

Minutes of the Dean Democratic Club of Silicon Valley Organizational Meeting

January 26, 2015

Hobee's Restaurant, 21267 Stevens Creek Boulevard, Cupertino

Next working meeting: February 23

Next DFA-link meeting: February 11

Introductions: John Comiskey called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m. Following that, each person introduced himself or herself and made a statement about recent political involvement.

Adoption of agenda: After several additions were made to the agenda, Joel Masser moved that we adopt the agenda as amended, Gerry Hunt seconded it, and the motion passed with no dissension.

Approval of minutes: Lucas Ramirez moved that we approve the November minutes, Carolyn Curtis seconded it, and the motion passed unanimously.

Treasurer's report: Don Mayall reported that we have \$5297 in the bank: \$3047 in the state and \$2250 in the federal account, similar to last year's end balances. Last year we raised \$4209. Don filed the year-end reports to the FPPC and FEC; the group thanked him for his work.

NEW BUSINESS

Future meeting dates: Marcene Van Dierendonck brought up the problem of the DFA-link meetings on the second Wednesday of the month conflicting with the Peninsula Democratic Coalition board meetings. We've been asked to change the dates. One possible option will be to go back to the first Wednesday (as before), which conflicts with San Mateo DFA meetings. Marcene and John will look into other possible dates and we'll vote on this at the next meeting. Marcene announced that we will show the movie *Gasland II* at our next link meeting, which will be February 11 at the SCCDP headquarters on Moorpark in San Jose; snacks and conversation start at 6:30 and movie at 7:00.

Two-year budget: Don created a proposal for the next two years (see attached, a proposed budget for 2015 and 2016 and the actual budget for 2014). Last year we spent what we took in, about \$4000. We gave \$1000 to federal candidates and \$300 to a state candidate, and we spent \$844 on overhead (P.O. box, printing, website, food for county committee meetings, etc.). About \$450 went to the J.J. dinner ("Other PACS"). The proposed budget for 2015 and 2016 is similar, as can be seen in the Excel file. Don noted that we should think about where we would like our contributions to go and suggest

ideas. Ralph Wheeler moved that we adopt the proposed budget, Mary Gill seconded the motion, and it passed with no dissent.

Pre-endorsement rule changes: John reported that the roster of club members that qualify us for delegates for the Democratic party convention in 2016 will be based on membership as of July 1, 2015. That means that if we are going to focus on getting new members, we should do so soon. We need 20 members for each delegate. The top-two primary may mean that some Dems are competing against another Dem, so we want to be sure to get the more progressive candidate endorsed/elected. Delegates must be paid primary club members and, of course, Democrats.

2014 accomplishments: Carolyn had prepared a very detailed list of our accomplishments for 2014. She passed around the list for people to add to or make comments on, along with lists for past years. This data shows the very high level of activism of our club, one reason that so many candidates seek our endorsement. If you have not sent a tally of your hours of activism to Carolyn, please do so: carolyncurtis@comcast.net

Possible meeting venue: Marcene asked if we would like to consider a change in venue to Marie Callender's in Sunnyvale (El Camino Real at Fair Oaks). They have a large room that may be available. The group encouraged her to check and report back. A map and menu are on line at: <http://www.mariecallenders.com/1/sunnyvale-restaurant-bakery/106>

Northern California CCMC Grassroots Summit February 28: Nancy Neff reported that the California Clean Money Campaign is working on getting a version of SB 52, the DISCLOSE Act, passed this year. (SB 52 would have required disclosure of the top three funders of political ads for ballot measures on the ads themselves; it passed the Senate but met with labor opposition last year and was not moved forward in the Assembly.) The grassroots summit will be on February 28 at the Unitarian Universalist Church, 505 Charleston, Palo Alto, from 9:00 to 4:30. She encouraged everyone to attend and help get disclosure in California and strengthen the movement for campaign finance reform. For more information or to sign up, go to: <https://www.yesfairelections.org/events>. Volunteers are needed for many tasks; contact Nancy if you can help: nancy@neffs.net.

2015 goal setting and task forces: John explained the voting procedure. He had grouped the goals from the brainstorming session in December into categories (to become task forces) and printed them out. (See the attached PDF from the brainstorming session for those ideas from the December meeting.) Each club member was asked to vote for up to three task forces in order of priority; the votes were rated on a point system with votes worth five points, three points, and one point. The results can be seen in the PDF for the 2015 task forces (also attached). "Good government" was the top vote-getter, "Economic justice" was second, etc. John assigned each person who voted a task force based on his or her five-point vote. People can add or change task forces at future meetings.

OLD BUSINESS

Task force reports

Candidates: No report.

Social justice: No report.

Environment: Joel reported on a recent meeting of the environmental task force. He noted that socially or economically disadvantaged people are disproportionately affected by the climate crisis and that goals of the environmental task force relate to those of the social and economic justice task forces. He gave several examples (many poor people live near areas that are more polluted, they are more affected by outsourcing of jobs, etc.). Problems like overfishing or destroying rainforest are caused in part by poverty. He expressed an interest in combining work with social or economic justice task forces.

Mary reported that there will be a March for Real Climate Leadership in Oakland on February 7. Transportation from many cities all over California, including San Jose and Palo Alto, is available. One of the goals is to make Governor Brown, who lives in Oakland, aware of the huge number of people who support environmental legislation against fracking, unsafe oil trains, and other activities that can harm our health and jeopardize our safety. For information and to sign up and/or get bus tickets, go to <http://marchforclimateleadership.org>

Government accountability: Nancy was asked about the new bill for the DISCLOSE Act. She said that Trent Lange has proposed new trace-back language (the determination of the original source of campaign funds) and at least one union, a local SEIU, may be willing to sign on with this change. If the unions do not come around to supporting a bill, we may have a new author. There will be new petitions when we have a new bill, but for now we can continue to use the ones we have. She made a motion that the club contribute \$100 to the CCMC Action Fund. Katie Dunlap noted that we had talked about giving the proceeds of the Cinco de mayo fundraiser (\$1000) to an environmental cause, and that disclosure qualifies since environmental ballot measures are heavily influenced by money. She suggested \$500 rather than \$100. Nancy amended the motion to \$500, Gerry Hunt seconded it, and it was passed with 1 abstention. Don will send a check for \$500 to the CCMC Action Fund.

Club support: Ralph encouraged everyone who can to become “paid plus members” and to use Facebook to publicize our events. We’ll be working on various fundraisers this year, probably a wildflower walk in late March or early April (courtesy of Don and Carolyn) and a Cinco de mayo event in May that Katie is working on. Ralph has other ideas for fundraisers, such as an ice cream social (one we did previously was very successful). He also encouraged individuals to write additional checks to our cause; our dues are very modest and have not been raised since the inception of the club.

State issues: John noted that there may be many ballot propositions coming up soon since the number of signatures needed to qualify an initiative is way down; this number is based on turnout in gubernatorial elections, and the turnout in November was very low.

Research: No report.

Club membership: Ralph had updated our membership list and sent it to the steering committee. He reported that we have 134 members (including 46 “paid plus members” who have paid for more than one year), 397 Facebook members, and 203 Yahoo members. He encouraged all of us to bring in one new member this year.

Announcements

❖ Gerry reported that LaDoris Cordell will be the speaker at the 21st Century Club on Friday, February 13, at noon at the San Jose Airport Garden Hotel, 1740 N. 1st Street.

❖ Mary announced that the Peninsula Peace and Justice Center and the Los Altos Library are cosponsoring a showing of the movie “Pay2Play: Democracy’s High Stakes” on Monday, February 9, at 7:00 p.m. at the Los Altos Library. Following will be a panel discussion featuring Nancy Neff of CCMC, Eitan Fenson of Move to Amend, and Paul George of the PPJC. The event coincides with the five-year anniversary of the controversial Citizens United case.

❖ Gerry announced that the People’s Movement Assembly will have a workshop/meeting on Saturday, January 31, at the SEIU Hall, 2302 Zanker Road, San Jose from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. “The People vs. the Corporations: Whose Constitution Is It?” will feature various groups including Move to Amend, Human Agenda, and the San Jose Peace & Justice Center. It is free, and lunch will be provided.

❖ Katie Dunlap reported that we will have a club fundraiser/garden tour with a Cinco de mayo theme on May 2 or 3 (Saturday or Sunday) at the home of Sue Zaslaw in San Jose.

❖ John reported that our annual picnic and election of officers will be on either the 13th or the 20th of June.

Adjournment: At 8:40 p.m. Ralph moved that we adjourn, Carolyn seconded the motion, and the meeting was adjourned.

Minutes submitted by Mary Gill