



Minutes of the Dean Democratic Club of Silicon Valley Regular Meeting
August 23, 2021

Next regular meetings: September 27, October 25, November 22

Annual holiday party and goals brainstorming: December 13

Introductions: John Comiskey called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m. Following that, people introduced themselves and made statements about their recent political involvement.

Adoption of agenda: After two additions, Gerry Hunt moved that we adopt the agenda and Amy Wright seconded the motion, which passed with no dissension.

Approval of minutes: John complimented Karen Porter on her excellent work preparing last month's minutes. Mary Gill moved that we approve the July minutes, Emilie Gatfield seconded the motion, and it passed with no dissension.

Treasurer's report: Amy Wright reported that the club has \$185 in the state and \$2734 in the federal account for a total of \$2919. The figure will surpass \$3000 soon because a \$100 ActBlue donation is being processed.

NEW BUSINESS

All Clubs Picnic August 28: John reported that the event will be from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at Emma Prusch Park in San Jose. Hamburgers and hot dogs will be served (free to Dean Club members who attend). Many elected officers and candidates will be present, so this is a great opportunity to connect with them. John will set up the club booth and is hoping others will attend and give him an occasional break.

Restore Democracy endorsement form: John had sent out a form to endorse the Resolution Endorsing a Constitutional Amendment to Diminish the Influence of Money in Politics. This resolution was discussed at our previous meeting and there was support for it, but there were also some concerns about specific wording. John started by saying that this is a long-term effort and any support we can give to people working on getting money out of politics would be useful. The language used is not final; it will be rewritten by someone in Congress ultimately. Emilie Gatfield moved that we endorse the resolution, and Gerry Hunt seconded the motion. However, Alice Smith voiced strong opposition, saying that this measure was too vague, not constitutional. Rob Means shared his screen and showed a chart comparing this resolution to the Move to Amend (MTA) one, which the Dean Club has supported strongly from the days of petition gathering. MTA is now HJR 48, which Pramila Jayapal is carrying in Congress. He pointed out

areas where MTA had more specific language; also, MTA had a section calling for the elimination of “corporate rights” (noting that these are privileges, not rights). He pointed out that there is nothing about public disclosure of money in the resolution under consideration. When a vote was taken, the motion failed 6 to 2 with several abstentions.

Jerry McNerney event October 3, 1:00 p.m.: Mary Gill and others who attended a planning meeting reported on this club-sponsored event. The Dean Club has a long tradition of sponsoring events for Jerry, starting when he first announced he was running for Congress years ago. Jerry is unsure about whether the new district lines will make his race tougher next year; his district is based in Stockton and does not have a lot of wealthy donors. Also, he is sure to have one or more very serious Republican contenders with major financial backing, so he does need to fundraise. The event will start at 1:00 p.m. and be on Zoom. John will be the master of ceremonies. The team has been in touch with Katie Porter and she may be able to speak, but details have not been worked out quite yet. The campaign is looking for other groups to cosponsor.

VoterPAC fundraiser with Dolores Huerta September 16, 5:00 p.m.: Mary reported that Norberto Gonzalez, who most of us know from work for CA-21, is now on board as executive director of VoterPAC (voter outreach to help win elections in the area that is now CA-21, 22 and 23). Norberto has identified key people in various organizations already working in the valley and is going to help them with voter reg programs by providing training for volunteers and money for expenses (e.g., rental fees for booths at fairs or markets, food for volunteer workers, etc.). The groups themselves will take responsibility for getting a specified number of registrations using volunteers. In addition, VoterPAC is working on getting people in the valley to change their registrations from NPP to Dem, organizing canvasses, and helping people get info on food banks/food discount programs/free Wi-Fi and so on. In support of this work, Dolores Huerta will speak at a fundraiser on September 16 at 5:00 p.m. There will be other speakers as well, and TJ Cox will moderate. Jackie Wheeler moved that we cosponsor, Emilie Gatfield seconded the motion, and it passed with no dissension.

DVC event with Larry Diamond, September 19, 4:00 p.m.: Mary reported that the DVC is presenting a talk by Professor Larry Diamond of Stanford University September 19 at 4:00 p.m. on Zoom, no charge. Professor Diamond’s research focuses on democratic trends and conditions around the world and on policies to defend democracy, both abroad and here at home. With the attacks on our right to vote here in the US and all the things happening now around the world, this is sure to be an interesting and informative event.

Recall volunteer opportunities at action.sccdp.org: John recommended consulting the preceding link at the county party website to find ways to volunteer against the recall. Currently there is phoning with Kings County Dems to voters both here and in Kings County on Wednesday evenings and Sunday afternoons. There is phoning to NPP voters in Kern and King Counties Saturday afternoon and Tuesday evening. [There are also opportunities at other times with the Democratic Volunteer Center: demvolctr.org.] You can phone from home using Mobilize. There are door hangers available now, and more

will be produced. You can walk in your own neighborhood as a neighborhood captain. Mary suggested that people who canvass knock on doors (not just leave the door hangers) and ask people to encourage their friends and family to vote; these are Democrats and are usually friendly. Texting has been good for contacting young people in particular and for getting specific information to voters (e.g., deadlines for registration, polling locations). John pointed out that there are also opportunities to work at tables registering voters in various places in the county and that volunteers are needed to work at the Moorpark office.

Pre-Endorsement Conference status: John had previously explained that Pre-Endorsement Conferences are conducted in each Assembly District statewide to generate the consent calendar that is presented at the Democratic Convention. Each recognized Democratic club is entitled to 1 vote for every 20 members per Assembly District. He reported that we managed to increase our membership substantially in recent weeks. Thanks to Nancy Neff and Alice Smith for calling members or former members, Ben Shapero for emailing people and updating the files, and John for finding additional household members, we now have 88 members. There are 62 in AD 24 and 24 in AD 28, which gives us three votes in AD 24 and one in AD 2.

In-person meetings: John noted that we will probably keep meeting on Zoom through November and reassess the situation after that. Jackie said that if it is possible to have the December 13 meeting at their home, they would be happy to host but must have a rule that only vaccinated people can attend.

SCCDP dinner September 17: John reported that the county Fundraiser and Victory Dinner will be at the Hayes Mansion, 200 Edenvale Avenue, San Jose, at 7:00 with a reception at 5:30. It will be outdoors following health guidelines. He urged people to sign up at and, if applicable, mark Dean Club table under special requests:
<https://act.myngp.com/Forms/6670754703977876224>

National Voter Corp event in Palo Alto, August 28, 10:00 a.m.: Alice Smith reported that National Voter Corps is sponsoring a rally at the Palo Alto City Hall at 10:00 a.m. Saturday, August 28, the 58th anniversary of Martin Luther King Jr.'s March on Washington. It's part of the nationwide March On for Voting Rights:
<https://marchonforvotingrights.org/>. Our local elected officials have been invited to speak. If you have a microphone that can reach more than 100 people that you could loan them, it would be appreciated; contact Alice at alice.smith@gmail.com. You can sign up at: <https://actionnetwork.org/events/palo-alto-rally-for-voting-rights-live-virtual>. Please bring a sign (see ideas and other information in the link). There will be a separate Zoom for those who can't attend in person; at 10:00 on Saturday the 28th, click on:
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81273472237?pwd=UnM5YU5XYi9EVmRtcU1Xck1zWnRlZz09>

Also, Alice recommends a 7-slide refresher on voter suppression:
<https://nationalvoter corps.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/Pass-SB1-June21-.pdf>

HR 2590 and central committee vote: Karen Porter asked if we could discuss the central committee vote on HR 2590, Defending the Human Rights of Palestinian Families Living Under Israeli Military Occupation. John explained the run-up to the vote and what happened at the meeting. Oftentimes people bring resolutions to the central committee meetings with very little advance notice. In this case, many young people in particular were in favor, supporting the Palestinians. Gerry Hunt, our representative, voted no. The measure passed 24-22 but has not advanced in Congress. Carolyn Curtis noted that this is a very divisive issue that has destroyed Dem clubs in the past. Karen thanked John and Gerry for the information.

Polling/outreach on the recall: Tom Shaw asked that we discuss polling on the recall and where it's best to put our efforts. John said that it's close, with the No vote slightly ahead. Polling models are not as good as they used to be—the models are no longer reliable (people don't answer their phones, etc.). Turnout is predicted to be low. However, there are five counties in California with very big majorities of Dems: LA County and four counties in the Bay Area, including ours, so we do not have to travel to other areas. We have defeated propositions like the one in 2018 to repeal the increase in the gas tax with large turnouts in these counties. There are predictions now that no one on the list for Question 2 will beat Larry Elder, that 37 candidates will get less than 3% of the vote. Amy Wright mentioned negative publicity about Newsom regarding the French Laundry and other things, which is disconcerting. We should talk to people about how much money the recall is costing the taxpayers. The question came up about whether we should vote for a Dem after voting no as a back-up plan. The campaign and state party have been very clear from the beginning that you should leave Question 2 blank, that our candidate is Governor Newsom.

OLD BUSINESS

Good government: Nancy Neff reported on SB 752, the Disclosure Clarity Act, which will address on-line political ads. The bill passed the Senate 35-0 and the Assembly Elections Committee 6-1 and will be heard in the Assembly Appropriations Committee on Thursday. However, the SEIU, CSEA, and CFT have come out against the bill, in part because they oppose reducing the threshold for required disclosure from \$50,000. Trent is working with them and others trying to resolve the issues. Nancy and others are calling constituents of Assembly members Lorena Gonzalez' and Anthony Rendon's districts using CallFire. If you have CallFire experience, they would really appreciate help, since the bill's future is now uncertain. Contact Nancy at: nrneff@sonic.net

Candidates and initiatives: Covered earlier.

Environment: Amy Wright noted that Green Foothills is supporting the protection of Juristac (Amah Mutsun sacred lands). In addition to other reasons—cultural and ecological importance--they say that it provides needed wildlife corridors.

Social justice: Mimi Spreadbury submitted a link to the *LA Times* article “Keep Bad Cops Out of Town”: <https://www.latimes.com/opinion/story/2021-08-03/decertify-bad-cops>

Political outreach: Covered earlier.

Economic justice: John mentioned that the two infrastructure bills now in Congress would have a huge impact on our economy and urged people to keep up the pressure on our senators.

Health care: Gerry Hunt noted that AB 1400 (Guaranteed Health Care for All) is currently stalled in the Assembly. However, they are having a “honk and wave” Sunday, September 5, at noon at Campbell and Winchester Avenue in San Jose in support of the bill.

Education: No report.

Club membership: Covered earlier.

Announcement

❖ Lucas Ramirez reported that the San Jose Charter Commission is discussing some important changes to city government, such as a strong mayor system, an increase of council members to 17, and rank-choice voting. He suggested that we connect with Huy Tran or someone else who is attending the meetings and ask them to speak to us about what is happening.

Adjournment: At 9:01 Gerry Hunt moved that we adjourn, Jackie Wheeler seconded the motion, and the meeting was adjourned.

Minutes submitted by Mary Gill