

46th Democratic District Meeting Minutes
Olympic View Elementary School, Seattle, WA
October 19, 2006

Chair Scott White called the meeting to order at 7:37 and welcomed new attendees, newly-elected PCOs, and other members. The agenda was approved as presented. White introduced his wife Alison and his five-month-old son Barrett.

White commented that the final phase of the general election is under way, and he encouraged everyone to make every effort by volunteering time or money to ensure that Democrats throughout the State are elected on November 7. He reported that a holiday party to celebrate the election and to mark the end of a successful year will be held on Sunday afternoon, December 10. Details will be announced later.

Treasurer's Report. Deputy Treasurer Donna Boysen reported that during the past month \$948 had been taken in, while \$3,537 was paid out.

Membership Report. Chair Betty Means reported that October marked the kick-off of the 2007 membership drive. Dues paid during the remainder of the year will be counted as membership for 2007. She stressed the need to begin organizing in 2007 for events coming up in 2008. Next year will see races for the Port Commission, five City Council positions, four School Board positions, and King County Assessor.

PCO Report. Chair Janet Miller reported that all newly-elected PCOs should have received an invitation to open a V-mate PCO account, which is a new and improved on-line voter file. From this account, PCOs will be able to print walking lists, update voter files, and track voters in each precinct. Janet suggested that PCOs who are having trouble with V-mate or who are interested in additional information should contact her, either after the meeting or by e-mail or phone.

King County Democratic Central Committee (KCDCC) Report. KCDCC Delegate Dean Fournier reported business at the October 24 meeting at the King County Labor Temple would include updating the KCDCC endorsements.

Chair White introduced elected officials present: State Senator Ken Jacobsen, City Council Member Peter Steinbrueck, County Council Member Bob Ferguson, and Superior Court Judge Theresa Doyle, who is a daughter of 46th member Ed Doyle.

City Council Member (and 46th District member) Steinbrueck gave an update on City Council activities. He reminded members that he and the 46th District had

endorsed the 11 City charter amendments on the general election ballot. Steinbrueck discussed what he sees as a critical Seattle Police Department (SPD) staffing shortage, citing that Seattle has fewer police officers per thousand residents than similar-sized cities. He is recommending that 50 officers per year be added for at least the next five years for parity with other large cities and to support recent population growth. In addition, he wants to see more accountability for SPD in increased performance, especially improved response for all crime incidents and improved clearance rates. Although there is money available, adding additional officers is not presently a priority in the City budget currently being developed. He urged 46th District members who want to give input on the issue to call City Council members or to attend the City Council's public hearing scheduled for Monday, October 30, at 5:30 p.m. at City Hall.

Resolution. A motion by Senator Jacobsen to suspend the rules was seconded and passed. He then moved a resolution *opposing the replacement of the existing Alaskan Way Viaduct with an even larger elevated structure.* (complete text available at www.46dems.com)

The motion was seconded, and Senator Jacobsen spoke for the motion, commenting that the first viaduct was a mistake and that that mistake should not be repeated. No speakers spoke against the motion.

A motion to postpone voting on the resolution until January was moved and seconded. The discussion that followed included opinions that the District would be moving too quickly on the main motion and that adequate information was not available at this meeting. On the other side, mention was made that Governor Chris Gregoire would be making her decision by the end of the year. The motion to postpone was defeated 12-25.

A second motion was moved and seconded to postpone action on the resolution until the November meeting. That motion failed 10-28.

The original motion to oppose replacement of the viaduct then was approved 30-10.

Program. Program Chair Gerry Pollet introduced three panel members for a discussion of *Protecting the Integrity of the Judiciary*:

Ron Ward, President of the Washington State Bar in 2004, first person of color elected president in 114 years, and 2006 Washington State Trial Lawyers Association President's Award honoree, who has a strong commitment to support the right to trial by jury, equal access, and diversity in the bar and the judiciary.

Larry Shannon, Government Affairs Director for Washington State Trial Lawyers Association, often cited in news reports and who provides

succinct, informed, and newsworthy quotes in support of positions that the 46th Democrats support.

Steve Zemke, Majority Rules blog, Taxpayers for WA's Future, and 46th District member, who has been behind initiatives dealing with toxic waste cleanup, the minimum wage, the state's presidential primary, and growth management. Zemke filed six initiatives of his own on October 16; one would require initiatives demanding supermajority votes from legislative bodies for new tax increases to be approved by a supermajority vote at the ballot box.

All three speakers agreed that special interests are "buying" courts throughout the country, including Washington State's Supreme Court, and that this action has to be stopped. Citizens in Washington State have an opportunity to begin to halt this practice by voting for Susan Owens in the general election. Judge Owens has 30 years of experience, has high integrity, is independent, is dedicated to civil liberties, and is impartial. Steve Johnson, her opponent, has no judicial experience and is beholden to special interests.

Ward said an independent judiciary is a "democracy issue"—not a Democratic, not a Republican, not a Libertarian issue. If this country loses its idea of checks and balances, the country has lost what got this nation to where it is today. It's necessary to band together to stop what's happening. He urged member not to stand around waiting for others to do something. "We are the people we have been waiting for."

"Shuffling" money among different PACs conceals who is behind various campaigns, so efforts need to be made to identify hidden supporters and make that information public.

When asked what specifically can be done for the future, panelists suggested that we educate ourselves and fellow citizens on the importance of liberty, property, life/death, peace, order, and stability in the judicial system. The website votingforjudges.org is a good source of nonpartisan information. The website is expected to be multilingual by 2008.

Judge Doyle added her strong support for Judge Owens. She believes that a big majority in Owens' race would send a loud message to those trying to use special interests to influence judicial elections.

Latino Vote Project. Tania Maria Rosario, who directs the Latino Vote Project for the Washington State Party, explained the goals of the project, which strives to register, educate, and mobilize Latino voters in Washington State.

Coordinated Campaign. Aiko Akers, from the Coordinated Campaign, encouraged members to get involved in final campaign efforts, efforts that

include activities to reach infrequent voters. She mentioned that a rally for U.S. Senator Maria Cantwell with U.S. Senator Russ Feingold, Wisconsin, and other elected officials would be held October 21 at 10 a.m. at the Ravenna-Eckstein Community Center. Door-to-door canvassing will take place after the event.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:17.