

46<sup>th</sup> District Democrats General Meeting minutes  
Olympic View Elementary School, Seattle WA  
July 19, 2007

Meeting was called to order at 7:34 PM  
Scott White led the Pledge of Allegiance, and welcomed everyone.

County Council member Larry Gossett is scheduled to speak but is delayed by a hearing on use of trans fats in restaurants.

The agenda was approved by voice vote.

Scott welcomed PCO's and first time attendees. He thanked Barbara Whitt, Gerry Pollet, Betty Means and others who helped with recent events. Scott introduced our new PCO coordinator, Bernadette Laqueur. Bernadette spoke about the transition from Janet Miller who has been coordinating PCOs. Bernadette passed out a sign-up sheet for mentors who would train new PCOs and go with them canvassing their precincts.

Scott introduced Sameer Ranade who is working on the Simple Majority Campaign for school levies. The legislature passed a simple majority bill which provides that the issue now goes to the voters.

Treasurer's Report: Donna Boysen gave a brief Treasurer's report, indicating we were in a good position relative to the budget.

Membership Report: Betty Means reported that membership is up from the comparable period in the last cycle.

Richard Dyksterhuis talked about neighborhood street improvement plans. Curbs, gutters, drains, and attractive landscaping are characteristics of nicer neighborhoods, However, several neighborhoods in Northwest Seattle still don't have complete street improvements. Projects to complete city streets have bypassed the "Forgotten Neighborhoods" with 37,000 residents north of 105<sup>th</sup> St. Richard asked for help contacting city officials.

Larry Gossett arrived and was introduced. Larry expressed appreciation to us for making time for him to speak. The Council voted 12-1 to ban trans fats. Chain restaurants will be required to label food for health-conscious consumers. King County will be the second jurisdiction to ban trans fats. Larry said the New York City legislation is voluntary - it only applies to restaurants that agree to comply. Larry wasn't sure how that would work exactly. Our legislation should be more meaningful and improve residents' health.

Larry spoke about the Vote-by-mail process. The goal is the highest possible voter turnout with excellent security. Larry explained his district's boundaries and asked for voters' support.

Q: All-mail voting must still have at least ten regional walk-in voting centers. Ballots sometimes arrive late or get misdirected when people move.

A: Drop-boxes and walk-in facilities will be in libraries and other handicapped-accessible locations. Larry is not sure how many locations will be used.

Q: Why have walk-in locations for an all-mail vote?

A: People want them. Provisional ballots can be handled better in regional sites.

Q: Whose idea was it to vote by mail?

A: Dwight Pelz was an advocate of this. Studies show vote-by-mail has higher turnout.

Q: How long after the election will results be ready?

A: That is the centerpiece of the conflict with this process. To count rapidly, we will need more tabulating machines. Votes can be queued up as the ballots come in. Then they can be counted very quickly. As later ballots come in, they can be counted and totals updated.

King County Report: We will need 4000 volunteers to staff voting locations. Sarajane Siegfriedt solicited volunteers. The picnic will be Saturday July 28 at Woodland Park. Food, politics, and fun.

Chad Lupkes announced a neighborhood cleanup at 9 AM on July 28. Chad wants to meet at Roosevelt and Northgate, then clean up to 95<sup>th</sup>.

The King County Democratic Central Committee passed a resolution calling for thorough testing of any new and used voting and tabulating equipment. Chad has a list of candidates up for endorsement.

Scott introduced Alec Fiskien who is endorsed by the 46<sup>th</sup> District for Port Commissioner.

Scott introduced Dwight Pelz, State Democratic Party Chair. In March, Dwight convened a meeting of LD Chairs in Ellensburg. Dwight sees caucuses as an organizing opportunity. Dwight made a "Challenge from the Chair." In 2004, Howard Dean's campaign brought in a lot of activists. Caucuses draw in lots of volunteers, but many drop out during the campaign season. Dwight wants organized, friendly, calm caucuses that make good impressions on new people.

Dwight's goal is 100,000 extra votes in the general election. His strategy is to recruit volunteers through the caucuses. Volunteers should be given specific tasks, like voter registration and voter identification. Tactics - high turnout to caucuses, well-organized caucuses integrated into the overall strategy.

Dwight characterizes LDs according to 6 categories. In this scheme, the 46<sup>th</sup> is an "urban blue" district. Dwight imagines registering every Democrat in the district. Seattle already has 80% voter turnout and 80% Democratic voters. The 46<sup>th</sup> District had 5595 voters at our 2004 caucuses. That's about 30 people per precinct. If 5 of those 30 volunteer to register voters, they could easily canvass the whole precinct using the voter file.

Q: Apartments are sometimes limited to residents only.

A: Some voters we may not reach. Ideas from the group: Get a building resident to get you in. Sometimes the manager is a Democrat who is helpful. Catch residents as they come out. Call and ask to come over. Post a notice at the mailboxes, setting up a short period to register votes in the lobby.

Q: At caucuses, people are intense about their guy, and confused about rules. Calm competent?

A: The 46<sup>th</sup> does this fairly well. Get enough space, train people at the caucuses.

Q: We need PA systems so people can hear instructions. Prior to the caucus, PCOs need to educate neighbors about how the caucus works. Caucus volunteers should not wear candidates' buttons, so everyone feels included.

Q: We need messages to use in canvassing.

#### **Resolutions:**

1) The City should enact legislation to **study re-implementation of public financing of campaigns**. Support local option in the State Legislature. Motion to consider made and seconded. **Resolution passed** by show of hands.

2) Resolution calling for a **positive direction for US foreign policy** - urge congressional delegation to promote health housing and education instead of military action. Motion to consider made and seconded. **Resolution passed** by show of hands.

3) Resolution **supporting purchase of new ballot tabulation equipment** by King County. New equipment must be **fully tested and certified before the election and a public demonstration must be made**. Equipment failing testing shall be returned to the manufacturer. Motion to consider made and seconded.

An amendment was offered to strike the entire motion and replace it with new language. Scott ruled that amendment to be out of order, since it reverses the meaning of the original motion. Scott also ruled that he would accept the proposed language as a new motion after we deal with the first motion.

In principle, both this resolution and the opposite one could pass (or fail). However, if the first motion passes, then it's unlikely that the opposite motion would pass, too. Scott said he expects one to fail and the other to pass.

Amendment proposed by Chad Lupkes so the resolution would say

Be it further resolved that the 46<sup>th</sup> District Democrats urge King County Executive and King County Council to thoroughly and completely evaluate all options for equipment that will enable all Vote-by-mail in King County in 2008 - including the use of existing equipment, new equipment or a combination therein; and

Be it further resolved that the 46<sup>th</sup> District Democrats urge the King County Executive and King County Council to require King County Elections to conduct a public demonstration of equipment, new or used, that would be utilized in the 2008 elections.

Motion to amend made and seconded.

Speaking in favor of the amendment: Chad Lupkes said that Vote-by-mail gives better turnout, which is good for Democrats. Chad Lupkes said that Vote-by-mail gives better turnout, which is good for Democrats. A thorough evaluation of the process and our equipment options is needed for Vote-by-mail. This resolution calling for such an evaluation would get us closer to all Vote-by-mail with some confidence.

Opposed to Chad's amendment: Jason Osgood understands the intent of better elections. This equipment needs to be tested before we buy it. Jason did a video with screen captures of a test. Folded mail ballots jack-knife inside the machines. Jason posted the video of the test on the Washblog web site. Jason predicts that even if the machines fail the test, the Secretary of State will waive the rules and approved flawed equipment.

For: Chad thanked Jason for his work on this issue. Chad expects that folded mail ballots will be tested.

Against: Julie Anne Kempf was superintendent of elections for 5 years. We don't need new tabulators. The new ones will fail. The old tabulators will work.

**Chad's amendment passed** with in favor 32; against 4.

New Amendment: require that the **public demonstration and testing of the equipment be completed before King County commits to purchasing new equipment**.

For: King County has many special purpose districts, with different ballots and different formats. King County has more write-in votes, too. Testing will be more difficult in King County.

Amendment passed by show of hands.

Another amendment was discussed, but no one made a motion to consider.

The **2<sup>nd</sup> amendment to the resolution passed** by show of hands.

**Motion to reconsider** made and seconded and passed by voice vote.

Motion to add "**local**" **demonstration** seconded. **Motion passed** by voice vote.

4) **Motion to suspend rules** to consider a resolution to impeach Dick Cheney, made and seconded. **Motion to suspend rules passed.**

Q: Is this urgent, for some reason?

A: Jim McDermott signed on to a bill to impeach Cheney. He needs our support promptly.

Motion **support impeaching Dick Cheney**, made and seconded.

For: Bev Marcus argued to support Dennis Kucinich's bill of impeachment for Dick Cheney. Bev says impeachment is really about supporting the Constitution rather than against Dick Cheney. Conservatives and liberals can both support impeachment in this respect.

Against: Basil Anex says this is a big gamble. George Bush could put someone worse in the Vice President's position. As long as Bush is still there, we won't gain anything by impeaching Bush.

For: Margaret Shields said impeachment would taint Bush as well as Cheney. Bush is isolated on the Iraq war, and would also be isolated on a new Vice President. Also, saving the constitution is a higher priority.

**Resolution passed** by show of hands.

Meeting adjourned at 9:45 PM

Minutes by Stan Sorscher