

Minutes of the Dean Democratic Club of Silicon Valley Organizational Meeting April 24, 2017 Marie Callender's Restaurant, 751 E. El Camino Real, Sunnyvale

Next working meetings: May 22, July 24, August 28, September 25, October 23 Next DFA-link meetings: May 8, June 5, July 10, August 14, September 11, October 9

June picnic and annual meeting and election of officers: June 24 (Saturday), 11:00 a.m. Ponderosa Park Picnic Area 2, 811 Henderson Avenue, Sunnyvale 94086

Introductions: John Comiskey called the meeting to order at 7:10 p.m. Following that, each person introduced himself or herself and made a statement about recent political involvement.

Adoption of agenda: Gerry Hunt moved that we adopt the agenda, Karen Porter seconded it, and the motion passed with no dissension.

Approval of minutes: Ben Stetson moved that we approve the March minutes, Carolyn Curtis seconded the motion, and it passed with no dissension.

Treasurer's report: Karen Porter reported that we have \$1557 in the state and \$1954 in the federal account for a total of \$3511. John noted that our bounty money for voter registration should be coming in soon.

NEW BUSINESS

Jacob Angel, veterans' health: Jacob Angel spoke to us representing the Military Health Project and Foundation, which works on federal policy for veterans' health care as well as financial aid to veterans for items that the federal plan does not cover. The ACA has packages for veterans to cover active-duty personnel, but cuts to benefits are expected with the Trump administration. The Military Health Project and Foundation is trying to create a stop-gap solution. They are working with the American Legion, Disabled Veterans, and the VFW and want to get other groups on board to help stem the damage. Active Dem clubs can help resist the cuts; Jacob will send information on action items (e.g., phone calls to make to Congressional reps) to John. In response to a question, Jacob noted that veterans' health care does not fall into the military budget category. They expect more funding for military equipment but less for health benefits. Titus Lin and Carly Hasbrook, Orchard City Swing Left: Titus outlined the basic goal of the new grassroots group Swing Left, to flip the House to Democrats next year. There are 60 local teams that formed out of house parties on March 4 and 5; these will be directed primarily toward CD 10 (Jeff Denham's district). The goal will be to do voter registration and outreach and build a volunteer base. They have partnered with Dem clubs and Indivisible groups within CD 10 so that efforts can be coordinated, and they are looking for other groups to sign on to work with them. They would especially like help training volunteers locally here in the Bay Area. Carolyn mentioned Marcene Van Dierendonck's experience with voter reg; Thida Cornes mentioned the PDC's voter reg efforts and then asked if Swing Left has a volunteer database. Titus said they have someone who is in charge of building a database and that they have access to Democratic Party data from the district, including MOE. Carly talked about her Indivisible group, which draws about 100 people every Tuesday for their meetings, the largest of the Indivisible groups in the Bay Area. (Orchard City refers to Campbell.) They have a Swing Left subgroup that Carly is working with. On May 2, Assembly Member Evan Low will speak to them. The meetings are at a church at 440 W Campbell Avenue, Campbell 95008, 6:30 potluck and 7:00 for meeting. They urged people to contact Carly (carlyhasbrook@gmail.com) to sign up to help flip CD 10, to come to a meeting, and to join their Orchard City Swing Left Facebook Page.

Bart Berquist, SCCDP precinct captains: Bart began by saying that in 2016 83% of registered voters in Santa Clara county cast their ballots, while it was only 50% in 2014. This is higher than the state-wide average, but shows a fundamental problem: the huge downturn in voting rates in the mid-terms. The Dem supermajority in the state legislature is one of many things at stake next year. To maintain the 2016 momentum, the county party is asking each of the 19 (soon to be 20) clubs to find 4 members who will be in charge of coordinating precinct walks, working with the club MOE coordinator (in the case of the Dean Club, John Comiskey). The goal will be to make connections and build solidarity and party activism, neighbor to neighbor. There are 1083 precincts in Santa Clara County, with 800-900 registered voters each (all political parties). John noted that when people ask about working in swing districts vs. working here, he tells them that going to a swing district is great, but if you have just two hours or so you can cover your own neighborhood little by little. Club members were encouraged to sign up for this project.

Wildflower walk recap: Carolyn announced that the wildflower walk and club fundraiser that she and Don Mayall led raised \$815. They held a make-up event the following week for those who couldn't get to the first one on April 8. Attendees noted that the flowers were beautiful, and people had a great time.

Dean Club trifold and business cards: John reported that Ben Stetson had been working on getting printing estimates for our trifold (description of our club and

membership information) and Carolyn had edited the source document. Ben got a reasonable estimate from a company called Aabco: \$263 for color on one side and black on the other, plus \$15 shipping. Another estimate from Suburban Press in Hayward was slightly higher. Business cards from Aabco would be \$89 for 500 or \$119 for 1000. Ben moved that we get the trifolds from Aabco, Gerry seconded the motion, and it passed with no dissension. Thida suggested a serif font and Carolyn suggested that the text be ragged right throughout. There will be a union bug. Ben then moved that we get 1000 business cards from Aabco, Carolyn seconded the motion, and it also passed unanimously. Suggestions were made to add the Facebook and Yahoo group information to the business cards.

Democratic Party Unity Dinner (formerly JJ Dinner) May 12: John is handling the RSVPs for the county Democratic party dinner (May 12 at the Fairmont Hotel in San Jose, cost per person: \$150). Speakers will be Zoe Lofgren and Ro Khanna. It's the county party's big fundraiser for the year. If you plan to go, please respond soon. You can write a check and send it to the SCCDP headquarters (2901 Moorpark Avenue, #110, San Jose 95128) or go to ActBlue (link below). To be seated with other club members, indicate in the special requests area that you want to be at the Dean Club table. You can also make dietary requests: https://secure.actblue.com/contribute/page/demdinner_2017

DFA dinner at CDP convention: John reported that Jim Dean and the national DFA volunteer coordinator (Mari Schimmer) will speak at the DFA dinner at the state Democratic Party convention on Friday, May 19, at 7:00 at Lucca Restaurant, 1615 J Street, Sacramento (two blocks from the convention). \$55 per person. Vince Casalaina is organizing the event. You can reserve at https://secure.actblue.com/contribute/page/cadfadinner

Call for nominating committee: John asked for volunteers for a committee to nominate club officers for next year. The election will be at the June picnic and meeting. Candidates or current steering committee members cannot serve on this committee. Gerry Hunt agreed to chair; please contact him or John if you are willing to serve on the nominating committee.

SB 562, Healthy California Act: John had sent out a letter from Pam Ramirez of the Wellstone Dem Club asking us to endorse SB 562; we will take endorsement up at our next meeting. Gerry reported that this bill, authored by Senators Ricardo Lara and Toni Atkins to create a single-payer health-care system throughout the state, will be heard in the Senate Health Committee on April 26 and that buses will be going up to Sacramento for a lobby day. He encouraged people to attend.

Congressional and CDP endorsements: John reported that the endorsement committee recommended the following: sole endorsement for Ami Bera (CD 7), Jerry McNerney (CD 9), Anna Eshoo (CD 18), Zoe Lofgren (CD 19) and Kimberly Ellis (state Democratic Party chair). They recommended deferring the endorsements of Ro Khanna (CD 17) and Jimmy Panetta (CD 20) for now. Thida asked that we pull Ami Bera and vote on the others first. Carolyn moved that we make the endorsements, Thida seconded

the motion, and it passed unanimously. After some discussion, there was a separate vote for Ami Bera, and this also passed unanimously.

OLD BUSINESS

Good government: Mary reported that AB 14, the California DISCLOSE Act, is now an urgency bill and will be heard in the Assembly Elections Committee on June 14 at 9:00 a.m. The move to grant the bill urgency status was a result of thousands of e-mails and hundreds of phone calls in support. Car pools will be organized for a lobby day in Sacramento on June 14. You can register to attend at http://www.yesfairelections.org/events/ab14-asm-elections.php. Clean Money Campaign members are continuing to gather petition signatures; thousands have been gathered at the recent marches. Please contact Nancy Neff for more information: nrneff@sonic.net.

Political outreach: Covered earlier.

Environment: Don reported on a meeting of the environment committee that he and Carolyn hosted. In response to requests from Restore the Delta, the group contacted the Santa Clara Valley Water Board to ask about the Delta tunnels project and express opposition. Joel Masser had written a letter against transporting nuclear waste to Yucca Mountain and was going to bring it to the club so that we could vote in support, but since he was not present we could not take this up at the meeting. However, Joel sent the letter on his own after considerable thought and research.

Social justice: No report.

Economic justice: Emily Ramos reported that Mountain View now has rent control and a Rental Housing Committee. She and Evan Ortiz, who both worked very hard with the Mountain View Tenants Coalition in support of rent control, are members of this committee. The San Jose City Council just passed Just Cause (specifying acceptable reasons for eviction) and a provision for tenant relocation benefits in the event that the owner sells a property or decides to move into and reside in it.

Health care: Gerry mentioned the lobby day for SB 562 and said that having a clear finance plan will be vital to getting the bill passed, not just a plan for delivery of care. We will need to clearly explain the financial advantages of single payer.

Club building: John has visited a Swing Left group and will be visiting the Berryessa Dem Club soon.

Education: Thida reported on Strong Start, a movement for universal pre-school in Santa Clara County. Polling is being done to determine how best to get funds to implement it.

Club membership: Membership chair Ben Shapero reported that we have 186 members (including 8 "paid plus members" who have paid for more than one year and 107 who are in arrears), 663 Facebook members, and 312 Yahoo members. So far in 2017 we have 15

new members and 55 new Facebook members.

Announcements

✤ Our speaker for the May 8 DFA-link meeting will be Susan Ellenberg, San Jose Unified School District board member and vice president. Susan is a candidate for county supervisor and will be speaking on "Civics Education in Our Schools." The meeting will be at Alice Smith's home, 4284 Los Palos Circle, Palo Alto 94306; come at 6:30 for conversation and snacks and 7:00 for the meeting.

✤ Thida announced that in Mountain View and Los Altos members of the League of Women Voters are giving presentations on how to get involved in city government. Other cities may be able to hold such presentations.

✤ John said that he will bring some suggestions for minor changes to our by-laws to our May meeting for consideration; voting would be at the July working meeting.

Adjournment: At 8:50 p.m. Gerry moved that we adjourn, Carolyn seconded the motion, and the meeting was adjourned.

Minutes submitted by Mary Gill