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Minutes, 9/5/2007

The Commission for Lesbian, Gay Bisexual and Transgender People at the University of Tennessee,
Knoxville

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Minutes
Commission for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) People
September 5, 2007

Time: 12:00

Place: Hodges Library, Room 605

Present: Melissa Bartsch, Donna Braquet, Connie Briscoe, Ted Brown, Alan Chesney, Ed Cortez, Rusty Drummer, Leslee Fisher, Trey Fogerty, Pam Hindle, George Hoemann, Michael Kelley, Erik Leander, Mary Lucal, Marti McClard, Suzanne Molnar, Becky Morgan Jenny Moshak, Gina Owens, David Payne, Mitchell Ronningen, Lynn Sacco, Tina Shepardson, Ashe Smith, Renee Smith, Stephanie Swain, Dan Trentham, Nikki Walles, Roger Weaver, Ed White, Yang Zhong

Absent: Alexis Boylan, Amy Davidson, Chris Hodge, Wes Knott, David Patterson, Victoria Thomas, Jane Redmond, Marva Rudolph, P.J. Snodgrass, Dawn Szymanski, Maxine Thompson, Lynn Woolsey.

Call to Order: George Hoemann welcomed everyone and the meeting began at 12:00 PM.

Old Business: None.

New Business:

A) Approval of Minutes from April 26th, 2007
Minutes approved at 12:06 PM.

B) Election of co-Vice Chair
George Hoemann opened nomination for co-Vice Chair. Renee Smith volunteered for position. Nominations closed. Renee Smith elected unanimously.

C) Report from the Chair
Donna Braquet received approval for funding to invite Suzanne Phar to speak at the university. The LGBT film series continues to go well, next viewing September 5th at 6:30. Brown bag seminars will continue to be scheduled through the fall semester, beginning next week.
Communications Committee will continue to arrange commission-sponsored programs.
Equity & Research Committee will continue to deepen quality of research in regards to the reality of UTK's policies compared to peer institutions.
Membership Committee should focus on expanding the diversity of the commission's membership.
Awards Committee should look into establishing an award to be given at the Honors Banquet in March.

LGBT Resource Center Committee has received greenlight from chancellor, who has suggested looking into private funding to get project off the ground.

Dr. Hoemann suggests that UTK staff survey should be modified to provide option of identifying themselves as LGBT. This would help with the collection of data regarding LGBT people at UTK.

A proposal is in place to amend 'trailing spouses' program for new faculty to include 'partners.'

Leslee Fisher voices concern that a Fred Phelps-associated organization was present outside of library. Legally, protesters are allowed to be on state property if they have signed the appropriate paperwork. Alan Chesney suggests that we commend students for courageous responses when harassed. Roger Weaver suggests that we have a place in the library where students can come to talk if they are harassed by street preachers.

E) Committee Reports

Jenny Moshak reports importance of recent decision to combine the equity and research committees.

Donna Braquet announces that Suzanne Phar will speak on heterosexism in October, as well as the continuation of the film series and brown bag seminars every second Tuesday. On September 11th, a PhD student will speak on how he infused queer theory into English 102.

Roger Weaver announces that he is looking into creating an official 'symbol' for the commission. Communications committee is working on a project called 'Voices of Diversity', a digital storytelling program that will allow UTK students, staff, and faculty members to share their stories of diversity online.

F) Discussion of Revised EEO/AA Statement

EEO/AA now includes the phrase 'sexual orientation' in the hiring policy. This applies to the Knoxville campus only. The wording was written by the general counsel office and approved by the chancellor. This inclusion has no legal binding. The general counsel office declined to send a representative to speak to the commission.

Adjournment: 12:59 PM