



Minutes of the Dean Democratic Club of Silicon Valley Organizational Meeting

July 22, 2019

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

Next working meetings: August 26, September 23, October 28, November 11 (at Calabazas Library; no other November meeting will be held)

Next DFA-link meetings: August 12, September 9, October 14

Holiday potluck and goals brainstorming: December 9 at the home of Ralph and Jackie Wheeler

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

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

Approval of minutes: Ben Shapero moved that we approve the May minutes, Barbara Comiskey seconded the motion, and it passed with no dissension.

Treasurer's report: Amy Wright reported by e-mail that we have \$3790 in the treasury: \$418 in the state and \$3372 in the federal account.

NEW BUSINESS

Federal and state mid-year statements: Amy reported that she has completed the federal and state mid-year financial statements and submitted them. [These are very work-intensive, and the club appreciates Amy's work on this!]

Read officers into minutes: John read the names of this year's officers, elected at the annual picnic and election in June:

Co-chairs: John Comiskey and Emilie Gatfield

Treasurer: Amy Wright

Corresponding Secretary: Gerry Hunt

Recording Secretary: Mary Gill

Members at large: Marcene Van Dierendonck and Karen Porter

The group expressed appreciation to previous officers Ben Stetson (co-chair), Carolyn Curtis (corresponding secretary), and Jackie Wheeler (member at large).

Present two-year calendar: John had sent out the two-year calendar by e-mail and had copies at the meeting. This calendar is what the agenda will be based on. This year things are a bit different because the primary was moved up to March.

Center for Biological Diversity letter: John had sent out a letter from the Center for Biological Diversity asking our club to sign on to urge Governor Newsom to lead in the transition off fossil fuel production. The letter had already been signed by over 500 groups. After discussion, Karen moved that we sign on, Barbara seconded the motion, and it passed with one abstention and all other votes affirmative. The letter can be found at the following link:

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfRIo_ppQoPKd1bHrnN2u9-E1GhQ1_hALBRdCK-riRgkU5myw/viewform

Reschedule November working group meeting: John noted that we need to reschedule the November working meeting (which falls during the week of Thanksgiving, and the restaurant is not able to accommodate us). We'll have just one meeting in November, combining the working meeting and the link meeting, and hold it at the Calabazas library on November 11. Also, we will need a different venue for the October link meeting, since the libraries are all closed for the holiday on the 14th.

DVC debate-watch party July 30: Mary announced that the Democratic Volunteer Center will be hosting a party to view the presidential debates on July 30. Pizza, snacks, wine and other beverages will be available, and Joe Simitian will moderate what is surely to be a very lively discussion. Doors open at 4:30 at the First Congregational Church of Palo Alto, 1985 Louis Road 94303. The debate will be televised at 5:00. The \$35 tickets will help toward opening a DVC office in north county. RSVP at: <https://secure.actblue.com/donate/dvc-july2019>

Reclaim Our Vote fundraiser August 11: Mary reported that there will be a fundraiser for Reclaim Our Vote on August 11 from 4:00 to 6:00 p.m. at the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Redwood City, 2124 Brewster Avenue. This organization is fighting voter suppression in various states that have been impacted by it. Hors d'oeuvres and an online webinar presentation by Andrea Miller, director of the Center for Common Ground, will be featured. \$20 minimum. (\$50 would support 150 phone calls to voters of color by low-income African American senior women in Virginia.) RSVP: https://actionnetwork.org/ticketed_events/fundraiser-for-reclaim-our-vote?source=direct_link&

DVC voter registration letter-writing event August 22: Mary reported that although the DVC does not have an office and will not have one until next year, there will be ongoing events to register voters in swing states. Since winning the Senate is vital, there will be a particular focus on states where there is a winnable Senate race. On August 22 there will be such a DVC event (probably to register voters in Maine, where Susan Collins is vulnerable). All supplies will be provided. We'll meet at Rinconada Library, 1213 Newell Road, Palo Alto, from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m. Contact Diane Rolfe at onedianerolfe@comcast.net or Mary for more information or to RSVP.

Event with Congressman TJ Cox August 24: There will be an event for Congressman TJ Cox (CA-21) on Saturday, August 24, from 6:00 to 9:00 p.m., 1955 The Alameda, San Jose. John and Barbara Comiskey are listed on the flyer as “champions” of the event, and the Dean Club is cosponsoring. TJ needs our support since unfortunately former Congressman David Valadao, who lost to TJ by only 862 votes last year, has filed to run again. Tickets start at \$100; the event will include standup comedy by Nato Green and music by jazz vocalist Lua Hadar. For questions, contact Gayle Boesch: gayleboesch@gmail.com. You can RSVP at: <https://secure.actblue.com/donate/southbayfortj>

Endorsements: John described the club endorsement process: questionnaires, interviews, candidates given the chance to speak to the membership before a vote, etc. This year things are different because candidates in three of the races are being given the opportunity to speak to the club membership in depth at link meetings. John and Barbara Comiskey, Emilie Gatfield, and Jackie Wheeler are on the endorsement committee, but a fifth person would be ideal. The November meeting will be our endorsement meeting. Candidates can come to speak at that meeting or not, or they can send a representative. Karen suggested that we find a more central location than the Calabazas library (e.g., Sunnyvale or Mountain View) and she will look into that. She also said that if someone opposes a committee recommendation, that person should be required to give a valid reason, one that is based on fact. John noted that from now on abstentions will not count as “no” votes: people will be asked to vote “no” or not vote. He also noted that the party platform (which candidates seeking our endorsement are given) may be changing since a small group is working on getting input from various clubs and groups about the current platform. Nancy Neff suggested that we invite the people who are working on information gathering to a link meeting in the future.

OLD BUSINESS

Good government: Nancy Neff reported that on Tuesday, August 20, members of the California Clean Money Campaign will attend a hearing in the Senate Elections Committee for **AB 1217**, the **Issue Ad DISCLOSE Act**, and then lobby legislators in the afternoon. John Comiskey volunteered to serve as an additional lobby leader. The bill has some opposition from the SEIU, the CTA (who have opposed disclosure bills in the past), etc. and has become an urgency bill, which will allow for time to address concerns. The hope is that the opposition will stand down. John Comiskey described his attempt to influence Evan Low on his bill **AB 1451**, which would ban paying petition signature gatherers per signature and require 10 percent of them to be gathered by volunteers or non-profit staff. CCMC opposes the bill unless amended and has suggested (1) reducing the 10 percent to 5 percent or (2) increasing the period allowed for signature gathering from six months to one year to allow small grassroots organizations to be able to get propositions on the ballot (larger groups like labor unions can use their staff to gather signatures). With members of the county central committee, John submitted a resolution to increase the time period allowed for signature gathering; the resolution will be

withdrawn if Evan Low accepts the amendment. Nancy also reported on **SB 47, the Petition DISCLOSE Act**, which is moving along in the legislature through its various committee hearings. A good compromise was reached on **AB 201** regarding closing a loophole in disclosure for text messages. That leaves **SB 636, the Ballot DISCLOSE Act**, which has become a two-year bill, and **AB 1784, the Secure the Vote Act**, which has been delayed until after funds have been allocated.

Health care: Barbara Comiskey reported on Planned Parenthood, whose president has had to resign.

Club building: No report.

Social justice: Mimi Spreadbury, Ben Shapero, and Nancy Neff all reported on the Lights for Liberty vigils on July 12 in various cities to protest the immigration detention centers.

Political outreach:

Jerry McNeerney event recap: Mary noted that the Dean Club has been cohosting events for Jerry McNeerney for 16 years now, and this year the event, held at the home of Stephanie Grossman, raised over \$19,000.

Voter reg letter-writing July 24: Mary reported that on Wednesday, July 24, from noon to 3:00 p.m. in Mountain View there will be a letter-writing event to register voters before a critical election. Contact Kathy at raykat@gmail.com or RSVP at: <https://actionnetwork.org/events/letter-writing-in-downtown-mountain-view-2>

Environment:

De Anza Youth Summit: Mimi Spreadbury reported that she and Amy Wright were adult volunteers at the recent De Anza Youth Summit, organized by Dave Cortese's office. Groups are being organized for each city, and it was a very worthwhile event.

Juristac: Mimi reported on the status of Juristac, the Amah Mutsun Tribal Band's lands in south county, where a holding company has applied for a permit to build a quarry for sand for concrete. The Dean Club signed on to a resolution to protect the tribal lands a couple of months ago; you can sign as an individual at <http://www.protectjuristac.org/petition/>. The board of supervisors will be voting on the issue; meanwhile, they are waiting on the environmental impact report. On July 23 Chairman Lopez, tribal leader, will be speaking at the First Universalist Church at 7:00 p.m., 160 N. Third Street, San Jose, across from Saint James Park.

San Jose City Hall Plaza Die-in Noon Friday: Mimi reported that Extinction Rebellion (the group that organized demonstrations in London) is working to build a coalition to ask the city of San Jose to call climate change an emergency. There will be

a die-in at noon on Friday in San Jose City Hall Plaza; you can simply show up and participate. There are no plans to get people arrested, just a peaceful demonstration.

Economic justice: No report.

Candidates and initiatives: No report.

Education: No report.

Club membership: Ben Shapero reported that there are 25 paid plus members (who have paid for more than one year), 55 regular members, with 7 new members this year.

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

Minutes submitted by Mary Gill