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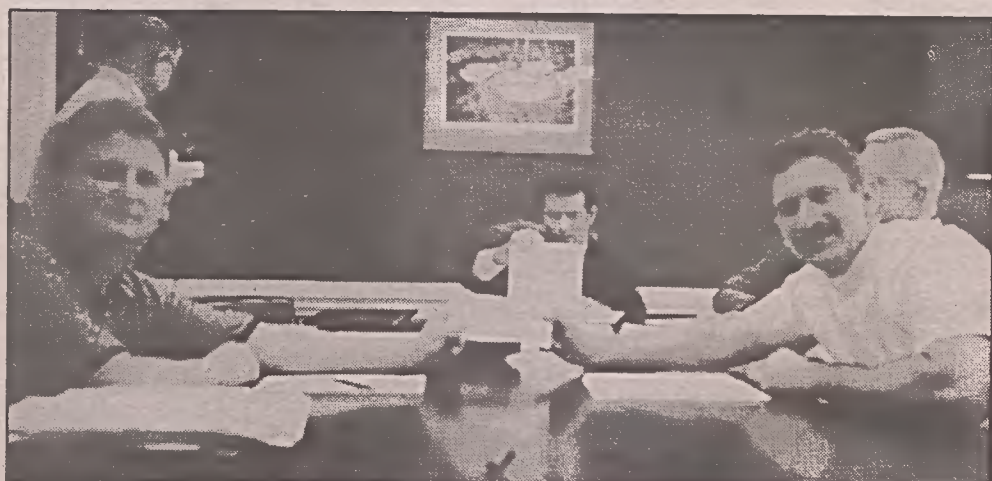
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Rev. Hinson (r) presents the check to the pastor of Eastfield Christian Church

## MMOW plans continue in turmoil

by Dan Van Mourik  
Q-Notes Staff

WASHINGTON, DC—Over the weekend of April 29 & 30, Washington, DC will play host to the Millennium March on Washington for Equality (MMOW). This will be the fourth national march for GLBT civil rights. However, the event has faced opposition from a variety of sources since it was announced two years ago. And questions have been raised ever since concerning the openness, inclusion and accountability of organizers.

On January 26, the Ad Hoc Committee for an Open Process (formed in opposition to the March) was faxed a "Financial Summary" issued by the MMOW Board. The summary, called "general and evasive" by the Ad Hoc Committee, comes eight months after the first formal request to the March board to publicly release financial information to the GLBT community.

"The statement by the MMOW board offers no specific information about their budget. There is no indication of income or expenses to date. This is a ragged collection of vague and generalized projections. If they believe this satisfies the request for financial data they are once again showing how out of touch they are with the LGBT activist community," said Leslie Cagan, member of the Ad Hoc Committee.

The May 14-20, 1999 issue of the *Philadelphia Gay News* reported that MMOW Board co-chair Nicole Ramirez-Murray "said the march's financial records are open to anyone, upon request." However, board co-chair Donna Red Wing is quoted in the January 28, 2000 issue of the *Washington Blade* as saying, "We are not going to release our financial statements to the Ad Hoc Committee." "Our contractual arrangements are none of their business. Those involve legally binding information," Red Wing said.

Mandy Carter, speaking on behalf of the Ad Hoc Committee, said, "We are outraged that the MMOW board acts as if the legitimate requests for information about their budget — requests that have come from LGBT activists and reporters around the country — are handled in this manner. The issue is not whether the Ad Hoc Committee has access to the information but if the LGBT community does."

"When MMOW says it's 'none of their business,' the 'their' refers to the entire LGBT community, the same community they purport to represent," said Ad Hoc Committee member Michael Castellano. "I'm both saddened and angered by Red Wing's callous and insensitive remarks, but I'm not surprised. I can't help but wonder if they have something to hide."

Ann DeGroot, another MMOW board co-chair, told the *Washington Blade* that a detailed financial report will not be released until after the event is over.

In early February, March organizers announced they had cut \$1 million, both from anticipated costs and revenue projections of the April 30 event. But despite cuts and even a \$25,000 loan from co-executive director Malcolm Lazin, budget projections show the event is running a deficit.

Diane Hardy-Garcia, MMOW co-executive director, said budget cuts were necessary to bring the cost of the event under \$2 million. She said the MMOW board approved the reduced budget.

MMOW organizers are counting on revenue projections from a street festival, merchandise and corporate marketing to pay the costs. Hardy-Garcia said the event is "on track."

In its summary, MMOW officials said the march will generate \$1.95 million in income and \$1.7 million in expenses. Hardy-Garcia said

these figures are the final ones, approved by the MMOW board, to put on "the most cost-effective, fiscally responsible" event.

Hardy-Garcia said cuts were made in all areas — "salaries, payroll and facilities" — but did not give specifics.

MMOW budget projections are counting on revenue from the Millennium Fest street festival, in which attendees will pay \$5 to patronize merchandise and food vendors. MMOW officials are also counting on hotel commissions, as well as donations from individuals, corporation and foundations as sources of income.

In addition, event sponsors PlanetOut, *The Advocate* and United Airlines have given in-kind donations.

One recent announcement by the MMOW board has raised a few eyebrows. The board chose National Events (a stage, light and sound company in Newington, VA) to coordinate plans for the March and Rally. In the board's financial summary, technical production of the event and rally was budgeted at \$550,000. However, the accepted proposal from National Events was \$612,000 — \$62,000 over budget. And that figure could rise even higher, an officer of National Events said, if the MMOW board sticks with an earlier agreement they made to try to hire employees from labor unions to work at the March. Using labor union workers could raise the cost by as much as 30 percent — to as much as \$795,600 or \$245,600 over budget — estimated Miles Clark, president of National Events.

To compound the problems, Michael Boucher, an attorney providing free legal services for the March, told the board that the tax-exempt status for the March "is still very unsettled." While awaiting approval from the IRS, another foundation is acting as the March's nonprofit arm.

Because of ongoing concerns about how the March is being organized and administered, only five of the 10 largest gay civil rights organizations have endorsed the March — the Human Rights Campaign; Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays; the National Latina/o Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Organization; the National Center for Lesbian Rights; and the Gay and Lesbian Victory Fund. The second-largest group, Lambda Legal Defense and Education Fund, expects to make a decision soon, as do the Gay, Lesbian & Straight Education Network and the Servicemembers Legal Defense Network.

Some of the groups and individuals who have come out against the March include: the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force; labor organization Pride at Work; the Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation; the National Association of Black and White Men Together; Gay and Lesbian Atheists and Humanists; the transgender civil rights group It's Time, America!; longtime activist Mandy Carter; openly gay US Rep. Barney Frank (D-MA); BiNet; Log Cabin Republicans (whose spokesperson admitted the group is too busy with this year's elections to concern itself with the march); ACT UP/New York; the United States Student Association; and the National Stonewall Democratic Federation.

For more information, visit their web site at [www.mmow.org](http://www.mmow.org). To receive their free email newsletter, email [MMOW2000@aol.com](mailto:MMOW2000@aol.com).



MILLENNIUM MARCH  
ON WASHINGTON  
for EQUALITY  
APRIL 30  
2000

## MCC Charlotte closes on property

by David Stout  
Q-Notes Staff

CHARLOTTE—Leaders of the Metropolitan Community Church (MCC) of Charlotte gathered in an uptown law office February 15 to sign documents officially assuming ownership of their new worship facility from Eastfield Christian Church (whose members had occupied the building until last October as Eastway Christian Church).

For MCC Charlotte, the closing is the payoff on a herculean year-long effort. With the notable exception of around \$130,000 raised in cash, the money for the \$775,000 property was secured through a massive bond offering. The final amounts of these were purchased a mere four days before the closing date.

Despite the substantial price tag and lengthy financing drive, support remained high at the church throughout the fundraising campaign.

According to MCC Charlotte pastor Rev. Mick Hinson, the church came out of the effort in better fiscal shape than it went in. "Since the move, we have met budget every week — with the exception of two consecutive Sundays of bad weather. At the same time, folks have donated to the building fund, sign fund and made payments toward their two-year pledges

from last year.

With attendance averaging between 125 and 150 at the Sunday morning service each week, he noted that the growing membership roster will make it easier for the church to implement several new ministries in the coming months.

Many attendees feel the church's daring is reflected in the size of its new home. "As far as we know, this is the largest and most costly building any GLBT organization has ever purchased in the Carolinas, and probably between Atlanta and DC," MCC Charlotte Building Finance Committee Chairman Jim Yarbrough noted.

"A lot of people — leaders in the community, professional fundraisers — didn't think we could pull it off, but we proved that if you're given a vision and have the faith to follow it, you can meet any goal. We knew this would work out," he added.

Thus far, the acquisition of the 10,573 sq-ft. building has done better than "work out." MCC Charlotte appears to be soaring on the wings of that snow-white dove they occasionally sing about.

"The church is on a real spiritual high right now," Don Watkins, a church member since

See MCC on page 22

## Victory Fund endorses NC lesbian

WASHINGTON, DC—The Gay and Lesbian Victory Fund has announced its endorsement of Wilmington, NC community leader Julia Boseman, a Democratic candidate for the New Hanover County Commission. The primary is set for May 2 and the general election will take place November 7.

"Julia Boseman will be an exemplary county commissioner and an important role model in the state that brought us Jesse Helms," said Gay and Lesbian Victory Fund Executive Director Brian K. Bond. "It is especially critical that we increase the participation of openly gay and lesbian community leaders in public life in the South and throughout our nation's heartland. As someone who grew up in a rural area myself, I certainly wish I had had the opportunity to benefit from the visible presence of openly gay and lesbian role models in office. We will not overcome discrimination until we increase our community's representation in every region of the country, and at every level of government. Part of that effort will be ensuring that Julia Boseman has a fair shot at the ballot box in North Carolina."

Boseman is running on a platform focused on advancing education, transportation, the environment and sensible, planned growth.

A life-long resident of Wilmington, the 33-year-old Boseman already has an impressive track record of community service. She co-founded the Harbor Foundation, a non-profit organization that helps low-income families and

people with disabilities purchase their own homes. She is extensively involved with Community Living-Wilmington, an organization that helps people with developmental disabilities. She has also been active in numerous efforts serving the local gay and lesbian community as well as children affected by HIV/AIDS.

"I believe I can bring a fresh, honest approach to serving the families of New Hanover County," said Boseman. "This is where I grew up, where my family roots run deep — and I am deeply committed to improving the quality of life for all of our people. I am grateful for the support of the Gay and Lesbian Victory Fund because I recognize the importance of running as a candidate who is honest about myself, stands up for what I believe in, and is committed to giving the people of Wilmington a community-minded voice that they do not currently have on the County Commission."

The County Commission has five seats, all currently held by Republicans. Three of the five commissioners face re-election this year.

The Gay and Lesbian Victory Fund is the only national organization whose sole mission is to increase the number of outstanding openly gay and lesbian public officials. The Victory Fund has generated more than \$2.5 million for qualified openly gay and lesbian candidates at all levels of government. For more information on the organization and their endorsements, visit their web site at [www.victoryfund.org](http://www.victoryfund.org) or call (202) 842-8679. ▼