

46th Dems General Meeting
Olympic View Elementary School
May 15, 2008

Javier Valdez called the meeting to order at 7:35 PM

Ivan Weiss led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Javier announced that the 7th CD convention would be this weekend at North Seattle Community College. Javier went through the basic rules for the endorsement meeting, June 19th.

Bernadette Laqueur introduced Janice Jackson-Haley in precinct 2333, Joe Balanoff in precinct 2349. Both were elected by voice vote. Bernadette encouraged PCOs to re-file for re-election as PCOs. Kathryn Lewis encouraged PCOs to pick up packets with walking lists and voter registration materials.

Javier welcomed first-time attendees.

Javier introduced Dean Fournier and Betty Means who organized the candidates' forum. Betty introduced other volunteers who set up the forum.

Candidates' Forum

Dean Fournier asked the candidates a series of questions.

Phyllis Kenney

Why or why not was it a good idea to give Boeing a \$3B tax break to build the Dreamliner, given that Boeing is outsourcing much of its construction?

Phyllis: Actually the Finance committee handled this subject, and Phyllis is not on that committee. At the time, there was a lot of discussion on whether this tax incentive was a good idea. Even with outsourcing, much work on the Dreamliner is done here. Work should be brought back anyway.

What position would you take on tax breaks for very large and profitable corporations in the future and how will you make your decision?

Phyllis: We should have good jobs with family wages and good benefits. We should scrutinize these tax breaks.

What are you going to do to help our high school graduates get a post-secondary education?

Phyllis: Studies show that only 20% of our workforce needs a college degree. We should work on apprenticeship programs. We also need 2-year degrees and certified programs.

Can you tell us whether any areas of King County are eligible for Community Development funds, and what might that look like?

Phyllis: The bill last session allocated about \$23 million, with some in King County - the Boys Club, Girls Club, the new Lake City food bank, and one in

West Seattle as well. This session, we created community funds for non-profits serving those in need.

Closing statement:

The 46th District is great. Phyllis has served on several committees, and she has seen many changes; being in the minority, then having a split house. It's much better being in the majority! She got there with our help. We all work hard to elect Democrats. We all care about our communities and want to make them safe and good places to work.

Gerry Pollet and Scott White

What distinguishes you from your opponent? Why are you the best candidate?

Scott White: Gerry and Scott have very similar values and similar positions on issues. Scott points to his experience in the District and as an activist. Scott can build relationship to get results. That's what matters.

Gerry Pollet: Scott and Gerry have known each other for a long time. Many activists came before them in this District. One candidate (Gerry) has written laws and organized across the state and helped write the Growth Management Act. It's a rare opportunity for the whole state.

Consider a beneficial project that adversely affects a portion of the district. Some residents are bitterly opposed and threaten elected officials. You believe they are guilty of NIMBY-ism. What do you do?

Gerry referred to a "tent city" situation, opposed by some residents. If some residents threatened Gerry over an issue, he would propose a community exercise to discuss and resolve the issue. Failing that, he would move forward with the project.

Scott feels his job is to represent the citizens. If the opponents have a fair chance to have their voices heard, then the project should go forward. Scott's job is to reach out to make sure the opponents are heard fairly. We should avoid a tyranny of the majority. We should look for mitigation opportunities.

Suppose that the speaker and other leaders urge you to support bad policy. You risk losing a committee assignment or influence. What do you do?

Scott; My job is to work for the District, not the leadership in Olympia. That said, he needs influence and standing to solve problems. The key is to act openly and with dignity, so everyone knows where he is coming from.

Gerry: We should do better than to give in to special interests. We should go to voters and appeal to the public interest. Gerry was told once to back off, to protect campaign contributions from businesses. Gerry stood up and went to citizen groups to beat the special interests.

Financing a state budget deficit?

Gerry: Gerry was an economist before becoming a lawyer. He has experience with budgets for large projects. At the State level, we have a very large budget, with some reserves. We need to beat back Republicans who want to cut back

services. We can look at tax exemptions that do not create jobs. We don't need a legislative review. We can condition tax exemptions on creating jobs.

Scott: Scott has negotiated budgets and worked on budgets at King County. He has made difficult budget cuts, worked with colleagues to figure out what you can afford and not afford. In the legislature, you have to work with your colleagues to find solutions. You should hold the line on services for children and those programs that need it most. You can be a voice and an advocate.

Improve K-12 education given budget constraints?

Scott: Scott's children will use public schools for many years to come, and he is very concerned with the future of education in this state. The issues that keep coming up are fully funding education, hiring more teachers, increasing salaries, and getting rid of the WASL. One size does not fit all. Our children need safe and efficient transportation to schools. State education issues are different from School Board issues. School Boards deal with operations. The State works with funding.

Gerry: Gerry lives and breathes educational issues. He knows the reality in the classrooms. Gerry works with other parents, faced with a shortfall of 1000 seats in the schools. Developers should pay impact fees. We need to fund full day kindergarten. We should plan from pre-K through 16, as they say. All of it is under-funded. We can't pit one part against another. The first thing we should do is pay for foster children, fully pay for education, then build roads. It is not OK to have 30 kinds in a classroom.

Health care reform?

Gerry: Let's break the logjam over health care. The insurance industry and pharmaceutical industries have a grip over the legislature. Access to quality health care should be a fundamental right - that should be in the State constitution. The state health care commission will make a recommendation. They are looking at 5 plans. The Healthy Wisconsin plan is attractive, for instance.

Scott: Seattle had an initiative about rights to health care, but it did not result in health care. Education is a right in the law, but that does not provide adequate funding. John Conyers' national legislation looks good, and Scott would support a state resolution in favor of that plan., Small businesses can buy into a pool to provide coverage for their employees. The Healthy Wisconsin plan is one of the 5 being studied. Scott has been working on this issue since the 1990s.

Gerry's questions for Scott: Will you agree to limit spending to \$100,000 in this race, and not take donations from businesses with items before the legislature?

Scott: No. Scott volunteered in the campaign for public financing, and Scott is endorsed by Craig Salins, who heads the public financing initiative. Craig encouraged Scott to decline a spending cap until the clean elections system is in place. Scott will work to push that system through the legislature.

Gerry's rebuttal: You can't talk the talk, then not walk the walk. Gerry will not take

donations from businesses that have business before the legislature.

Scott's questions: The environmental community has never taken the Hanford issue as a top priority. How will you balance your attention among all the issues before the legislature?

Gerry: Every major environmental organization lobbied for his bill in the legislature this year. Industry opposition is formidable. Gerry helped write the Growth Management Act, and the hazardous waste management law. Gerry is active in other environmental and open government consumer protection groups. He works with groups from a broad spectrum and is not a single-issue candidate. Gerry spent years building a political lobbying base.

Scott: Scott and Gerry talked before the campaign season, and Gerry did not talk about the broad range of issues at that time.

Affordable housing and homelessness compete for the same resources?

Scott: Tools exist for encouraging developers to build affordable housing. They don't necessarily compete against each other. Start with the greatest need, first. Provide incentives within the Growth Management Act

Gerry: We cannot allow these two issues to compete against each other. Affordable housing is the answer to homelessness. The GMA and local ordinances can require setting aside certain percentages for lower income housing.

Same-sex marriage and Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA)?

Gerry: Today the California State Supreme Court said there is a fundamental right for people of the same sex to marry. The judiciary committee needs legislators who can stand up for the rights of two human beings to be married.

Scott: Everyone should have equal protection and equal rights under the law. The legislative process works by many people coming together to write legislation. Scott is endorsed by the people leading the way in fighting for equal rights in Olympia.

Global climate change?

Scott: this will be the defining issue of Scott's generation. We need more bus service, better mass transit, and we should fix the Growth Management Act - high density communities, transit-oriented communities built around transit centers. People need to get out of their cars and reduce vehicle miles.

Gerry: Gerry is working with Climate Solutions and other organizations. We need to put in place a "cap and auction" system so utilities don't get windfall profits. Every community must link transit with density.

Yes - no questions.

Scott

Phyllis

Gerry

Support automatic sunset of tax exemptions?	+	+	+
Support a cap on payday loans at 36%?	+	+	+
Support Washington home owner bill of rights?	+	+	+
Double General Assistance (Unemployable) from \$339/mo.?	+	+	+
Public financing of elections?	+	+	+
Repeal 3 strikes?	+	+	+
Support death with dignity initiative?	+	+	+
Support other candidate if you are not nominated tonight?	+	+	+

Closing statements

Gerry: We built a strong participatory organization. We should be as broad as possible in our voting. As an elected official, Gerry can do more than as an advocate. Gerry can mobilize people all over the state for global warming and other issues. Gerry can stand up and say, "it's the wrong thing to do, just because a lot of campaign funding may be at stake." We can't do it if we keep going with politics as usual.

Scott: We have a unique opportunity. We can turn the page. Scott's dad was part of the greatest generation. A new era of politics is coming to this country. Everyone has a seat at the table. It is not the only way, to fight and win. We should empower the grassroots. We can take people to Olympia to speak on their own behalf. Gerry has been Scott's friend for a long, time. It's your vision, your community. We want to be partners in this together.

King County male alternate

Mike Thompson resigned as the King County male alternate, and we will fill that open position on the Executive Board. Javier explained that only PCOs can vote and only PCOs can run for this position.

Jayron Finan nominated Matthew McSheehy to take Mike' s position on the Executive Board. Matthew is not able to be present at the meeting. No other nominations were made. Jayron says Matthew is passionate, a union member, and a veteran of the first Iraq war. Matthew was an outstanding PCO, and a strong Barack Obama activist.

Matthew was elected by voice vote.

No officer reports.

Kathleen Porch challenged a ruling of the chair regarding a resolution she wants to bring before the body. She missed deadline for running the resolution in the Demogram because she did not see the call for the convention until the Convention Call came out 10 days ago. The chair ruled her resolution out of order, and Kathleen wants to challenge that decision.

The resolution objects to the PCO-only nature of the nominating convention.

Challenge to the chair passed.

Upholding the chair: 63

Challenging the decision of the chair: 66

The visual impression was that the chair's ruling was upheld, contrary to the vote count. Move to reconsider made and seconded. Motion to reconsider withdrawn.

Kathleen Porch spoke in favor of her resolution. She is a PCO. She feels the nominating process is top-down and un-democratic. The endorsement process should be more inclusive. She finds the top-two primary repugnant. She wants the process to be open inclusive and fair.

John Webber spoke against the motion. We will not have a real convention a month from now. The comparison is not between a primary and this PCO-only vote. Rather, Kathleen's resolution is one small meeting instead of this small meeting.

Kathleen's resolution **failed**

63 in favor

71 opposed.

Abdul Aleem expressed his greetings.

Jim McIntire invited everyone to his kick-off event.

Phyllis Kenney invited everyone to her kick-off event.

Javier adjourned the General Meeting at 9:02 PM

Minutes by Stan Sorscher