

Parents, Families, Friends of Lesbians and Gays
Annual Advisory Meeting
Havenwood Community Center
May 13, 2004

Call to Order: Roberta called the meeting to order at 19:09.

Directors present: Peg, Duncan, Margie, Carol, Marianne, Gordon, Roberta, BarbieAnn, Sheila, Lisa, Jeremy

Directors absent: Cheryl

Roberta gave her opening remarks. She described the role of PFLAG in the state, and the purpose of the meeting. She introduced Peg Gage and Jamie Curtis from PFLAG National and Gordon & Cy for their connections with the Havenwood community. She described the meeting format, noting that Jeff Perkins was here but that Bishop Robinson could not attend due to pastoral emergency. She described PFLAG's needs: Recruiting and enlisting new board members (Margie), Fundraising & Grant Writing (Gordon), Summer strategic planning/workshop (BarbieAnn), Education and Advocacy, Speaker Bureau activities (Margie), Advocacy.

Brian Rater (President of NH Freedom to Marry). Noted that there are many newspapers that are looking for people who are planning to participate in some way in marriage in Massachusetts, which becomes legal on May 17. Told personal story, and discussed the state of marriage in NH. Discussed how SB427 provided for the establishment of a commission to study the institution of marriage and to possibly find a way to make it equitable for all. The passage of SB427 in the House sent a message that although marriage is not allowed right now, it appears to be amenable to looking towards the future. He noted that PFLAG has taught him the importance of relationships and through that, he has been able to move forward on the FTM agenda.

Roberta noted that she has been traveling with Peg to visit New England PFLAG chapters. She noted that a new chapter is being created in Springfield VT. She noted that PFLAG strives to build coalitions with other groups (GLSEN, FTM, etc). She noted that PFLAG Boston is very busy, and that May 17 is not only the day that marriage becomes legal, it is the 50th anniversary of the Brown v. Board of Education ruling. Serendipitous? She read from a booklet of letters compiled by Boston PFLAG "The Family Stories Project"; this program may be expanded nationally. PFLAG will have reps in MA to hand out roses to marrying same-sex couples on May 17. Compared PFLAG to a family.

Peg noted that she will be term-limited as of October and will thus be stepping down as regional director, but she is not saying good-bye to PFLAG. Noted her political connections, adding that she has secured that both NH senators will be voting against Bush's proposed constitutional amendment against marriage. Noted that this is also true throughout New England, but not true

throughout the country. Discussed how she came up with a replacement, and announced that she is Roberta, but that she will not become the RD until she is elected by ballot. Noted that the RD Council is composed of the most talented and devoted people she's ever met. Discussed the major national issues: marriage, safe schools. Announced national convention being held this year Salt Lake City (10/22-24). Introduced Jamie Curtis.

Jamie discussed the marriage issue, noting that civil unions are not marriage. Discussed her role at National as a field representative. Asked that everyone stays in touch with her. Noted that she works with the chapters and provides support to them. Noted that the biggest issue coming from chapters is the loss of members or the absence of new members; she wants to help chapters with these issues. Discussed Gill foundation grant concerning safe schools assessment being conducted nationally. The assessment can be found on the website; she asked everyone to fill it out.

Roberta expressed her excitement with the youth coming into PFLAG.

Tawnee is new EDE at Seacoast Outright. Discussed what Outright is and its role in the community. Supports youth 13-22, taking youth to many organizations to speak. Noted that Concord Outright is in need of support.

Carol Perkins did most of the work to assemble this meeting. She pointed out that a recent Globe Magazine had a nice write-up on parents supporting their gay children and their pursuit of marriage. Carol introduced her only son, Jeff, and quoted from his new book.

Jeff Perkins' presentation, and readings from his book.

Roberta's follow-up, noting that Jeff's book is available here at the meeting and will be selling autographed copies. Roberta introduced Marcus Hearn, volunteer lobbyist in the NH legislature.

Marcus asked for perspective concerning the tumultuous political season and the backlash. He noted that this effect has created DOMA revivals and state constitutional amendments. He noted that not one word of the original Senate bill survived, and thus NH still does not have a DOMA. He noted that the final version is a big step for a generally regarded conservative state. Asked for patience, noting that if the opposition knows that if it does not put a stop to marriage within the next 5 years, that it will never happen because the rising generation will not put up with it. Asked for tolerance, particularly with those who are conservative or libertarian and not yet ready to strive for the entire package. He noted that some of these people are willing to help a great deal (would vote for civil unions,

for example) but are not willing to go all the way. It does not help us to alienate and make enemies of these people. He believes that a majority of the House will vote today for civil unions. He worries that our desire to go for

everything, right now, may cause us problems in the future.

Roberta discussed the assignment for the meeting.