

46th Dems General Meeting
November 15, 2007
Olympic View Church

Javier Valdez called the meeting to order at 7:37 PM

John Webber led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Javier welcomed PCO's and first-time attendees. He also acknowledged members whose dues are paid for this year.

Election rundown. Javier talked briefly about results of the November election; good news about simple majority for school levies, and not so good news in some of the campaigns for public office.

Looking Ahead. The precinct caucuses are February 9, and we will have major races in the primary and general elections. We are identifying and reserving sites for the caucuses. PCO training will be part of the January General Meeting.

Funds Transfer. Jim McIntire has surplus funds in his account, and he asked contributors if he could transfer the remaining funds over for his campaign for State Treasurer. The 46th District Dems had contributed \$200, and the Executive Board gave permission to move that money to his State Treasurer campaign. October 31 was the deadline for making this move.

New PCO. Bernadette Laqueur introduced Jayron Finan. She spoke to the group, saying she has always been interested in politics and she looks forward to being a PCO. Jayron was seated by show of credentials.

Vote-builder. Bernadette thanked PCO's for canvassing precincts before the November elections. Training on the vote-builder computer system will be at 1 o'clock on December 2nd. Details will be posted on the 46th District web site. Bernadette will send emails when the system is put into operation.

Holiday Party. The 46th District holiday party will be Sunday, December 9 at Meadowbrook Community Center, with the exact time to be determined. Javier will send out postcard announcements.

At-large Executive Board position. Larry Smith was nominated and seconded. Mark Saporito was nominated and seconded.

Speaking for Larry Smith.

Justin Simmons said Mark is a great guy, who served several terms on the Board. Justin wants to give Larry an opportunity. Larry is very progressive, and made a special effort to clear his work schedule to attend Board meetings.

John Webber said Larry is active with his radio program and is a solid blue-collar Democratic activist.

Larry Smith spoke for himself, saying he is concerned with traffic and transportation issues. He has worked in every election cycle for many years. He was a Teamster, and is now is a member of another union. He works to bring attention to working class issues. Larry thinks Mark is a good leader, too.

Demogram. Javier announced that Barbara Whitt volunteered to work on the Demogram.

Speaking for Mark Saporito.

Betty Means spoke in favor of Mark Saporito. Mark has been active on and off the Board. Mark worked on caucuses in 2000, 2002, and 2004, and was a site coordinator. Mark volunteered at the State Party office, too.

Gerry Pollet also supports Mark as a hard worker with experience in recruiting, caucuses and working turnout. Mark was our Sergeant-at-arms for many years. Gerry thinks Mark is the roll-up-your-sleeves kind of guy we need on the Board.

Mark Saporito thanked Betty and Gerry for their kind words. He wants to do many things to help the District. He asked for support in this election.

Announcements.

Barbara Whitt said movie night will not be at the church, but will meet at her house instead - Tuesday - RSVP to her, please.

Sylvia Haven is looking for a group to take care of the 46th District banner, so we can get visibility at public events. Javier can schedule the banner, too.

Treasurer's Report. Donna Boysen reported donations for the month, expenses and the balance, which is in good shape.

At-Large election results:

Larry Smith 25

Mark Saporito 27

Candidate forum. Gerry Pollet pointed out that CNN is running the candidate debate on cable TV, tonight. In a caucus state, the system depends on activists who support candidates to turn out and elect delegates. Individuals need to get involved, so that will be the theme of the candidates' forum, tonight.

Gerry had submitted questions specific to Washington State to help guide opening statements:

- Federal funds for transit projects
- Sustainable energy
- Global nuclear energy partnership
- Water policy - conservation, allocation of water to different interests
- Nuclear waste

Ken Jacobsen - for Barack Obama

Ken is a yellow-dog Democrat, and he would vote for any Democrat in this campaign, but he thinks Obama is the best candidate. Ken once heard Obama speak at the Billy Goat tavern in Chicago. Everyone in the bar stopped and listened, and Obama was mesmerizing. At the national convention, Ken thought Obama gave the best speech. Obama worked in ghettos after college, then went to law school, and returned to the poor neighborhoods to work, turning down big job offers. Obama was against the war in Iraq from the start, and does not operate by triangulation. Obama is electable, honest, straightforward and can bring the nation together. Ken introduced the Obama state coordinator, and explained how to get involved in the campaign.

Dick Kelley - for John Edwards

Dick has been working in the Democratic Party since he was "too young to vote." This year, a lot of people will vote for a Democrat, no matter what. Dick settled on John Edwards quite early. Edwards opposes the war in Iraq, now, and he says directly that he made a mistake voting for the war powers resolution. Edwards has a plan for getting troops out of Iraq. He has a good plan for universal health care, and he's direct and honest in his policies. We can end our dependence on oil, and Edwards has a systematic program to do that. Edwards is unique among the candidates with respect to poverty. Dick heard Edwards talk to rich people about paying more taxes to deal with poverty, and the audience applauded. Edwards does not take money from PAC's and big business, and he complies with the conditions for public funding. Chad Lupkes is a local contact for getting involved in the Edwards campaign.

Ken Camp - for Bill Richardson

Ken is an active Democrat in Thurston County. Bill Richardson is Latino. He grew up in Mexico City, then went to school in Boston, before settling in New Mexico. He was in Congress for 15 years, and has held many public offices. Richardson has experience in foreign policy. He has a very aggressive withdrawal plan for Iraq. Clinton, Edwards, and Obama have longer timetables. Richardson would call for an all-Muslim UN peace-keeping force. Neighboring countries need to be involved, too. Regarding Washington State issues, Richardson wants increased funding for transit, and incentives for riders, and help for employers who encourage transit solutions. Richardson is a leader in New Mexico becoming the "clean energy state." Sierra Club says Richardson "raised the bar" on renewable energy. He opposes nuclear energy and does not want to create more nuclear waste, and does not want Hanford to be a nuclear waste dump. The Federal government should play a role in water rights, but the states have the main responsibility. Richardson was Secretary of Energy and is very familiar with nuclear waste issues. Speak to Ken if you want to become involved in the campaign.

Dr. Rebecca Wolfe - for Dennis Kucinich

Rebecca says campaigns are very expensive - front-runners need a lot of money. Esquire magazine ran a story titled "It's Kucinich Time!" Democracy is under pressure. Kucinich is running a truly grass-roots operation. She is looking for a coordinator in the 46th District. In the CNN debate, Kucinich was not getting much air time, but other candidates got much more time. He was opposed to the war in Iraq from the beginning. The UN and other countries need to be involved in the post-war reconciliation. In many polls, Kucinich is ahead of Richardson. Kucinich has strong positions on health care, Iraq and trade. Our trade policy is bad for workers in the US and in other countries. Voters need to be critical thinkers and readers.

Linda Mitchell - for Hillary Clinton

Linda lives in the 46th District. She watched Hillary Clinton for many years, and is more excited every day. She trusts Hillary, and says Hillary is in a strong position to win. Hillary has strength, intelligence and experience, and worked for better schools and stronger communities. Hillary climbed in the polls as voters get to know her better. She beats Republican candidates in head-to-head polling. She can hit the ground running after she wins. She has been a leading critic of Bush's management of the war in Iraq. She would bring the troops home, and bring create stability to the regions. She supports clean renewable energy. She has a plan for affordable health care, and will end our dependence on foreign oil. Despite attacks, she has the highest favorable numbers of all the candidates. In her Senate race, she did well upstate where Republicans are strong. Linda has sign-up sheets for volunteers.

Gerry reminded us that we had 7000 voters at the 2004 caucuses, so we hope to have a lot of activity in 2008, too.

Q&A

Q. Alternative fuels, electric cars and reduce industrial pollution?

A. Obama will support all the issues like that.

A. Clinton has a comprehensive energy plan (on the web site). Three main pieces are to reduce green house gases, reduce dependence on oil, shift to green economy.

Linda Mitchell talked a little about the State-specific questions. Local transit programs are important in solving the oil problems. Land-use policies should be linked to Federal funding of transit. Alternative energy accounts for 2 or 3% and hydro supplies a little more. We need to get to 20% renewables. Capital investment in rural areas can increase renewable energy production. Nuclear power has many problems, and should not get more subsidies. The Nuclear Regulatory Commission should be strengthened.

A. First, Richardson will not have secret meetings in the White House. (-) New electric vehicles, and better fuel efficiency, build a large renewable portfolio and take other steps.

A. Edwards supports dramatic increase in CAFÉ standards. In his first term, he wants to raise the average to 40 miles per gallon. He would give tax credits for purchase and development of electric vehicles. We should break the circular relationship between oil industry and automobile industry. Our auto industry should convert to electric and alternative fuel vehicles. This will create new industrial jobs in our economy.

A. Kucinich has a "works green" plan to connect jobs to new environmental policy. Ethanol will not be a viable solution. The number one concern of young people is global climate change. Kucinich will keep clean jobs in America to clean up the environment and the planet.

Q. Stronger gun control laws?

A. Not sure, but Kucinich is the "peace candidate." The Department of Peace is about building peace at home as well as abroad.

A. Edwards supports the ban on assault weapons, and closing the gun-show loophole. He supports the DC gun control ordinance.

A. Richardson is a member of the NRA, and is a hunter and sportsman. Criminals should not have guns. Richardson would keep guns out of the hands of the mentally ill.

A. Not sure about Clinton's position.

A. Not sure about Obama, either.

Q. Return to Pre-Bush understanding of Presidential powers?

A. Edwards - yes

A. Obama - yes

A. Richardson -yes

A. Kucinich has a bill to impeach Dick Cheney, which is in Judiciary Committee, now. New co-sponsors are signing on.

Q. Promote peace in the world?

A. Clinton has a three-point plan - troops home, stabilize region, diplomatic initiative. She has extensive relationships with world leaders.

A. Richardson is a seasoned diplomat. He would talk to any world leaders. We need to talk - not isolate, and he does not believe in pre-emptive war.

A. Edwards says security has two aspects. One is to be the strongest, and another aspect is to not have enemies. Our policies foster anti-American sentiment. Our foreign policy priorities should focus on China.

A. Obama says being a bully and isolating countries doesn't do any good in the long run.

Q. US has financial challenges. Pay off debt, balance budget.

A. Kucinich would take 15% out of military budget, and cancel WTO and trade agreements. Elizabeth, Kucinich's wife is an economist.

A. Richardson says Social Security budget complicates our fiscal problems. He would raise the cap on income subject to Social Security tax. We could tax non-earned income. Pay as you go financing would help.

A. Edwards says we should stop the war in Iraq, which would leave money for education, health care and climate change.

A. Obama told businessmen we will need to raise tax on the wealthy. Sunset the Bush tax breaks; raise the

cap on Social Security tax; write a budget that balances.

Resolution on Condominium conversion

Sarajane Siegfriedt introduced the resolution, which ran in the Demogram. Many housing units are being converted to condominiums. People in low-cost housing don't have the resources to stay when their unit is converted.

No speakers against.

Resolution passed by a show of credentials.

Jim McIntire spoke, asking the group how many days before Bush leaves? 430. And 344 days to the election. Jim thanked everyone for our support over the years, and asked for help in his race for State Treasurer. Volunteers will make a difference. The 46th District is walkable, in a limited sense, but a state campaign takes a lot more resources.

Good of the Order. John Webber mentioned the State Chair's Challenge and asked the Presidential campaigns to help out with that effort for voter registration.

Meeting adjourned at 9:15

Minutes by Stan Sorscher