

## **NE Democratic Party LGBT Caucus Meeting Minutes**

June 6, 2005, 7:00 p.m.

**Present:** Lin Quenzer (Chair); George Wolf; Andrew Korte; Tom Dorsch; Melissa Rigney; Tim Hopkins; John Taylor; Victoria Lavin (1<sup>st</sup> District Chair); Jill Korte; Larry Wikoff (Treasurer); Barb Baier (Secretary); Michael Gordon (2<sup>nd</sup> District Chair); Sandy Ramsey

**Absent:** Jeff Leanna (Vice Chair); Chris Shepherd (3<sup>rd</sup> District Chair)

Caucus officers recognized.

Meeting minutes for February were approved. Tom Dorsch made motion, seconded by Victoria Lavin.

### Chair's Report - Lin Quenzer.

LGBT Caucus will sponsor a vehicle in the Nebraska Pride parade in Omaha. CFEP co-sponsor. Banners will celebrate Nebraska's first openly gay/lesbian elected official, Barbara Baier. Baier will also speak at the Nebraska Pride Festival.

Quenzer stressed the need to have people attend the State Central Committee meetings that occur every quarter to encourage official approval of all caucuses. Next SCC meeting will be on Saturday, June 25<sup>th</sup>, in Omaha at Metro Community College, starting at 12:00 for the general meeting. Any Legislative District with no representation can be represented by those who show up.

Probably more important than SCC meetings is to have caucus members attend their local county central committee meetings. Typically, if a person attends meetings for two months in a row, one can be nominated to become a regular member. Lancaster County Central Committee meetings occur every third Tuesday of the month at 7 p.m. at the CWA Union Hall, 25<sup>th</sup> & N.

The Morrison-Exon Dinner went well in Omaha, clearing around \$25,000. The LGBT Caucus sponsored one table with representatives from Lincoln Gay Straight Youth Alliances, Metropolitan Community Church - Omaha, Citizens for Equal Protection, and the caucus.

The LGBT Caucus has received a letter from State Party Executive Director, Barry Rubin, allowing us to establish a bank account.

### First District Report - Victoria Lavin.

The "Daily Queer News" continues to provide an important source of information for our community. Lavin mentioned that the news service will also cover news that may impact the LGBT community in indirect ways.

Lavin has met with the Beatrice Public Schools to establish an anti-bullying policy and possible additions to curricula regarding these issues. The BPS principal seems supportive.

### Second District Report - Michael Gordon.

LB 627 (Anti-Bullying) did not make it out of committee during this legislative season. Ultimately, this will allow for a better bill to be developed with input from the Human Rights Campaign, Lambda Legal, GLAAD, and GLSEN. Additionally, the bill's sponsor, Sen. Gwen Howard, will do a study and have three public hearings across the state. Bill supporters will work to leverage support from Voices for Children and Catholic Charities, which would improve its chances.

To increase awareness and support of the bill, some discussion ensued to organize a reception in late July or early August. Michael Gordon said he would organize this. It was hoped to have the reception or the results from it to help support Anti-Bullying Week, which school boards across the country are supposed to recognize. The week occurs September 12<sup>th</sup> - 17<sup>th</sup>.

Michael spoke on the lawsuit regarding 416, now Section 29 of the Nebraska Constitution. The ACLU, Lambda Legal, CFEP and others won the lawsuit, which is now on appeal. This means we as a community can now advocate for ourselves through legislative channels. It does not mean we can get married. For more information about the lawsuit and its implications, see the Amy Miller (ACLU Staff Attorney) interview conducted by Barb Baier, which was aired on Channel 13 Time Warner in early June. The caucus is in the process of having copies of the tape made into DVD and VHS formats for distribution to anyone who is interested across the state.

As a result of lawsuit success, some nondiscrimination legislation was passed late this spring helping University employees. Other legislation has a good chance of passing next year.

### Gay Summit Report - Tim Hopkins, Organizer.

On May 21<sup>st</sup> a Gay Summit was organized at Mahoney State Park, featuring speakers and workshops. Forty-seven people attended, with some coming as far away as Lexington and Hebron. There were a number of sponsors, including PFLAG, COLAGE, Planned Parenthood, etc. Workshops included Financial Planning (Phylis Webb) and Barbara Baier's candidacy as Nebraska's first openly gay/lesbian elected official. It is hoped that another Gay Summit will be organized. Maybe the next one will happen in October out in Kearney or Grand Island. Everyone thanked Tim for his efforts.

Motion was made by Michael Gordon and seconded by Tom Dorsch to organize and host an Anti-Bullying Reception during Anti-Bullying Week, September 12<sup>th</sup> - 16<sup>th</sup>. Michael will organize.

Skipped the Third District Report due to Chris Shepherd's absence.

### Committee Reports:

Web-site. The web-site is up and functioning at: [www.lgbtdemocrats.org](http://www.lgbtdemocrats.org). It will be updated with results of Baier's election, some articles written by V. Lavin and other articles. Everyone was encouraged to submit articles that would be reviewed for grammar and basic credibility by

the caucus Executive Committee prior to posting. Generally, articles need to be 750 words or less. Discussion ensued on establishing a blog, which would be great if someone wants to take on the responsibility. We will have C. Shepherd establish links to the "Daily Queer News", ACLU-Nebraska and other sites people think of. We will post the e-mail addresses of the Caucus Executive Officers.

Fund Raising/Events. The Panic featured a drag show that raised funds for the caucus. Peter Nicely did a good job organizing this.

Membership. Membership continues to grow. Tim Francis is heading this up and will have recommendations for next caucus meeting. We can now accept membership dues, which are suggested to be \$20 annually.

A caucus brochure was developed and reviewed. Motion was made by John Taylor and seconded by Tom Dorsch to have 1,000 copies of brochure printed and distributed at Pride events and other arenas.

Forum/Issues Committee. Next one will be the Anti-Bullying reception that will take place in late August or September. Next one after that would be co-sponsorship of Grand Island or Kearney workshops similar to the Gay Summit.

George Wolf spoke about bringing the author of "The Lavender Scare" to Lincoln on October 25<sup>th</sup>. The caucus may be able to co-sponsor and do some things leading up to his speech. He will likely focus on Lin Quenzer's experience regarding Sen. Kenneth Wherry (Father of the gay witch hunts of the 1940s and 1950s. He was from Nebraska.) We would want to get a lot of publicity for the event and particularly some political reporters there. Quenzer said she would help on this. October is Gay & Lesbian History Month so it would be nice to do several things bringing more attention to "The Lavender Scare" author's appearance. Perhaps, we could invite some state senators as well. George will follow up.

"Seriously Funny," the annual CFEP fund raiser, will happen on September 24<sup>th</sup> in Omaha. Michael will provide more information at the next meeting.

Public Relations. Baier will get the Amy Miller interview in a format that can be distributed (DVDs and VHS). Ruth Kupfer may also have a video of the Gay Straight Alliance rally in January, which may be of interest to people.

#### Old Business.

The caucus can now establish a bank account. Motion was made by George Wolf and seconded by Tom Dorsch to open the account at Wells Fargo because they are supportive of the LGBT community. Members wanted those opening the account to notify the local Wells Fargo executives so they know that's why we opened the account there. Motion passed with Larry Wikoff abstaining.

Planning for Nebraska Pride parade occurred.

Motion was made by Barbara Baier and seconded by Tom Dorsch to have Cindi Lavin develop several logos for the caucus using the kicking donkey. Motion carried.

Motion was made by Tom Dorsch and seconded by John Taylor to have the caucus print up a banner stating that Baier is Nebraska's first openly gay elected official to be displayed at Nebraska Pride Parade.

Michael Gordon discussed establishing a CFEP chapter for Lincoln with meetings occurring approximately 15 to 30 minutes prior to LGBT Caucus meetings. Pat T. and others have expressed interest in serving on the CFEP Lincoln Chapter Board.

Caucus officers and absences were discussed with Jeff Leanna determined to be overextended and unable to contribute toward the caucus in a meaningful way. Motion was made by Tom Dorsch and seconded by Larry Wikoff to have the Chair send a letter requesting improvement in meeting attendance or resignation of the Vice Chair position so it can be filled by someone else. Motion carried.

#### Announcements.

Michael Gordon, Barbara Baier and Lin Quenzer were each honored for their contributions toward the LGBT community with Spirit of Pride Awards from Nebraska Pride.

**Next Meeting will occur Friday, July 8<sup>th</sup> at 7 p.m.** Members expressed a desire to keep the meetings in Lincoln for the time being since it is more centrally located. If enough people RSVP, we'll move the meeting location from the Quenzer-Baier house to the CWA Union Hall, 25<sup>th</sup> & N. Motion made by Tom Dorsch and seconded by Larry Wikoff to have the next meeting on July 8<sup>th</sup>.

Motion was made by Barbara Baier and seconded by Tom Dorsch to adjourn the meeting at 9 p.m.

Minutes respectfully submitted by:  
Barbara Baier  
LGBT Caucus Secretary