



Minutes of the Dean Democratic Club of Silicon Valley Organizational Meeting

April 27, 2020

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

Next DFA-link meetings (by Zoom unless things change): May 11, June 8, July 11, August 8

Next working meetings (by Zoom unless things change): May 25, June 22, July 25, August 22

Annual potluck picnic and election of officers: Postponed

Introductions: John Comiskey called the Zoom meeting to order at 7:12 p.m. Following that, each person introduced himself or herself and made a statement about recent political involvement.

Adoption of agenda: Jackie Wheeler moved that we adopt the agenda, Marcene Van Dierendonck seconded it, and the motion passed with no dissension.

Approval of minutes: Emy Thurber moved that we approve the February minutes, Karen Porter seconded the motion, and it passed with no dissension.

Treasurer's report: Amy Wright reported that we have \$3742 in the bank: \$294 in the state and \$3448 in the federal account. However, our check for the ad in the county party dinner program will be returned, an extra \$360.

NEW BUSINESS

Otto Lee DNC report: Otto Lee spoke shortly after 7:30, as agreed earlier, to update us on the Democratic National Committee; the results of the election at the end of March are still not known because of the shutdown. There were 37 candidates vying for 20 seats. He thanked the Dean Club for endorsing him for the Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors and reported that he made it to the top two with 29% of the vote; Kansen Chu came in at 31%. The Democratic National convention is scheduled to be August 17 in Milwaukee but almost surely that will change because of COVID. However, the Dems are outraising the Republicans at this point, and there is momentum. It's hard to make predictions; Hillary was doing well at this point in her campaign in 2016. The campaign this year will be very different; for one thing, we will not be able to rely on precinct walking this year. Dems are focusing now on registering voters, increasing access to voting, and expanding the voter base. The Wisconsin election results just recently were a very good sign for Dems. Other considerations: the economy and high unemployment

rate are very bad for the Republicans, as is the fact that a lot of the stimulus money did not go to small businesses. Otto mentioned some important national races: the Senate seats in Arizona, Colorado, Maine, North Carolina, Montana, and even Kentucky. In response to a comment from Jackie Wheeler, he mentioned South Carolina as a possible Senate flip also and said that Jamie Harrison is doing well, getting more name recognition. Emy Thurber noted that she is working on getting information from the Bullock campaign in Montana for the DVC to help us support him. In response to a question about Medicare for All from Mimi Spreadbury, Otto said that he believes that health care is a right and should be expanded and gave the example of Taiwan as an excellent system. He will support this issue both at the DNC and also as a county supervisor if he wins the election (the county can cover undocumented people or others who are not covered). Gerry Hunt pointed out that the county board has endorsed Medicare for All. Otto emphasized that the Dems must flip the Senate this year. In addition, he mentioned two California races, TJ Cox (who won by only 862 votes and will have a lot of money against him) and Christy Smith, who is in a special election on May 12 to replace Katie Hill. Herb Engstrom noted that Mark Kelly in Arizona has raised a lot of money but needs volunteer help, while John Hickenlooper is an example of a candidate who has raised less money at this point. Otto said that looking at candidates' fundraising is a good idea; money goes farther in a smaller state with fewer people than in states with large populations where the expenses for a Senate race are typically very high.

SCCDP dinner postponement: John announced that the county Democratic Party dinner will be postponed to a future date due to COVID-19. There is hope that it will be held at the Hayes Mansion if the situation with COVID changes.

Picnic/Annual meeting postponement: John announced that we will almost surely have to postpone our annual June meeting and election of officers. If so, there will be a Zoom meeting on the fourth Monday of the month of June where we will be able to vote for officers. He will communicate with Ben Stetson so that Ben can get his deposit back for the park in Sunnyvale.

List of accomplishments ("brag list"): John asked for people to send him their accomplishments from last year; these go on the website. Examples: any work for our endorsed candidates, for the California Clean Money Campaign, working at fundraisers, phoning, walking precincts, voter registration, etc.

Nominating committee: John asked for people to serve on a nominating committee for next year's officers. This would involve contacting current officers to see if they are running again for the same or another office and recruit people for any office that needs to be filled. People running for office themselves of course cannot serve. If you can volunteer to serve on the committee, please contact John.

Call for nominees, to be addressed to the committee, outside the meeting: John requested that the call for nominees be done outside the regular meetings.

Larry Klein, mayor of Sunnyvale, virtual office hours videos: Larry reported that he has been doing updates on happenings at the city, county, and state level on Friday mornings. These include information about resources available during the pandemic and other news. You can access the videos at:

<https://www.facebook.com/pg/larryforcouncil/videos>. You don't have to be on Facebook to do this.

Donation: Herb Engstrom reported that he and his wife Mary have decided to donate their stimulus money (\$2400) to four Democratic candidates that they want to support: John Hickenlooper and Cal Cunningham running for the US Senate and Gil Cisneros and Christy Smith running for California House districts.

OLD BUSINESS

Candidates and initiatives: Mary Gill gave an update on the Democratic Volunteer Center. Candidates we are encouraged to support include Senate candidates Mark Kelly (Arizona), Sara Gideon (Maine), Steve Bullock (Montana), and Cal Cunningham (North Carolina) and House candidates TJ Cox and Christy Smith. Christy Smith needs help to win against Republican Mike Garcia on May 12 in the CA-25 special election. Phone bank training and opportunities to phone for these candidates (while technical help is standing by to assist you) are provided; see the calendar for these and other listings at demvolctr.org/events. If you click on "ways to volunteer from home" at the events page, there is information about the many opportunities to text, write postcards, or write letters from home.

Good government: Nancy Neff said that SB 636, the Ballot DISCLOSE Act, has an uncertain future now since everything is changing and legislators may have a limit of only five bills, they may not be physically present in Sacramento, etc.

Economic justice: No report

Environment: Amy Wright reported on the Wildlife Conservation Network's virtual spring conference, which had an effective expo: <https://wildnet.org/events/>. She said perhaps more people will be able to continue working from home and will travel less as a result of the pandemic.

Health care: Covered earlier

Social justice: No report

Education: Herb Engstrom said that the pandemic is bringing out the inequalities in education, which have been a problem for so long; early childhood education could do a lot to break the cycle of poverty and also create jobs. Elizabeth Beheler brought up the issue of parents struggling to home school their children and the decision of the Palo Alto district to grade on a pass-fail basis this semester. Some parents object because they want

their children to have letter grades for college entrance GPAs, but Elizabeth pointed out that some of the families have many more resources and time than others. Amy agreed and said that inequality is a problem at all levels even in our area.

Political outreach: Emy Thurber noted that the county party has reached out to the Biden campaign with encouraging results; they appear to be interested in working with local groups.

Club membership: No report

Announcements

❖ Mimi Spreadbury reported that Silicon Valley and US Youth Climate Strike will have a webinar on April 29 from noon to 1:00 p.m. with Amah Mutsun Tribal Youth leading the teach-in.

<https://www.facebook.com/events/3110982388980915/>

❖ Karen Porter announced that Adam Schiff will be speaking to the Commonwealth Club on April 29 from 12:00 to 1:00. If interested, you need to pre-register:

<https://www.commonwealthclub.org/events/2020-04-29/rep-adam-schiff-what-america-missed-about-covid-19>

❖ Larry Klein announced that if anyone needs a face mask they can contact him and he can help. Also, Sunnyvale Community Services is having a fundraiser to help those who need food or services. There is a match of up to \$100,000 for each individual donation up to \$250 by Sunnyvale residents: <https://svcommunityservices.org/donate-online-2/>

Adjournment: At 8:31 p.m. Ralph Wheeler moved that we adjourn the meeting, Karen Porter seconded the motion, and the meeting was adjourned.

Minutes submitted by Mary Gill