



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

March 26, 2018

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

**Next working meetings:** April 23, May 28

**Next DFA-link meetings:** April 9, May 14

**June picnic and annual meeting and election of officers:** June 30 (Saturday), 11:00 a.m. Ponderosa Park Picnic Area 2, 811 Henderson Avenue, Sunnyvale 94086

**Introductions:** John Comiskey called the meeting to order at 7:06 p.m. Following that, each person introduced himself or herself and described a recent political activity.

**Adoption of agenda:** Ben Stetson moved that we adopt the agenda as amended, Emilie Gatfield seconded it, and the motion passed with no dissension.

**Approval of minutes:** Jackie Wheeler moved that we approve the February minutes, Emilie seconded the motion, and it passed with no dissension.

**Treasurer's report:** Karen Porter reported that we have \$5934 in the treasury: \$1470 in the state and \$4464 in the federal account.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

**Candidate visits:** The candidates spoke in the order in which they had arrived. Each was given two minutes. The office for which they are running is in parentheses.

**Joe LaJuenesse (sheriff).** Retired army major and current deputy sheriff of Santa Clara County. Sees a need for new leadership with the problems with the county's jail system. If elected, he will be the first sheriff who is a Democrat, person of color, and veteran. He is chair of the Veterans Caucus for the state party.

**Susan Ellenberg** (Santa Clara Board of Supervisors, District 4, represented by Steve Ellenberg). Currently a San Jose Unified School Board member (Dean Club endorsed) and director of community development for the Silicon Valley Organization. She is a graduate of the Columbia University School of Law, focused, compassionate and dedicated to her work. She will work hard to make the county a more just place in which to live.

**John Hirokawa** (sheriff). Strong belief in immediate reform of our justice system

with equal rights for all while following the rule of law. Graduated from San Jose State University, worked for 35 years in the sheriff's office, rose to Undersheriff (second-ranking official in the department). Endorsements include 11 retired police chiefs, the Peace Officers Research Association of California, the Deputy Sheriffs Association, and LaDoris Cordell.

**Rosie Zepeda** (San Jose City Council District 9). Former teacher who then worked in the tech industry and is now a business owner in leadership training and marketing consulting. Emphasis on safety in neighborhoods, schools, parks; safeguarding our community.

**Jose Salcido** (sheriff). Believes our jails are in crisis and new leadership is needed. Has 32 years' experience in the sheriff's office and 5.5 years in the mayor's office. Wants to lower the recidivism rate and help those in the system who suffer from PTSD or other mental health issues.

**Dominic Caserta** (Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors District 4, represented by his campaign). Teacher and current Santa Clara councilman. Endorsed by the California Nurses Association, South Bay Labor Council (this endorsement was shared with Don Rocha). Member of Planned Parenthood and the California Teachers Association. Believes in passing a living wage and supporting wage equality for women and also doing more to support victims of sexual assault and domestic violence.

**Don Rocha** (Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors District 4, represented by his campaign). Now a District 9 San Jose City Council member. Endorsed by South Bay Labor Council (with Dominic Caserta). He will work hard for change; the current person has been on the board for 12 years so it's time for a new voice.

**Shay Franco-Clausen** (San Jose City Council District 9). Has been a community leader and organizer for many years, has worked mentoring youth, supporting equality for women, LGTBQ rights. Works for Silicon Valley FACES. She would be the first lesbian woman of color in this office if elected. She ran Ash Kalra's successful campaign for Assembly and has the endorsement of the South Bay Labor Council.

**Sabuhi Siddique** (San Jose City Council District 9). Vice chair of the county Human Relations Commission, former hospital technician. She aspires to be the voice of the people who have not had a voice. Public safety and affordable housing are among her priorities.

**Jason Baker** (Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors District 4). After law school, worked in a violence prevention program as a researcher. Was mayor of Campbell twice. Supports environmental protections, community choice energy, plastic bag ban. Has sued Shell and Exxon for exposing workers to deadly chemicals. Endorsed by 25 mayors.

**Scott Nelson** (San Jose City Council District 9). Strongly supports more funding for education. Works intentionally as a substitute teacher in many high schools around Silicon Valley. Sees that young people are afraid of police and that this is causing harm to the community.

**Endorsement committee recommendations:**

First, Michele Dauber made a statement about the Recall Persky Campaign, which has withdrawn their request for endorsement. Michele noted that the campaign has many Democrats willing to work with the Dean Club on future endeavors. Following that, John presented the committee recommendations:

Sheriff: No endorsement

Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors District 4: sole endorsement for Jason Baker

San Jose City Council District 9: dual endorsement for Rosie Zepeda and Kalen Gallagher

SB 100 (bill to get to 100% renewable energy by 2045): Yes

Measure A, City of Santa Clara (to change how city council members are elected, creating two districts, each with three members, with the goal of giving more representation to minority communities): Yes

Michele Dauber asked to pull the Jason Baker and Measure A endorsements.

Ben Stetson asked to pull No endorsement for sheriff.

The committee recommendations to endorse **San Jose City Council District 9 candidates Rosie Zepeda and Kalen Gallagher** and to **support SB 100** passed with 19 yes votes and no opposition or abstentions.

**Sheriff:** Ben Stetson said that he felt no endorsement would lead to a win for the incumbent and that he feels it is time for change, citing the murder of an inmate by three deputies. LaDoris Cordell was the head of the Blue Ribbon Commission on Improving Custody Operations; she has endorsed John Hirokawa. Ben moved that we endorse John Hirokawa, and Ben Shapero seconded the motion. With 9 yes votes, 7 no votes, and 1 abstention, the motion failed. The endorsement committee's recommendation for **No endorsement** was taken up, and it passed with 11 yes votes, 4 no votes, and 1 abstention.

**Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors District 4:** Michele Dauber gave several reasons why she felt Dominic Caserta was the best candidate and asked why the endorsement committee was recommending Jason Baker. The answer from the committee was that all but one current mayor and 12 previous mayors have endorsed him. Several committee members voiced the opinion that he is the most knowledgeable about urban issues like transit and housing that mayors have to deal with most often. Emilie made a motion for a **sole endorsement for Jason Baker**, Elinor Stetson seconded it, and it carried with 13 yes votes and 6 no votes.

**Measure A, Santa Clara:** Michele Dauber described opposition to the measure from the Asian Law Alliance, which is advocating for six districts rather than two (currently there is one). After some discussion, Michele moved that we defer the vote until we have time to hear from Asian American groups in Santa Clara, Emilie seconded the motion, and it passed with no dissension.

**OpenNetReview:** Kayhan Kucukcakar is developing a platform that would enable better communication between citizens and public officials, allowing the public to hold the officials accountable. The idea is that change can come from the people through performance reviews in a kind of poll that is not influenced by special interests. Kayhan would like input and help developing the project and will send us a PDF about it. For more information, contact Kayhan at [opennetreview.com](http://opennetreview.com).

**DVC donation:** Stephanie Grossman requested that we donate \$2000 to the Democratic Volunteer Center, listing many ways in which it is serving our interests as a hub of activity to help elect Democrats, most importantly in House races. Various other amounts were suggested. After much discussion, Emilie moved that we donate \$500 a month for March and April and then revisit the issue, with a view toward our finances. The motion was seconded, and it passed with 1 no vote.

**Goals committees:** Not covered for lack of time.

**Blue Wave Writers:** Mary Gill reported on a group that will be writing postcards to voters to urge them to get involved in Democratic Congressional races in tough districts, the Blue Wave Writers. Dean Club member Mary Takahashi and Pam Salvatierra are also on the committee forming the group. This strategy has been used out in the valley with success; for instance, the Andrew Janz campaign has reported that people are coming into their office with postcards in hand asking how they can help. The first meeting will be at the Democratic Volunteer Center in Mountain View on April 5 from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m. (Cards, stamps, and addresses to Democrats in Andrew Janz' district will be provided.)

**Democratic National Committee report:** Otto Lee reported on news from the DNC. The DNC Unity Commission report recommended removing the first round of voting for super/unpledged delegates except for Congress members and governors. The vote on this will not be until the summer meeting, not yet scheduled. The new slogan is "I Will Vote" since when more people vote, Democrats win. The DNC will be funding every state with \$100,000 and trying to reach every zip code. The goal is to reach 50 million voters. The recent Alabama Senate race and the House race in Pennsylvania were good examples of how Democrats can win; the Arizona race with Dr. Hiral Trepinini in April will be the next effort to gain a House seat. Voter registration, voter protection, GOTV, and rebuilding finances are all part of the plan, as is getting people to commit by vote by texting VOTE to 43367. (There is an immediate response to the text, asking for your address and e-mail, thanking you for committing to vote, and connecting you to your county ROV if you want to register, check your voting status, or get other information.)

## **OLD BUSINESS**

**Candidates and initiatives:** There was very little time at this point, but Mary passed around an updated list of ten California Congressional districts that are now held by Republicans but that might provide pick-up opportunities for Democrats. There were a lot of changes right before close of filing March 9. (See the file California Red-to-Blue House Races attached after the minutes.)

There was no time for any of the other task force reports.

**Club membership:** Ben Shapero reported that we have 245 members (including 36 “paid plus members” who have paid for more than one year and 124 who are currently in arrears), 722 Facebook members, and 312 Yahoo members. There are 4 new “paid plus” members and 10 new Facebook members so far this year.

## **Announcement**

❖ Emilie reported that Working America needs volunteers in their efforts to turn CA-21 and CA-10 blue; they are canvassing in those districts. Contact Emilie if you can help: [e.g.gatfield@gmail.com](mailto:e.g.gatfield@gmail.com)

**Adjournment:** At 9:00 p.m. Emilie moved that we adjourn, Carolyn Curtis seconded the motion, and the meeting was adjourned.

Minutes submitted by Mary Gill