

# Windy City Times

Volume 1, Number 42

Chicago's Gay and Lesbian Newsweekly

July 17, 1986

## Community rallies for rights Archdiocese statement delays Council vote

By Tracy Baim  
and William Burks

"If not now, when?"

The Chicago City Council has once again delayed voting on protections for gays and lesbians, protections which would amend the city's Municipal Code to make illegal discrimination based on "sexual orientation." At its July 9 session, after a last-hour statement released by the Archdiocese of Chicago, vote was delayed when several aldermen wavered on their support of the bill.

Before that release of the diocesan statement, it appeared that the amendment to the existing code, which would add "sexual orientation" to protections for employment, housing and public accommodations, had enough votes for passage.

The Archdiocese, issuing a press release the evening of July 8, called the bill's language too vague and also questioned whether religious institutions would be covered by the changes. Religious institutions are covered under the present ordinance, which includes protections against discrimination based on race, creed, gender, and religion, among other categories.

At the Council meeting, in an unprecedented aldermanic pow-wow with the gay and lesbian community, several elected officials met in a large group with rights supporters to discuss the bill changes and possible compromise amendments, hastily drawn to console the Archdiocese.

Dozens of supporters gathered together in the chambers and in a close voice vote decided that because in all likelihood the bill would have failed that day, to delay any Council action until the next session, Tuesday, July 29. Community activists made it clear to the aldermen, however, that "come hell or high water," July 29 the ordinance would be voted on. Thus, whether the bill fails or wins July 29, activists guaranteed a commitment to working toward the next aldermanic elections (all 50 are up for election next year)—working in favor of those who vote for the ordinance, and working adamantly against those who vote it down.

While many people were concerned about the influence of the Catholic Archdiocese over the City Council, most agreed that because the statement was issued so close to the vote, three weeks would give time to work on countering the religious attack.

The number of people showing support for the bill was strong July 9 (filling the Council chambers, leaving little room for anti-civil rights demonstrators), with about 150 total. This compared to more than 200 protestors outside City Hall, led by Rev. Hiram Craw-



Ald. Vrdolyak (center), Hansen (left of him) and Kelley confer in the Council chambers July 9. Photo: William Burks

ford, a member of the Moral Majority.

Up until June 25, lobbying for passage of the bill was done primarily behind closed doors. Bar owner and former Cook County Board candidate Jim Flint joined with several other community members and Mayor's liaison Kit Duffy in working for aldermanic support. But June 25, when it appeared there could be enough votes, Ald. Cliff Kelley (20th), who introduced the legislation in 1973, failed to give enough advance warning about the vote to the other aldermen.

After June 25, the bill was out in the open, and Mayor Harold Washington called for its passage during his speech at the 17th Annual Gay and Lesbian Pride Rally and to the local media. What followed was a strong anti-bill campaign by some religious leaders (including opposition from Channel 38, which urged viewers to oppose the measure by calling City Hall), ending with the diocesan statement July 8. Some supporters say two opposition aldermen requested an Archdiocese position on the bill and that is why the statement was released right before a vote.

But after July 9, the community has taken a different course in organizing for passage.

### Strategy planned

Several meetings have already taken place among community members as to a strategy in pushing for the bills. Some people are meeting with Archdiocese representatives: (Cardinal Bernardin, who last year said he supported gay and lesbian rights legislation, was

out of town when this statement was issued. A diocesan representative said the Cardinal was contacted and is interested in negotiating about the bill; meanwhile, gays and lesbians are meeting with church officials. Bernardin is expected back next week and a final compromise may be worked out then.)

Chicagoan Jim Bussen, national president



Several aldermen confer with gay and lesbians rights supporters in the Council chambers July 9. Photo: Tracy Baim

of Dignity, an organization of gay Catholics, and attorney Larry Rolla are among those people meeting with Archdiocese representatives about possible amendment language.

Even if negotiations fail, a vote on the bill is expected July 29. While some people are willing to compromise, many community members do not want a compromise amendment, even if it means a loss on the bill.

In order to get more community input and support, several events have been planned to coincide with efforts for bill passage. For up-to-date information, call the Windy City/Ordinance Central Hotline (donated by Windy City Times) at (312) 935-1853.

- Sunday, July 20, Community Meeting, 4 p.m., Good Shepherd Parish Metropolitan Community Church, 615 W. Wellington.

- Friday, July 25, Religious Service sponsored by Congregation Or Chadash, 8:30 p.m., 2nd Unitarian Church, 656 W. Barry.

- Sunday, July 27, Candlelight Vigil, 8:30 p.m., Daley Center, organized by activist Mary Mack.

The July 25 service is a "Solidarity Sabbath Service," expressing solidarity, from both gay and non-gay people, within the Jewish community concerning that gay rights bills. Jewish and non-Jewish people are invited. Call 248-0399 for further information.

In addition, meetings with aldermen have been scheduled, as well as extensive phone calling and letter writing to wavering aldermen.

Aldermen who wavered in their support

See page 6



Ald. Gutierrez reads the 'Sun-Times' account of the Archdiocese opposition July 9.

## Chicago City Council Aldermen

The following are the phone numbers for the 50 aldermen representing Chicago's wards in the City Council. They are listed in by ward number; the phone numbers listed are first City Hall, next their ward offices. (Also of relevance are the following print media phone numbers: *Chicago Tribune*: 222-3429, *Chicago Sun-Times*: 321-2517, *Chicago Defender*: 225-2400.) For information on what ward you live in, call (312) 935-1853.

1st Fred Roti	744-3063, 236-2792	18th Robert Kellam	744-6856, 776-9000	35th Joseph Kotlarz	744-6835, 463-3505
2nd Bobby Rush	744-6836, 225-3444	19th Michael Sheahan	744-3072, 238-8766	36th William Banks	744-6857, 622-3232
3rd Dorothy Tillman	744-0584/5, 373-3228	20th Clifford Kelley	744-6840, 667-6409	37th Percy Giles	744-8019, 287-8500
4th Timothy Evans	744-3077, 373-8005	21st Niles Sherman	744-4810, 881-7405	38th Thomas Cullerton	744-6811, 237-0900
5th Lawrence Bloom	744-6832, 667-0900	22nd Jesus Garcia	744-9491, 762-1771	39th Anthony Laurino	744-6813, 736-5594
6th Eugene Sawyer	744-6868, 994-3900	23rd William Krystyniak	744-6828, 582-7323	40th Patrick O'Connor	744-6858, 769-1140
7th William Beavers	744-6833, 731-1515	24th William Henry	744-6839, 522-2444	41st Roman Pucinski	744-3208, 763-4141
8th Marian Humes	744-3075, 221-2286	25th Juan Soliz	744-6845, 733-4440	42nd Burton Natarus	744-3062, 527-5607
9th Perry Hutchinson	744-6831, 264-4900	26th Luis Gutierrez	744-6853, 486-1123	43rd Martin Oberman	744-3071, 472-0705
10th Ed Vrdolyak	744-3078-5687	27th Wallace Davis	744-3079, 733-2296	44th Bernard Hansen	744-3073, 525-6034
11th Patrick Huels	744-6663, 254-6677	28th Ed Smith	744-3066, 533-0900	45th Gerald McLaughlin	744-6841, 286-4200
12th Aloysius Majerczyk	744-3068, 376-1212	29th Danny Davis	744-3070, 626-2700	46th Jerome Orbach	744-5940, 327-4000
13th John Madrzak	744-3076, 581-8000	30th George Hagopian	744-6851, 772-6565	47th Eugene Schuller	744-4021, 271-4423
14th Ed Burke	744-3380, 471-1414	31st Miguel Santiago	744-6838, 486-6488	48th Marion Volini	744-6860, 784-5277
15th Marlene Carter	744-6850, 476-0524	32nd Terry Gabinski	744-6567, 384-3011	49th David Orr	744-3067, 764-3617
16th Anna Langford	744-3069, 434-5535	33rd Richard Mell	744-6825, 772-5420	50th Bernard Stone	744-6855/6106, 743-0050
17th Allan Streeter	744-6827, 224-1560	34th Wilson Frost	744-6820-6829		