  
legislation will be on hand to assist in approaching them.  
Legislative sessions begin at 1:00 P.M. so everyone is urged  
to see their representatives in the early morning and be-  
fore they leave for lunch. If not, accost them in the  
cafeteria.

#### Youth Committee Report

The committee is working closely with M.C.C., Harrisburg,  
and met on 5-8-77. Motion "to release the # and name of  
the P.R.G.C. CHECKING ACC'T. (Bank of deposit) to World's  
Finest Chocolate, Inc., 2521 W. 48th St., Chicago, Ill.,  
60032 for legalities associated with purchase of candy for  
the Youth Committee". Motion 2nd and carried. Property  
on Market St., Harrisburg which are available for a Gay  
Youth Community Center must be 90% paid down upon signing  
of papers by the M.C.C.. Since the church cannot own the  
property outright a ~~priv~~ private owner must sign in the name  
of M.C.C.. Property formerly owned by the Diocese of Greater  
Harrisburg and \$6500 is needed for down-payment by 5-31-77.  
It is in a center city commercial zone. Are there any  
wealthy gay or straight philanthropists in reach of this  
newsletter willing to underwrite the cost?

Our sincere apologies to Craig Lewis whom we erroneously reported as supporting 83. He voted against it. A letter of contrition has been posted. The bill is currently being held in Judiciary Committee. 12 member support is needed to make it a viable issue and at present such interest is not present. The chairman of this committee, Sen. Berson, feels the bill is a 'hot potato' politically and is content to let it die in this session. If the bill is not out of committee this session it will have to be re-submitted under another number during the next session (1978)

Tony suggested that letters of support be sent to Lewis Hill for his adept handling of pro-gay legislation in his capacity as the chairman of the Senate Committee on SB 83. The committee is evenly split ~~of~~ over interpretation of the bill. It is a non-partisan issue.

Certain adverse publicity by the press in regards to SB 531 (decriminalization of sodomy and repeal) because of some senatorial statements that misrepresentation was used by gay groups has been seen as a form of political football. This is a fact of life in the political arena and should not daunt our efforts. That is the hoped-for effect and we as gays should not stoop to, such easy defeat.

~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ Nomination for Sec.

No one accepted at the caucus so the ~~XXXXX~~ nominations will remain open until the vacancy is filled. (6 weeks)

Budgets of Committees

They are due with the Treasurer beginning with May meeting. The costs of pamphlets for Human Rights Day have been covered by an anonymous donor but mailing costs remain. A motion "that \$50.00 be given by the P.R.G.C. to Human Rights Day Committee to cover costs of mailing flyers." 2nd and carried. HOPS can donate the needed envelopes.

Tony said that AFSCME, APSCUF, ~~XXXXXXX~~ PSEA, and other state unions would appreciate letters from union members supporting inclusion 'sexual and affectional preference' clauses in their bargaining contracts.

Anti-abortion legislation

Mixed reaction by some members of the caucus. It is a moral issue and potentially explosive, as is gay rights. A motion "Resolved that the P.R.G.C. oppose HB 71 (right-to-life bill) 2nd and carries. It should be noted that the membership was male, only 2 women present. Further discussion is encouraged by both the pros and cons of the issue. It is hoped that many more women will feel free to speak on this subject.

Next meeting is June 4 in Middletown at Arnold Hutchings

3rd world Committee

Need is not seen since all persons have to make a moral choice of what human rights and dignity are, and a following of our conscience makes its existence unnecessary. Our attitudes, we hope, leave room to meet the needs of all peoples. We could move forward into consciousness raising sessions by inviting outside speakers of other civil rights movements to our caucuses.

After ~~xxxx~~ an intelligent and sensitive speech of Dale Masterson on what it is like to be a young lesbian and an equally beautiful speech by a member from Williamsport on the feelings of a male diabetic, we ~~xxx~~ all gained a deeper understanding of our brothers and sisters. The stigma and oppression that we all face must be explored and resolved toward a furtherance of our collective development.

Motion of adjournment received and 2nd. Adjourned at 4:00 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

*Keith Edinister*  
*Caucus Secretary*