



**Minutes of the Dean Democratic Club of Silicon Valley Organizational Meeting**  
May 25, 2020

**Next working meetings** (by Zoom unless things change): June 22 (election of officers), July 25, August 22, September 28

**Next DFA Link program meeting:** August 8 (ballot presentations)

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

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

**Approval of minutes:** Gerry Hunt moved that we approve the April minutes, Marcene Van Dierendonck seconded the motion, and it passed with no dissension.

**Treasurer's report:** Amy Wright reported that we have \$4131 in the bank: \$294 in the state and \$3837 in the federal account.

**NEW BUSINESS**

**All Clubs Picnic sponsorship (provisional):** John suggested that since this event may not happen because of the pandemic, we make a provisional cosponsorship. Gerry Hunt moved that if the event does take place we cosponsor and contribute up to \$100. Ralph seconded the motion, and it passed with 9 yes votes.

**Ballot initiative DFA link assignments, preliminary:** John explained our procedure for making ballot initiative endorsements. He had sent out "Meeting Notes" with a link to the Secretary of State's website with the five ballot measures that have qualified and the five that are likely to qualify: <https://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/ballot-measures/initiative-and-referendum-status/>

He asked that club members choose a ballot measure to present at the August 8 meeting and email him with their choice (only one measure per club member). He will send all presenters a template of 16 slides to fill out and use while making the presentations. We will take a straw poll after the presentations, as we usually do, and then vote on endorsements at the following meeting.

**Endorsement interviews schedule, preview:** John pointed out that our endorsements for Ann Ravel (State Senate, District 15), Otto Lee (County Board of Supervisors, District 3), David Cohen (San Jose City Council, District 4), and Anna Eshoo (US Congress, District 18) will be carried over since they all made the top two. Sergio Jimenez (San Jose City Council, District 2) won outright. Our endorsement for Anne Kepner (State Assembly District 25) was not carried over, and Alex Lee has requested our endorsement in that race. Similarly, our dual endorsement for Sally Lieber and Shelly Masur (State Senate 13) will not carry over. In order for the committee to endorse a candidate in a race, a Dean Club member has to request the endorsement (in addition to the request from the candidate). The committee consists of John and Barbara Comiskey, Jackie Wheeler, Gerry Hunt, and Emilie Gatfield. If you would like to be taken off the committee or join the committee, please let John know. He noted that an odd number of members is preferable.

**Nominating committee report:** Marcene Van Dierendonck reported that the following club members will run for office this year: John Comiskey, Emilie Gatfield (co-chairs), Amy Wright (treasurer), Gerry Hunt (corresponding secretary), Mary Gill (recording secretary), Karen Porter and Jackie Wheeler (members at large).

**Call for nominees, to be addressed to the committee, outside the meeting:** Marcene noted that other people can run for office in addition to the above. Please contact her if you are interested in running. We will vote at the June 22 meeting.

**Virtual event for TJ Cox with Eric Swalwell, May 30:** Mary reported that there will be a virtual event for TJ at 4:00 p.m. on May 30. TJ is in one of the toughest House races in the country and needs our support. She noted that Jackie Wheeler has worked very hard organizing this event, and Emy Thurber also. Marcene will send an updated invitation out to the larger list soon. Meanwhile, most club members have received the earlier invitation. The Dean Club was the first to cosponsor.

**Presidential endorsement:** Ralph Wheeler showed a map of Joe Biden's strategy to get to 270 electoral votes and said that time is of the essence; we should get involved as soon as possible. The Biden campaign wants to work with state and county party organizations. Ralph moved that we endorse Joe Biden for President, Emy Thurber seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

**CADEM bounty program suspension:** John reported that we will no longer be receiving bounty money for voter registration; the program has been suspended since in-person voter reg is not happening because of COVID-19. Efforts are being made to get people to register, check their registration, etc. in other ways. John talked about organizations like Sister District and Swing Left and their work as well as other efforts in coordination with the county party, which is ongoing even though the office is closed. There are many volunteer opportunities on the website at [sccdp.org](http://sccdp.org).

**OLD BUSINESS**

**Candidates and initiatives:** Mary Gill reported that the Democratic Volunteer Center is now actively supporting Joe Biden and continuing to support Senate candidates Mark Kelly (Arizona), Sara Gideon (Maine), Steve Bullock (Montana), and Cal Cunningham (North Carolina) plus House candidate TJ Cox. For opportunities to phone (with technical help), text, or write letters/postcards, see [demvolctr.org/events](http://demvolctr.org/events) and click on "ways to volunteer from home." If you are interested in texting, the DVC puts out weekly information on organizations that have active texting campaigns.

**Good government:** Nancy Neff said that Trent Lange has been communicating with state legislators about bills the California Clean Money Campaign will be working on, but it may be a couple of months before there is any action to take.

**Economic justice:** Lucas Ramirez said that the state moratorium on evictions will expire at the end of the month and asked that we contact our local representatives (county, city) to ask for an extension. Mountain View, where Lucas is on the city council, is among the cities considering this issue. He also mentioned that food shortages have become a huge problem and urged people to donate to their local food banks or organizations.

**Environment:** Amy Wright inquired about candidates seeking our endorsement: could they be asked whether they are taking money from fossil fuel companies and could this be a factor in club endorsement? John replied that the endorsement committee itself can make that decision; the club does not have to vote on it. He will send out the questionnaire they are using. Mimi Spreadbury noted that a letter can be signed online at [nofossilfuelmoney.org](http://nofossilfuelmoney.org); Dave Cortese signed a written pledge and gave it to her.

**Health care:** Gerry Hunt reported that Bernie Sanders and Pramila Jayapal have introduced a bill to require Medicare and Medical/Medicaid to reimburse people for COVID testing. He will send John information for possible club endorsement.

**Social justice:** Jackie Wheeler has been looking into the Equal Rights Amendment and its current status.

**Education:** No report.

**Political outreach:** Lucas Ramirez announced that Josh Becker requested the Dean Club endorsement for state senate; Emy Thurber will make a formal request to the endorsement committee. John said that in June there will be an important meeting for people in the county who want to run for office or work for candidates. Invitations will go out to the county's list of about 3000 people. This will be for local offices such as school boards, city councils, and the water district. There are numerous Republicans or NPPs in office at the local level, and the party wants to encourage more Democrats to run.

**Club membership:** Amy Wright reported that there have been no new members this month.

## **Announcements**

❖ Jackie announced that Close the Gap is having a virtual event on Thursday, May 28, at 7:00 p.m. featuring Senator Tammy Baldwin and Congresswoman Lauren Underwood discussing the importance of recruiting women to run for office, among other things. To RSVP, go to [https://secure.everyaction.com/kaaW10Zmj0K5jlg8\\_X\\_oWQ2](https://secure.everyaction.com/kaaW10Zmj0K5jlg8_X_oWQ2)

❖ John made a request for people to donate to the county Democratic party, since the annual fundraiser/dinner will probably not be held due to COVID-19. He asked us to consider giving monthly if possible or giving half of what individuals usually would have contributed (e.g., around \$60) for the dinner ticket.

❖ Jackie said that the Century Club provides about \$20,000 a year for the county party budget and is an easy way to give. They have informative ongoing virtual events every month. She encouraged people to join them. Emy said that the next speaker will be Zoe Lofgren on June 19: <https://www.demcenturyclub.org>. Contact Jackie with questions or for more information.: [jackiewheeler217@gmail.com](mailto:jackiewheeler217@gmail.com).

**Adjournment:** At 8:29 p.m. Ralph Wheeler moved that we adjourn the meeting, Amy Wright seconded the motion, and the meeting was adjourned.

Minutes submitted by Mary Gill