



Dean Democratic Club of Silicon Valley



Minutes of the Dean Democratic Club of Silicon Valley Organizational Meeting

September 28, 2015

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

Next working meetings: October 26, November 23

Next DFA-link meetings: October 12, November 9

Annual brainstorming and potluck dinner: December 14 at the home of Ralph and Jackie Wheeler

Introductions: John Comiskey called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m. Following that, each person introduced himself or herself and made a statement about recent political involvement.

Adoption of agenda: After one addition to the agenda, Lucas Ramirez moved that we adopt the agenda as amended, Mary Gill seconded it, and the motion passed with no dissension.

Approval of minutes: Jackie Wheeler moved that we approve the August minutes, Ben Stetson seconded it, and the motion passed unanimously.

Treasurer's report: Karen Porter reported that we have \$3540.39 in our state account and \$3032.54 in our federal account.

NEW BUSINESS

Visit from Vicki Veenker: Jackie Wheeler (who has been working with Close the Gap) introduced Vicki Veenker, who is considering running for Assembly in AD 24 (Rich Gordon's district). Vicki is a patent attorney and member of the board of the Law Foundation of Silicon Valley, which has five anti-poverty programs; projects include one for foster youth, one for housing discrimination or advocacy (e.g., the situation at Buena Vista Mobile Home Park), and one for victims of predatory lending. A major issue for her is education. She also worked on a campaign to relaunch the women's pro soccer team locally. In answer to a question about campaign readiness, she pointed to her extensive community volunteer work and her work professionally in the scientific and tech communities. She has been making a fundraising plan and other preparations for a possible campaign. John explained our endorsement process.

Task force report: Joel Masser reported on recent activities of the environmental, social, and economic justice task force. At the last DFA-link meeting, with Sally Lieber, we wrote over 100 letters to local officials on the topic of human trafficking. John noted that we learned from Sally that colorful envelopes that are not standard size are more likely to get noticed. Although we wrote to our own council members when possible, many of us were writing to officials in other cities; Ben Stetson brought up the idea of organizing the latter effort so that each person on a specific council would get a letter from a different writer, with different points of view (to avoid repetition). Joel next described a meeting of the task force last week, in which we talked about

the Delta tunnels, climate bills, endorsement best practices, and possible questions for Jerry Hill, our speaker at the next link meeting. See Environmental task force report.

Restore the Delta/Tunnels: Joel had sent a copy of his letter opposing the tunnels to the steering committee and others. Mary passed around a fact sheet and some information from Barbara Barrigan-Parrilla of Restore the Delta, who urges us to send comments by October 30 to: BDCP/Water Fix Comments, P. O. Box 1919, Sacramento CA 95812. (See their website: www.restorethedelta.org for more information.) Also there is a fundraiser for the organization on Thursday, October 8, from 6:00 to 8:30 in San Francisco with George Miller, Joan Buchanan, and Mike Miller; contact Jennifer@RestoretheDelta.org or call 209 475-9550. This is a very important organization that is working hard to prevent the Delta tunnels project.

Eggman campaign: Mary reported that Michael Eggman would really appreciate our help in his campaign for Congress in CD 10 against conservative Jeff Denham. Any donation, however small, before October 1 (end of the third quarter) would be very helpful. See: <http://eggmanforcongress.com>. Doug Greven, who many of us know from Jerry McNerney's campaigns, is now on his staff, and the Cook report shows him as the #1 pickup opportunity for Dems in California. There was discussion of a fundraiser and then of a small donation at this point, given that we did this for Russ Feingold last month. Mary moved that we contribute \$250 to his campaign and Lucas seconded the motion, which passed with no dissension. Mary will find out how to get the check to him by the deadline and let Karen know.

Russ Feingold event: Mary passed out fliers and urged people to attend the fundraiser for Russ Feingold at Stephanie Grossman's home, 1121 Harriet Street, Palo Alto, on October 4 from 3:00 to 5:00 p.m., cosponsored by our club. This is one of the most important Senate races in the country. RSVP at www.russfeingold.com/gtafternoon.

Convention presence, preliminary: John reminded the group that he'd 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 Kelly Martinez to see if we can rent the UFCW Hall on Market Street for a welcome event for attendees, and it appears that we can get it if the remodeling work on it has been finished in time. Also, he has gone to various club meetings to present the idea and ask for support.

Meeting site: There was a discussion about where to continue to hold our organizational meetings. John noted that we can always change the venue in the future; Gerry Hunt suggested that we could hold link or other meetings in other places to try them out. After discussion, Lucas moved that we continue to meet at Marie Callender's in Sunnyvale, Mary seconded the motion, and it passed with one abstention.

Housing affordability crisis: Lucas spoke about the lack of affordable housing in our area and described meetings at the Mountain View City Council where this has been discussed. He asked if members of our club were interested in getting involved in this topic. John pointed out that cities have different agendas/approaches, so it is unlike most of the issues we cover. Joel asked if there is someone or some organization that could provide guidance of a general nature and also if Lucas wanted him to bring up any specific actions for discussion in the task force meeting on economic justice. Lucas will look into this and get back to us.

OLD BUSINESS

Task force reports

Good government: Mary reported that AB 700 can still be passed in time for the DISCLOSE Act to be on the November ballot and that a very comprehensive Voters Right to Know initiative was filed with the attorney general (see <http://www.votersrighttoknow.org>). Gerry is organizing car pools to go up to San Francisco on October 6 for a rally in support of putting Prop 49 (overturning Citizens United) back on the ballot. The rally starts at 8:00 at the Civic Center and the hearing at the California Supreme Court is at 9:00. Contact Gerry for more information or for car pools: gwhunt97@comcast.net

Economic justice: No report.

Environment: Joel noted that we submitted a petition on the water plank for the party platform. He attended a meeting of the Silicon Valley Dems and they are on board, as are certain other clubs. He mentioned two environmental bills, SB 32 and SB 350; the former is now a two-year bill, and the latter was passed after being amended, a great disappointment. Barbara Comiskey mentioned the fact that Shell Oil has withdrawn from their Arctic drilling project, which they'd invested billions in.

Social and criminal justice: Covered earlier.

Club building: No report.

Candidates/campaigns: Covered earlier.

Outreach: John had discussed club presence at the state party convention. In addition, he has completed an updating of the county clubs' directories (minus a new labor club).

Club membership: Erik Fong has been working on contacting people whose memberships are in arrears. He sent a report that we have 162 members (including 33 "paid plus members" who have paid for more than one year), 456 Facebook members, and 203 Yahoo members. So far in 2015 we have 41 new members and 68 new Facebook members.

Announcements

❖ The next DFA link meeting will be October 12 at the home of Alice Smith, 4284 Los Palos Circle, Palo Alto 94306. State Senator Jerry Hill will speak.

Adjournment: At 8:28 p.m. Gerry moved that we adjourn, Lucas seconded the motion, and the meeting was adjourned.

Minutes submitted by Mary Gill