



## **Minutes of the Dean Democratic Club of Silicon Valley Organizational Meeting**

January 23, 2017

Marie Callender's Restaurant, 751 E. El Camino Real, Sunnyvale

**Next working meetings:** February 27, March 27, April 24, May 22

**Next DFA-link meetings:** February 13, March 13, April 10, May 8

**Introductions:** John Comiskey called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m. Following that, each person introduced himself or herself and made a statement about recent political involvement.

**Adoption of agenda:** After two changes were made to the agenda, Lucas Ramirez moved that we adopt the agenda as amended, Don Mayall seconded it, and the motion passed with no dissension.

**Approval of minutes:** Paul Crider moved that we approve the November minutes, Lucas seconded the motion, and it passed with no dissension.

**Treasurer's report:** Karen Porter reported that we have \$2728 in the bank as of December 31: \$1411 in the state and \$1317 in the federal account.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

**Movement for Black Lives:** Joel Masser had reported earlier on a coalition of social justice organizations called Movement for Black Lives. He had read a summary of their goals and positions on issues but time was short and the discussion was postponed. The steering committee read through the information on the organization but did not agree that it would be useful for us to sign on. John will write up a statement about why this was the case, and the club can discuss the issue again at the next meeting.

**State Party Progressive Caucus:** Vincent Casalaina of the Northern California Progressive Caucus gave a report highlighting the outcome of the AD elections (the fact that many progressive young delegates were elected in a huge voter turnout), the resounding success of the marches over the weekend, Keith Ellison's 3124 county strategy for winning Democratic contests nationwide, and the wall-of-us.org website, which gives people four ideas for action items per week that they can do to help the Democratic cause. There is a movement toward eliminating the \$5 fee to vote in the AD election and one to make it a requirement for legislators to show they have read the party platform (and be held accountable if they choose not to follow it). John mentioned that our DNC representative is Otto Lee and that you can let him know if you have a

preference for California party chair (e.g., Kimberly Ellis vs. Eric Bauman). Vincent pointed out that the progressive caucus website has a debate between Ellis and Bauman if you want to learn more about them (<http://www.progressivecaucuscdp.net>). Kimberly Ellis will be speaking at our next DFA-link meeting on February 13 (see Announcements).

**Sunnyvale Sustainable and Affordable Living Coalition:** Richard Kolber reported that the Sunnyvale Democratic Club is forming a coalition to promote affordable housing and improved transportation in Sunnyvale. Members include Friends of Caltrain, Greenbelt Alliance, Silicon Valley Bicycle Coalition, and Sunnyvale Cool. They would like the Dean Club to join them. He will send information to John and we will consider the request at our next meeting ([www.livablesunnyvale.org](http://www.livablesunnyvale.org)).

**2016 accomplishments:** Carolyn Curtis is preparing a list of our accomplishments for 2016. Previous lists from past years are posted on our website. If you have not sent a tally of your hours of activism to Carolyn, please do so: [carolyncurtis@comcast.net](mailto:carolyncurtis@comcast.net)

**California Democratic Party, California Democratic Council affiliation:** John described our representation in the state party, with delegates based on number of club members (20 members per AD gives a club one delegate who can vote; as an example, our club has three delegates in AD 24). Our membership chair, Erik Fong, is moving to the Seattle area, and we need someone to step up to the job. Erik is willing to train the new person, and past membership chairs Ralph Wheeler and Carolyn Curtis are also available to help. Contact John if you are willing to volunteer for the position of membership chair. John extended a thank you from the club to Erik for his work.

**2017 goal setting and task forces:** At our December meeting, we had a brainstorming session of possible goals for 2017. John had divided these into eight general categories. Each club member was given a sheet of paper on which to rank his or her top three categories. Under each category, the club member then ranked his top three goals for that category, also in order. John will send the specific goals for each category separately from the minutes later on, but the results of the vote on the categories are:

- Good government (53 votes)
- Political outreach (45 votes)
- Environment (28 votes)
- Social justice (24 votes)
- Economic justice (21 votes)
- Health (20 votes)
- Club building (10 votes)
- Education (1 vote)

## **OLD BUSINESS**

While John was counting votes, co-chair Ben Stetson took charge of running the meeting,

calling on the various task forces from 2016.

**Candidates/Campaigns:** Mary Gill noted that she had just received a letter from Michael Eggman, who ran unsuccessfully for Congress in CD 10 in 2014 and came very close to winning in November. He got enormous support from our club, with many Dean Club members walking precincts and giving money, and Michael is very grateful for that support. He did not say if he will run again. This is a district that we have worked hard on for many cycles and will continue to prioritize. [If only a few of the hundreds of thousands of people who marched on Saturday in Bay Area cities had been out walking precincts in CD 10 last fall!]

**Good government:** Nancy Neff reported on the DISCLOSE Act, AB 14. Many signatures on petitions in support were collected over the weekend at the marches, about 1000 each in Oakland and San Jose. She announced that there will be a grassroots summit on March 25 at the Unitarian Universalist Church in Palo Alto from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Informational talks by various speakers (probably Senators Jerry Hill and Marc Levine as well as California Clean Money president Trent Lange) will be followed by afternoon workshops focusing on specific strategies/tasks (social media communications, CallFire phoning, data entry, etc.). There will be work parties every Thursday from 2:00 to 4:00 at the Unitarian Church for the next few weeks; data entry people are especially needed right now to record information from the petitions that are being gathered. Please contact Nancy if you can help: nrneff@sonic.net. There will be a trip to Sacramento to lobby legislators sometime in March.

**Social justice:** Carolyn reported that Alice Smith, who was the lead for Social Justice last year, is now working on a National Voter Corps, an umbrella organization to fight voter suppression and make it easier for people to cast their ballots. The idea grew out of a committee of people who were working at the Democratic Volunteer Center last fall. Alice may be presenting the research the group has done at one of our link meetings.

**Environment:** Joel reported that the environmental task force met last week at Ada's Café in Palo Alto (which trains and employs people with disabilities) to discuss goals for this year. He has written to Peter Drekmeier about his work on the Bay Delta Water Quality Control Plan and other environmental priorities that the committee might want to focus on. The group has been working on many issues (the Delta tunnels, anti-fracking measures, etc.).

**Education:** No report

**Economic justice:** Lucas reported on Measure V on rent stabilization, which passed in Mountain View in November but is being challenged by the California Apartment Association. The Mountain View City Council is going to be meeting tomorrow to discuss the issue; they have not been supportive, and there is a temporary restraining order in place. Lucas urged residents of Mountain View to contact their council members by 4:00 o'clock tomorrow and urge them to support Measure V.

**Health:** Gerry Hunt, treasurer of Health Care for All – California, reported that there is a huge amount of interest now in single-payer health care and how to implement it in California. A bill will need to be introduced by February 17 to be considered this year; the bill will be different from those in the past (which were passed by the legislature but vetoed by Arnold Schwarzenegger). Efforts are underway to identify an author and make single-payer happen in California.

**Support the club and party:** John mentioned that we are supporting the party by electing people to leadership positions and also through the goal-setting process we are following this year, which may be implemented by the county party as well. Bill James is the new chair of the county party, John is vice chair, Angelica Ramos is treasurer, and Helen Chapman is secretary. John encouraged people to join or renew.

**Club membership:** Erik Fong reported by e-mail that we have 171 members (including 27 “paid plus members” who have paid for more than one year and 101 who are in arrears), 629 Facebook members, and 312 Yahoo members. So far in 2017 we have 2 new members and 21 new Facebook members.

## Announcements

❖ Executive Director of Emerge California and candidate for Democratic Party Chair Kimberly Ellis will be speaking to us at the next DFA-link meeting on February 13 at Alice Smith’s home, 4284 Los Palos Circle, Palo Alto 94306. Snacks and conversation at 6:30, program at 7:00. Bring a snack or dish to share if possible.

❖ Nancy reported that tomorrow night the Menlo Park City Council will consider a resolution to not report undocumented people to immigration for possible arrest and deportation.

❖ Mary announced that Pulitzer-Prize winning Stanford professor Jack Rakove will speak on “Getting Rid of the Electoral College” on Wednesday, February 1, at 7:00 p.m. at the Woodside Methodist Church, Woodside Road and Alameda de las Pulgas, Redwood City.

❖ Jackie Wheeler announced that Close the Gap will have an authors’ discussion and luncheon featuring Elizabeth McKenzie (*The Portable Veblen*), Marianne Cooper (*Cut Adrift: Families in Insecure Times*), and Barbara Babcock (*Fish Raincoats: A Woman Lawyer’s Life*) on February 10 from 11:30 to 1:30 at Mitchell Park Library. Tickets are \$125; register at <http://tinyurl.com/Literature2017>.

❖ Emily Ramos announced that the Silicon Valley Young Dems will be meeting on February 27 from 7:00 to 9:00 at the party headquarters in San Jose; Joe Simitian will be speaking.

**Adjournment:** At 8:42 p.m. Lucas moved that we adjourn, Emily seconded the motion, and the meeting was adjourned.

Minutes submitted by Mary Gill