

Southwest Virginia LGBTQ+ History Project
General Interest Meeting at the Roanoke Public Library
October 27, 2022

Attendance: 4

Meeting Minutes:

1) ARCHIVES

a) Updates on digital archives

- i) Big updates in JSTOR. More than 200+ items posted now. All coded with OCR (optimal character recognition—which allows for word searchability). MR's goal is to finish scanning *BRLPs* through the end (2008) by the time she graduates in May.

2) LIBRARY

a) Any updates from the RDC board on our summer intern's report?

Recommendations from them for our future involvement?

- i) No need for us to reach out or be involved anymore

3) ORAL HISTORIES

a) House of Expression oral history interviews - LM

- i) LM talked to PK about it, but the House has not made a decision on it
- ii) GSR: possible summer Oral History Boot Camp funded by Roanoke College?

4) PODCAST

a) Episode 4 plans (collab with House of Expression; focus on Black Queer History & Joy!)

b) Episode 5 plans (focus on local drag scene history & issues around gender identity)

c) Podcast launch event, scheduled for Thurs, Dec. 1 (World AIDS Day) at Ursula's Cafe

- i) GSR: reach out to Drop-In Center to come and offer testing or literature on HIV/AIDS ???
GSR: follow up with Ursula's about confirming time, food, and cost
- ii) Need to start advertising at least two weeks in advance (by Nov. 17th)

5) WALKING TOURS

a) Make short videos of walking tour spots for social media promotion — KS

- i) This fall KS will create some short videos of distinct sites for Instagram reels (and possible future TikTok account) - in progress

- ii) November walking tour: AS will take video of the tour which KS can use for making a tour highlight reel
 - b) Updates on tour guide training & staffing
 - i) 2 new guides are trained on the Downtown tour - but only one on track to follow through
 - ii) We discussed changes to the 2023 tour calendar. Beginning in March offering the Downtown tour once a month AND alternating a second monthly tour between Old Southwest and West Station
 - (1) Discussion? Do we need to scale this back?? YES. We decided to scale back to 11 tours per year, as we have done this year. Drop extra tour guide from the schedule.
 - c) Proposed changes to walking tours
 - i) Starting in 2023 we have rebranded the West Station tour the “Salem Avenue LGBTQ History Walking Tour”
 - ii) Time to revise the Downtown tour?
 - (1) We agreed during the off-season (Dec to March) to conduct a review and revision of the Downtown tour
- 6) MEETING DISRUPTION: this is to note that partway through the meeting a relatively new History Project member showed up and became increasingly belligerent in his comments towards all of the other members in the room. This included screaming and cursing at us, intentionally deadnaming one of us, and becoming physical aggressive (including purposefully knocking over several chairs). All other members attempted to de-escalate through dialogue for quite some time, but to no avail. We then asked the person to leave the meeting; he refused. So we then asked Library Staff to assist us in removing the person from the meeting; he still refused. At that time the Library staff person got on the phone (supposedly with the police). At that time we were able to convince the member to voluntarily leave the building so as to avoid any potential interaction with the police (which never came). Library Staff informed us that the member will be barred from the library building. The remaining members felt it was important to include this documentation in the meeting minutes as a record of what happened, but also so that we can go back to it in the future if we need to reassess how we handled the incident. We want to note that at no time did we ask for police intervention, but rather that the Library staff independently made that decision based on their own policies.
- 7) EVENTS
 - a) Upcoming events this year?
 - i) KS is proposing a Lesbian Frisbee event in Oct or Nov. GSR will get her materials from the 2016 event - DID NOT DISCUSS
 - ii) Podcast launch at Ursula’s, Dec. 1st

- b) Next year?
 - i) Do we want to participate in any of the Prides next year? - DID NOT DISCUSS
 - ii) June Pride Picnic (Queer Community Picnic)
 - (1) Next year: have a policy ready for group sponsorships/participation
- 8) TRANS WELLNESS FUND - GSR
 - a) Proposal to create a Trans Wellness Fund (good name, or rename?) with the money from royalties on *Living Queer History*. The History Project would advertise the fund, solicit applications, and make decisions about awarding money. The proposal is for the funds to be available to transgender and non-binary people in Southwest Virginia to help with 1) transition-related expenses, or 2) basic needs such as rent & bills
 - i) The proposal was discussed and GSR was asked to flesh out a more complete proposal and resubmit it to History Project members at a later date. A comment was made that this fund would work best if we recruited people specifically to administer the funds as a committee, with an eye towards diverse representation on said committee.
- 9) NEXT MEETING
 - a) Tuesday, Jan. 10th, 2023, 6pm