



Dean Democratic Club of Silicon Valley



Minutes of the Dean Democratic Club of Silicon Valley Organizational Meeting

August 24, 2015

Marie Callender's Restaurant, 751 E. El Camino Real, Sunnyvale

Next working meetings: September 28, October 26, November 23

Next DFA-link meetings: September 14, October 12, November 9

Introductions: John Comiskey called the meeting to order at 7:08 p.m. Following that, each person introduced himself or herself and made a statement about recent political involvement.

Adoption of agenda: After two additions to the agenda, Emilie Gatfield moved that we adopt the agenda as amended, Gerry Hunt seconded it, and the motion passed with no dissension.

Approval of minutes: Gerry moved that we approve the July minutes, Alice Smith seconded it, and the motion passed unanimously.

Treasurer's report: Karen Porter reported that we have taken in \$115 this month; as our new treasurer, she has been working on trying to get authorization to use the club bank account and has had problems with repeated requests for paperwork from the bank. She will bring a detailed report next month.

NEW BUSINESS

Visit from Vincent Casalaina, CDP Progressive Caucus: Vincent began by recommending the movie *Straight Outta Compton* (or at least the first 30 minutes) for an understanding of some of the issues in the Black Lives Matter movement. He suggested evaluating candidates on how well they understand and support the movement. He then outlined three environmental bills that are currently in the Assembly and asked us to support them: (1) SB 32, which would require a reduction of greenhouse gases to 40% below the 1990 level to be achieved by 2030 and 80% below the 1990 level to be achieved by 2050; (2) SB 350, which would increase renewable energy use, reduce petroleum use, and increase energy efficiency in buildings; and (3) SB 185, which would require CalPERS and CalSTRS to divest from companies that receive at least half their revenues from coal mining. He encouraged club members to join the committee on climate change. Joel Masser suggested that that we also support SB 788, which would prohibit future oil drilling off the California coast. A short while later, after the next agenda item, Marcene Van Dierendonck moved that we endorse all four bills, Gerry seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

Visit from Senator Bob Wieckowski's office: Tim Orozco (who we had endorsed for San Jose City Council and who works with Bob Wieckowski) presented three bills that the senator is sponsoring: (1) SB 501, a tiered approach to wage garnishment, which would lower the rate to 10% from 25% on lower wage earners, (2) SB 308, which would raise the homestead exemption so that fewer people in bankruptcy would lose their homes and would be more able to retain their

cars; (3) SB 641, which would allow a debtor who has not received notification of a settlement to have recourse and have a new settlement on the merits of the case after two years have passed; currently, there is no recourse but to pay the collection agency or debt buyer at that point. Lucas Ramirez moved that we endorse all three bills, Emilie seconded the motion, and it passed with no dissent. At this point Alice moved that we oppose SB 249, which would allow the DMV to issue drivers' licenses with radio frequency identification technology that could be read from a distance. This would enable police to use a citizen's driver's license to determine whether that person is a citizen (since non-citizens would not have them), what their ethnic or racial background is, and what their legal/criminal status is. She noted that the bill is opposed by the ACLU. The motion passed with no dissent.

Task force report: Joel reported on the environmental and social/criminal justice task force. We will be doing letter writing on human trafficking at our next DFA-link meeting (see the first announcement in the minutes). On the work against overuse of antibiotics in farm animals, he has talked to Cindy Chavez, Ash Kalra, and Don Rocha's staff about the issue. He has been working with the environmental water caucus on a water plank in the party platform since this is such an important issue in California. He read a letter about water policy that he would like to submit to the state party platform committee. Gerry moved that we support including the language in the party platform and sending it in, Ben Stetson seconded the motion, and it passed with 1 no vote.

Tunnels update; supporting "Restore the Delta": Mary reported on a talk by Barbara Barrigan-Parrilla of Restore the Delta. Many club members have followed this issue, involving two 30-mile tunnels to take water from the North to the South. It was called the Bay Delta Conservation Plan and is now split into two parts, one of which is the Cal Water Fix, the part related to building the tunnels. Right now 70% of the water goes to Kern County and Westland Water Districts for agricultural use (growing almonds and pistachios for export, cotton that goes to China and comes back to us as clothing with a huge carbon footprint). The other 30% goes to Metropolitan and Santa Clara Valley Water Districts for urban use; SCVWD represents 5%. Both water boards can raise rates without a vote and would have to do so to pay for the tunnels, but we would probably get no additional water. According to Barrigan-Parrilla, costs could be as high as \$70 billion with interest and the usual overruns, and Delta fish, farms, waterfowl, and the ecosystem would be jeopardized. She urged us to send comments to: BDCP/Water Fix Comments, P. O. Box 1919, Sacramento CA 95812. She suggested focussing on a local perspective: the damage that would be done to tourism, fishing, restaurants on SF Bay if there is a lack of fresh water flowing into it. We are also in a prime position as SCVWD rate payers.

Feingold event donation: Stephanie Grossman had contacted John to ask if our club could make an on-line donation to the event for Russ Feingold at her home on October 4. After discussion, Emilie moved that we give \$250, Karen seconded the motion, and it passed with 9 yes and 5 no votes. The money will come from the federal fund.

CDP Rules: John brought a series of recommended changes to the Assembly District Election Meeting procedures, one of which was to change the ballot type from secret to open and require each participant to sign and print their name before voting. Many present at the meeting expressed the opinion that this rule should not be implemented; the people voting represent themselves, so a secret ballot is in order. There is clearly great potential for abuse if this rule goes through, and some people might not vote in order to avoid political repercussions. John urged us to go to CADEM.org, go to "Rules Committee" to see the "Procedures for 2015

ADEMS” and then click on “Submit Rules Testimony” in order to express opinions on this suggested idea. The direct link: <https://fs3.formsite.com/CADEM2011/form164/index.html> Emilie noted that you can also add testimony about the party platform in general at the CADEM.org website.

Webmaster backup: John has been serving as a back-up person for Barbara Comiskey, the webmaster. Ben Stetson was asked to be another pair of eyes to work with Barbara and has accepted the task. Karen has also been looking over the website unofficially.

New membership chair Erik Fong: John announced that Erik Fong will be our new membership chair. Erik noted that although he will be a candidate for San Jose City Council, he will in no way use any of the material from the list to further his campaign. The club thanked Ralph Wheeler for his years of service in this position.

Convention presence, preliminary: John asked for ideas for ways in which the 18 local Dem clubs could participate together in the state convention, which will be held in February in San Jose. He has contacted Tony Alexander to see if we can rent the UFCW Hall on Market Street for an event. A hospitality suite in the hotel would be very costly, as would a table. Ideas so far include putting something in the goody bag that is given out (Marcene suggested a notebook), hiring a food truck, and making T-shirts. If you have any other ideas, send them to John.

Meeting site: There was a discussion about where to continue to hold our organizational meetings, and it was decided to meet at Marie Callender’s in Sunnyvale again in September. If you have other suggestions, please bring them to the September meeting.

OLD BUSINESS

Task force reports

Good government: No report.

Economic justice: No report.

Environment: Covered earlier.

Social and criminal justice: Covered earlier.

Club building: No report.

Candidates/campaigns: No report.

Outreach: No report.

Club membership: Ralph reported that we have 163 members (including 34 “paid plus members” who have paid for more than one year), 447 Facebook members, and 203 Yahoo members. So far in 2015 we have 41 new members and 59 new Facebook members.

Announcements

❖ The next DFA link meeting will be September 14 at the home of Marcene Van Dierendonck, 1131 Seena Avenue, Los Altos 94024. Former Assembly member and Speaker Pro Tempore Sally Lieber will be on hand to help with a letter-writing campaign against human trafficking. We will also write comments to submit to the state about the Delta tunnels. Snacks and conversation at begin at 6:30 p.m., and the meeting starts at 7:00.

❖ Ben announced that there will be a working meeting for Mike Honda's campaign at the SEIU, 2302 Zanker Road, San Jose, on Tuesday, August 25, and one for the California Clean Money Campaign (a mailing party) on Thursday, August 27, at the Unitarian Universalist Church, 505 Charleston Avenue, Palo Alto. Both events start at 6:30.

❖ Tim Orozco thanked the club for our endorsement of and support for his race for San Jose City Council. Although the campaign was unsuccessful, he was asked to be on the General Plan task force and has accepted.

❖ Lucas announced that the National Equality Day Silicon Valley Rally and March will be on Saturday, August 29, from 8:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. Meet at San Jose City Hall, 200 E. Santa Clara Street.

❖ Alice announced that there will be a summit "Ending Chronic Veteran Homelessness in Santa Clara County" on Friday, October 2, from 1:00 to 4:00 p.m. in Mitchell Park Community Center, 3700 Middlefield Road, Palo Alto.

Adjournment: At 8:57 p.m. Ralph moved that we adjourn, Mary seconded the motion, and the meeting was adjourned.

Minutes submitted by Mary Gill