



Minutes of the Dean Democratic Club of Silicon Valley Organizational Meeting

July 23, 2018

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

Next working meetings: August 27, September 24, October 22, November 26

Next DFA-link meetings: August 13, September 10, October 8, November 12

Introductions: John Comiskey called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m. Following that, each person introduced himself or herself and described a recent political activity.

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

Approval of minutes: Gerry Hunt moved that we approve the May minutes, Chris Roat seconded the motion, and it passed with no dissension.

Treasurer's report: Karen Porter reported that we have \$5405 in the treasury: \$1362 in the state and \$4043 in the federal account.

NEW BUSINESS

Read officers into minutes: Amy Wright read the names of this year's officers, elected at the annual picnic and election on June 30:

Co-chairs: John Comiskey and Ben Stetson

Treasurer: Karen Porter

Recording Secretary: Mary Gill

Corresponding Secretary: Carolyn Curtis

Members at large: Jackie Wheeler and Marcene Van Dierendonck

County Supervisor District 4 candidates: John introduced Susan Ellenberg, who noted that Jason Baker (who the club had endorsed before the primary) is now giving her his full support. She will fight for families, affordable housing, health care, criminal justice reform, and early childhood education. She has broad experience on regional issues in her work on the school board, in social justice education, as a jail monitor, attorney, and on the county commission on the status of women. John then introduced a representative for Don Rocha, an incumbent who could not be present because of family obligations; he has fought for a tenant bill of rights, affordable and veterans' housing, and safe schools. He is not afraid of going against popular opinion and "will stand up for justice."

Endorsement committee recommendation: John reported that the endorsement committee recommends endorsing: Dianne Feinstein for Senator; Congressional candidates Josh Harder, TJ Cox, and Andrew Janz; Susan Ellenberg for County Supervisor District 4. Emilie Gatfield moved that we accept the recommendation but asked that County Supervisor be pulled. Carolyn seconded the motion, and the yes vote was unanimous to endorse the other four candidates. Alice then moved that we endorse Susan Ellenberg, Gerry seconded the motion, and it passed with 12 yes votes, 0 no votes, and 3 abstentions. After considerable discussion about the sheriff's race, Carolyn moved that we endorse John Hirokawa, Alice seconded the motion, but the motion failed with 8 yes votes, 3 no votes and 2 abstentions.

Steering committee composition: John said that in June when there were three people running for members at large, a proposal was considered to enlarge the steering committee to accommodate all three. However, it was already too late to announce this proposal since 30 days' notice are required. Our election is annually in June so any change to the composition of the steering committee cannot be implemented before then.

Proposed bylaws amendments: Both John and Karen proposed amendments to the club's bylaws, shown in redlined draft in the attached file, to be voted upon at the August 27 meeting. They are intended to: provide for the transition of the treasurer's duties to an assistant treasurer, if necessary; clarify when/how the size of the steering committee may be adjusted; update the document to better reflect current practices (e.g., re standing committees); change/simplify how any club funds remaining upon any dissolution of the club should be distributed; and some minor formatting cleanups.

All Clubs Unity Picnic recap: John described the Unity Picnic (formerly called the All Clubs Picnic), an event for all county Dem clubs and other groups who choose to participate. Ben Shapero and Barbara and John Comiskey attended. The Dean Club was the only Dem club to have a booth this year. Most of the booths were funded by various candidates. There were many speeches, lunch, and about 120 people present. Although there were no new Dean Club memberships, numerous people stopped by the booth and took brochures.

Ballot initiative assignments, final: At the August DFA-link meeting in election years the club always has a presentation on the ballot initiatives. Each initiative is presented by a Dean Club member using a template that John provides. Alice suggested holding questions until the end of the presentations so as to be sure all presenters have adequate time, and many agreed. After the presentations, there will be a straw poll that will serve as an endorsement recommendation at the August business meeting. This year the following 11 propositions are on the ballot; names of presenters are listed. (Proposition 9, on dividing California, was removed by the state supreme court.)

Proposition 1 Veterans and affordable housing bonds -- Chris Roat

Proposition 2 Homelessness prevention bonds – Patrick Dill

Proposition 3 Water bonds – Karen Porter

Proposition 4 Construction bonds for children's hospitals – Ben Stetson

Proposition 5 Transferring tax assessments from prior to new homes -- Barbara Comiskey
 Proposition 6 Repeal of gas tax – John Comiskey
 Proposition 7 Permanent daylight savings time – Gerry Hunt
 Proposition 8 Kidney dialysis regulation -- Emilie Gatfield
 Proposition 10 Local government authority to enact rent control – Emily Ramos
 Proposition 11 Ambulance employees required to remain on call – Dale Cipperley
 Proposition 12 Regulation of farm animal confinement – Mary Gill

Endorsement interview schedule: John pointed out that any candidate can request a Dean Club endorsement for the position he or she is running for; club members who want to endorse in a particular race can ask a candidate to request that the club endorse in that race. So far this year, the club has been asked to endorse in the Cupertino, Mountain View, and Palo Alto City Council races and in the Campbell Union Elementary School District, San Jose Union School District, and Alum Rock Union School District races. This will mean interviewing as many as 24 candidates in 6 weeks. The committee consists of John and Barbara Comiskey, Emilie Gatfield, Ben Stetson, and Karen Porter. Elspeth Farmer asked to become an endorsement committee member, and the steering committee immediately voted to accept her as a new member. Dale Cipperley asked about the Dean Club process since the new Dem club Avalanche will be doing endorsements also; John will send him an unfilled endorsement form.

Letter to the state water board: Carolyn presented a request from Peter Drekmeier to sign on to a letter to the state water board urging them to increase the flow of water from the San Joaquin River tributaries to at least 50% so as to protect fish, wildlife, and public health. The letter will be sent to the board from a coalition of environmental and other groups. Carolyn moved that we sign on to the letter, Gerry seconded the motion, and it passed with no opposition.

TJ Cox campaign: Mary Gill reported on TJ's campaign; this is a district that Hillary won by 16 points, so the Democratic voters are there, but we need to raise awareness and name recognition for TJ. On August 25 the Cox campaign is organizing a canvass in the town of Firebaugh, about 2 hours away; the DVC canvassers and others are planning to "adopt" the town of Firebaugh and try to turn out voters there. Training, snacks, water, and everything needed will be provided by the campaign. Mary urged people to let her know if they are willing to canvass or to drive volunteers (on this or subsequent trips), and Alice volunteered for 8/25. In addition, phonebanks for TJ (and other candidates) are going on at the DVC on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 2:00 to 7:00 and on Saturdays from 12:00 to 3:00. The Blue Wave Writers will hold a postcard party for TJ on Wednesday, July 25, from 10:30 to 1:00 at the DVC; all materials will be provided.

OLD BUSINESS/TASK FORCE REPORTS

Candidates and initiatives: Covered earlier.

Social justice: Elspeth Farmer described an effort she has been working on for a number of years to get Governor Brown to prevent the execution of an innocent man, Kevin

Cooper, and convene an investigation using DNA testing. Senators Harris and Feinstein are both supporting this effort.

Good government: Nancy Neff reported on the California Clean Money Campaign activities. Kevin Mullin's bill, AB 2188, the Social Media Disclosure Act, passed the Assembly with bipartisan support and also passed the Senate Elections Committee (4-1). In all probability it will be heard in the Senate Appropriations Committee on August 6, and CCMC members will be going up to Sacramento to testify and lobby for it. She passed around a sign-up sheet for the lobby day. There are some negotiations going on now and some possible amendments, which could be troubling. Also, CCMC was instrumental in getting people to contact their legislators to restore SB 822 and SB 460, bills for net neutrality, to their original, unamended state; they will be the strongest net neutrality bills in the country. Ben Stetson asked about the "clean-up" bill for the DISCLOSE Act (fixing some issues such as overly long committee names), and Nancy says at this point there is no opposition to the proposed changes CCMC would like to see made. ("Clean-up" bills are common with major pieces of legislation like DISCLOSE.)

Political outreach: John recommended that everyone attend an OCI meeting at least once. The group meets every Tuesday at 400 W Campbell Avenue, Campbell starting at 6:30 for a potluck. About 60-100 people attend. Elspeth noted that on August 7 Anna Eshoo will speak. John then asked club members to encourage any candidates they know in races where the club will be endorsing to go to the endorsement committee meetings.

Club building: Carolyn suggested having an ice cream social and club fundraiser in September.

Health care: Gerry reported that Health Care for All is now doing candidate endorsements based on support for single-payer health care.

Economic justice: no report

Environment: Amy reported on the huge problem that plastic straws (and plastics in general) create; she had brought her reusable straws with case and cleaning brush and encouraged people who want to use straws to use an alternative to plastic.

Education: Ben Shapero reported that a Los Angeles School Board member who supported charter schools has resigned due to corruption charges. Dale Cipperley reported on NIB.com, a site for political cartons. Since many magazines and newspapers are downsizing or going out of business, he urged people to explore the site and sign on to help support it financially.

Club membership: Ben Shapero reported that we have 244 members (including 38 "paid plus members" who have paid for more than one year and 126 who are currently in arrears), 715 Facebook members, and 312 Yahoo members. There are 6 new members and 10 new Facebook members so far this year.

Announcements

❖ Alice announced that there will be a fundraiser for Mi Familia Vota on August 12 from 4:30 to 6:30 in Palo Alto. \$50 minimum. Mi Familia Vota is a nonpartisan organization working to register and turn out voters in the Central Valley and elsewhere.

❖ Amy reported that Father Don Pedigo will be the speaker at the OCI meeting on Tuesday, July 24.

Adjournment: At 8:55 p.m. Emilie Gatfield moved that we adjourn, Ben Shapero seconded the motion, and the meeting was adjourned.

Minutes submitted by Mary Gill