

46th District Democrats
General Meeting Minutes
Olympic View Church
August 20, 2009

Chad Lupkes called the meeting to order at 7:33 p.m.

Sarajane Siegfriedt led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Chad welcomed all in attendance.

A **Motion** was made to approve the minutes from the June meeting. **Motion** was approved by voice vote.

Chair's Report. Chad announced that Matthew McSheehy has stepped back from his position on the executive board, where he served as King County Male Alternate. We will elect someone to fill the position at the September General Meeting, and Chad encouraged anyone interested in the position to see him. Chad also noted that the Maps and History Project, on which he has been working for three years, is all online now, covering all 39 counties and all 49 legislative districts in the State. Chad gave special mention to Roger Crew (41st LD) and Scott White for their help.

Legislative Action Committee Report. Co-Chairs Sarajane Siegfriedt and Steve Zemke reminded us that the next Legislative Action Day in Olympia will be President's Day and encouraged members to attend. They introduced our Legislative Representatives, Phyllis Kenney, Scott White, and Ken Jacobsen to provide a recap of the last session and take questions.

2009 Legislative Review. State Representative Phyllis Kenney thanked Sarajane, Steve, and Chad, and all who attended last year's Legislative Action Day. Phyllis chairs the Community Economic Development and Trade Committee. She reported that the last session was not an easy session due to the budget cuts needed. She then provided an overview of the budget process, budgets being created in one of the three committees (Education, General Government, Health and Family Services) and then moving to the Ways and Means Committee, where the budgets are negotiated before being finalized. Phyllis helped pass bills this past session which increased unemployment benefits, including retraining programs and "one-stop centers" at the community college level; tightened up Payday lending practices; expanded rights of domestic partners; the housing trust fund for low income housing; education systems improvements; the Evergreen Jobs Act; investments in clean energy and water; and healthcare for kids.

State Representative Scott White emphasized that the budget deficit was the story of the session, and that it was difficult, and sometimes heart wrenching to make some cuts. He sits on three committees—the Capital Budget Committee, the Hiring Committee, and the Local Government and Housing Committee. Scott was active in creating the Community Resource Center at North Seattle Community College, to consolidate resources for people

looking for jobs to a one-stop center. He also helped get funding for the Sand Point Housing Resource Center and funding for community schools by allowing non-profits to utilize their services. He made a strong effort to get \$5 million in additional funding for Seattle Schools to address overcrowding. Lastly, Scott cautioned against the upcoming Eyman Initiative 1033, which would basically cripple state and local governments. The initiative would use the 2009 budget, in this very tight year, as a base year for future budgets and severely limit any increase in spending in future years. Steve Zemke added that Eyman is getting approximately 85% of his funding from three sources.

Senator Ken Jacobsen talked about the similarities of this year with recessionary times of the past, and emphasized that it is a myth that if a Representative votes for taxes, he/she won't be reelected. He provided examples from his own experience as a Representative. Ken emphasized the significance of cuts in areas such as Education and Natural Resources, and talked about how the initiative process traditionally was organized by volunteers at the grassroots level, rather than with the big money as at present.

Steve Zemke posed the question to the three about what they will do about the new revenue and tax situation. He also asked what the Legislators can do about Initiative 1033.

Ken Jacobsen responded that we need to start talking about changes in how we govern. It is up to leadership to vote for tax increases if necessary, and then go home and communicate to their districts. Scott White noted that the 46th LD is progressive but statewide, elected officials are often the last ones people want to hear from and we need to rebuild respect for our elected officials. Phyllis Kenney replied that we need to reform the Initiative and Referendum process, but they also need to educate colleagues in the House and Senate as well as the public.

Report on Legislative Action's Housing Subcommittee. Bill Rumpf, who is from the Seattle Office of Housing and represents the Steering Committee of the Seattle Housing Levy, which voters have renewed every seven years, provided an overview of the Housing Levy that will be on the November ballot. If passed, it will extend the Housing Levy passed several years ago, and upwardly adjust the amount to cover current costs for the same level of service. Bill said that it would mean an increase of \$2/month for the average home owner. The Levy would continue to provide for new construction and preservation of facilities for low income families. Examples of past Levy projects include the Meridian Manor senior citizens' facility at Northgate, low income family housing at Sand Point, and a facility for the homeless at 48th and Stone. Bill noted that it is a hard time to pass this measure and asked that anyone who could volunteer, doorbell or call voters, to please contact Sarajane.

Literature Distribution for Primary. Chad Lupkes thanked Jason Sawatzki for the excellent job of getting sample ballot and campaign literature distributed within the 46th LD, and noted that it is Jason's 34th birthday.

Financial Report. Stan Moffett could not attend this evening, so Kathryn Lewis provided the Treasurers' Report. She noted that the July fundraiser barbeque had raised \$822 and thanked everyone who participated. The 46th LD has \$8,193 (separate from the Cole Fund) on hand. Year to date, we are under planned revenues by \$283, and under planned expenses by \$3,803, but Kathryn noted that the coming months have some higher expenses planned due to the election. She estimated that final 2009 revenues may come in \$5,000 less than the original plan, and that we will need to adjust our spending to stay within budget.

Annual Financial Review. Norma Miller reported that the review of the 2008 budget, checks, and income was completed by the audit committee (Norma, Barbara Pistoresi, and Stan Moffett), and that review has been submitted to the District. It was printed in the August Demogram. This is the third year that the 46th LD has followed a methodology set up by Gail Chiarello. Norma noted that the previous Treasurer, Donna Boysen, had done a great job in 2008. The final audit report found no policy changes necessary and gave good marks to the LD. It made two recommendations: 1) that any time the Treasurer needs to reimburse him/herself, that another board member sign off on the check, and 2) that when a member asks to be reimbursed for expenses, that the member knows which budget number the reimbursement should come from, and has approval for it. These recommendations do not need to be passed, but were provided to the executive board.

Raymond Cole Committee. Chair Jan Ames provided background on Raymond Cole, his gift of \$60,000 to the 46th LD, and the values that were important to him. She then went into detail with a PowerPoint presentation on the Raymond Cole Committee's work and recommendations to the LD. The key goal of the committee is to act as good stewards of this extraordinary gift.

Jan's PowerPoint presentation, and the same detail that was in the August Demogram, covered the following:

- The committee's guiding principles
- Plans for initial allocations (Up to \$10,000 to be approved through the end of 2010)
- Initial funding categories (fundraising, capital projects, organization building)
- The criteria necessary for a project to be considered for funding (in addition to meeting the values of Cole and our 46th LD, projects to be considered should not be projects normally covered by our 46th LD operating budget; Jan listed several other criteria of which the project should meet some or all)
- The committee evaluation process
- The proposed timeline for "Round One" funding in 2009:
 - August 20—46th Democrats vote on proposal.
 - August 21—Opening of the application process
 - September 30—Deadline for applicants to submit two-page "Letter of Intent" form
 - October 21—Deadline for full grant proposal submission

- November 3—Committee will make recommendations to the Executive Board
- November 19—46th District Democrats will vote on approvals
- November 30—Committee will notify applicants of decisions.

“Round Two” Funding is still skeletal, but the committee anticipates that it will begin December 1 and wrap up February 28.

The membership then asked a number of questions:

What will the Letter of Intent look like?

It is a simple two-page form, which Chad will post as soon as possible after this evening’s meeting, assuming the Cole Proposal passes.

Could someone make a small monthly or quarterly donation to the Cole Fund?

Chad replied that donations of less than \$500 were probably best focused on our 46th LD annual operating budget, and we will always want to make sure the operating budget is in the black. However, the Fund would be a great place to make donations of \$500 or more.

Why isn’t there a specific goal of electing Democratic candidates included in the outcomes?

The Fund is not intended to support individual candidates, but it will invest in organizational development and creating a strong foundation, which in turn will help us get the vote out. The Fund will approve only projects that are in alignment with our 46th District Democrats’ vision, values and platform.

A **Motion** was made to pass the Cole Proposal, as presented by Jan Ames. A unanimous **Vote**, by show of hands, **approved** the Proposal.

Tally Committee Report. Betty Means gave an overview of the Proposal on Methods of Voting and Determining Results, as published in the August Demogram, and requires a membership vote. The proposal primarily focuses on the way that we count votes, making it as transparent as possible and, in cases of controversy, what reconstitutes a recount. In addition to the detailed text in the Demogram, there were several questions and comments from the membership this evening.

When do we need signed ballots?

Chad Lupkes said that this guidance comes from the State Party and he is notified in writing when a vote requires it. Chad will include this information in future Demograms before a vote that requires signed ballots.

Can someone use a proxy vote?

Chad said we do not allow proxy votes in the 46th LD. However, someone noted that he had seen people come to the General Meeting, complete their vote slips and leave them with someone else. We don’t want delays in the agenda to keep people from voting, but it was suggested that members must come and STAY to vote.

Can we do something instead of using numbered ballots? It seems we have problems with them each time—people use the wrong slip to vote and their votes are disqualified. Betty Means said she is very open to ideas to make the voting more effective and asked that people bring her any suggestions they may have.

A **Motion** was made to approve the proposal. **Motion passed** by vote of hands.

Resolutions. A resolution to support the SR-520 West Side “A” Design was brought to the membership for approval. This resolution was printed in the August Demogram, and an updated printed version was brought to the meeting, due to an error in the Demogram version. There are three alternatives under consideration for replacing the current SR 520 bridge. The proposal asks the 46th LD to support Alternative A as the only west-side design, based on the fact that it comes within the statutory budget, it would keep SR 520 within its existing corridor, would reduce auto traffic on Lake Washington Blvd through the arboretum, would protect the University of Washington Campus and its Waterfront Activities Center, and would reduce traffic through the Northeast Seattle neighborhoods. The proposal also supports removal of all ramps directly to and from SR 520 and Lake Washington Blvd in the Arboretum. A **Motion** was made to pass this resolution. **Motion passed**, by show of hands. It was noted that we will have an additional in depth presentation on the 520 options in October.

A second resolution, to Repeal the Federal Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA), was brought before the membership for approval. This resolution was published in the August Demogram. In short, this DOMA limits federal recognition of marriage of anyone other than heterosexual couples. Based on our District, County, State, and National platforms, we support every couple’s right to marry and be afforded all civil rights associated with marriage, regardless of sexual orientation and gender.

A **Motion** was made to pass this resolution. **Motion passed**, by show of hands.

SustainableWorks Presentation. Dusty Hoerler and Jesse Rothman from the Sound Alliance, gave an overview of this program that provides free home energy audits and accessible financing to retrofit and upgrade homes for improved energy efficiency. The initiative has funding from the Federal Stimulus package (\$14.5 million to Washington State), and will focus its first pilot project on 200 homes in the Wedgwood Area. The Sound Alliance group is working on a neighbor to neighbor approach, where they hope neighbors will help get other neighbors to have their homes audited.

State Committee Report—None.

King County Report—There will be a King County Democrats’ Picnic this Saturday, 8/22/09, at the Renton Carpenters Hall from 4 -8 p.m. You are encouraged to attend and support King County in this fundraiser.

Old News—none

New News—none

Good of the Order. Bob Rosenberg, candidate for Assessor, spoke to the group. He is a PCO in the 37th and serves on the Legislative Action Committee with Sarajane and Steve. Bob said that he has worked for 24 years in the Dept of Assessments, knows how to assess and equalize, and will fight high priced consultants who want to lower their clients' assessments—as it is a closed system, when one assessment is lowered, others carry the burden to make up the difference. He also wants to counter Tim Eyman.

Shanna Sawatzki announced that there will be a house party for David Ginsberg, running for City Council Position 2, at her home this Friday, 8/21/09, from 7-9. If you would like to get to know David better, or would like to support him, please plan to attend.

John Webber reminded the group to attend and play an active role at OFA healthcare forums. Don't let the opposition grab and hog the microphones. Tell your own story and don't be afraid to talk.

David Bloom, running for City Council Position 4, thanked the 46th LD for its endorsement and asked for our continued financial and volunteer support. His opponent has connections to big money supporters in the downtown corridor who are writing \$700 checks to get her elected. Please contact David if you can help doorbell, make phone calls, or do other volunteer work.

Pat Emerson reminded the group that 2009/2010 property tax notices are coming out soon, and that in this economic downturn, assessments may not match up with the reality of home values. See Pat if you want information on how to challenge your tax assessment.

Meeting adjourned at 9:40 p.m.

Minutes submitted by Kathryn Lewis.