

## **Minutes of the Dean Democratic Club of Silicon Valley Organizational Meeting**

May 25, 2015

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

**Next working meetings:** July 27, August 24, September 28, October 26, November 23

**Next DFA-link meetings:** June 6 (event for Jerry McNerney), July 13 (book club meeting), August 10, September 14, October 12, November 9

**Annual potluck picnic and election of officers:** June 20

**Introductions:** John Comiskey called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m. Following that, each person introduced himself or herself and made a statement about recent political involvement.

**Adoption of agenda:** After an addition to the agenda, Carolyn Curtis moved that we adopt the agenda as amended, Don Mayall seconded it, and the motion passed with no dissension.

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

**Treasurer's report:** Don reported that we have \$6166 in the state and federal bank accounts; the garden party on May 2 netted \$910.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

**Jerry McNerney event June 6:** Mary Gill reported that our fundraiser for Jerry will be on June 6 at Stephanie Grossman's home, 1121 Harriet Street, Palo Alto, from 3:30 to 6:00 p.m. To RSVP, contact François Genard: [francois@jerrymcnerney.org](mailto:francois@jerrymcnerney.org) or (209) 956-2872. Jerry's votes have been unfailingly progressive: he voted against Cromnibus, has spoken out strongly against the Delta tunnels project many times, and is opposing the TPP. Carolyn pointed out that he has introduced a Constitutional amendment to reform campaign financing. John added that Anna Eshoo will be there also.

**Letters about Lehigh Cement:** Joel Masser had written a letter to the editor to go to the *San Jose Mercury News* from our club on this issue. It urges careful monitoring of Lehigh and strict enforcement of penalties for violations of the water treatment regulations that were imposed upon the company by the EPA. The calculation of the penalties was confidential, and the letter expresses the concern that the company might not comply with the regulations if their expected profits are higher than the costs the penalties would incur. John read the letter aloud. It was suggested that the letter go in John's name on behalf of our club. Marcene Van Dierendonck moved that we send the letter, Don seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously. (See addendum following the minutes.) Joel then read a second letter, to go to the Assistant Attorney General in the Environment and Natural Resources Division with a similar message. After a couple of

small changes were made, Ben Stetson moved that we send the letter, Carolyn seconded the motion, and it passed with no dissension. John will post the letter on the club website.

**Book for July 13 meeting:** Margaret Okuzumi had purchased 10 copies of *With Liberty and Dividends for All: How to Save Our Middle Class When Jobs Don't Pay Enough*, by Peter Barnes, and brought them to the meeting. If you would like a copy from Margaret, there are still a few available for \$14.25 (a discounted price through Amazon). She became aware of the book at a Citizens Climate Lobby event and found it very readable and informative. This will be the topic of our July 13 DFA-link meeting.

**Clean Money postcard campaign:** Nancy Neff had brought postcards for the group to take and have people sign urging Speaker Atkins to support AB 700, the DISCLOSE Act, and asking their own representative in the Assembly to vote in favor of it. We have only one week to get these done since the Assembly will be voting fairly soon (probably by June 5). She asked everyone to scan them and then mail them, if possible; otherwise, we can give them to her first and she will get them scanned and mailed. Contact Nancy for postcards or more information.

**Michael Eggman update:** John reported on a talk he had with Michael at the Democratic convention. Unfortunately, Michael has decided not to run for Congress in CD 10 again, in part because of lack of support from his family for another arduous campaign. However, he plans to run for the Assembly and in this his family does support him. One of the problems with the DCCC not giving the help that had been promised to Michael was that Jeff Denham did not have to spend a lot of money on the race and now has \$1.5 million for 2016.

**Orozco campaign:** John walked precincts yesterday for Tim Orozco, running for San Jose City Council. This is an important race because it will tip the balance on the council. If you can help, please do so. Precinct walks will leave from Tim's home at 3344 Whitman Way, San Jose 95132 starting at 10:00 on Saturdays and 11:00 on Sundays or from the Labor Temple. Vote-by-mail ballots go out tomorrow. The Dean Club has endorsed the campaign and given financial support.

**June 20 picnic and annual election of officers:** John noted that the annual potluck picnic and election will be in on June 20 starting at 11:00 a.m. (It will be held in Area 2 of Ponderosa Park, 811 Henderson Avenue, Sunnyvale.) Bring a potluck dish to share. Swanee Edwards has sent paper invitations to 131 electeds and e-mails to others; those who come at 12:30 will be invited to speak. Marcene Van Dierendonck, Barbara Comiskey, and Alice Smith are on the nominating committee; if you would like to run or nominate someone else, contact one of them. Margaret will post the site reservation before 8:30 a.m. as required by the park department. Ralph Wheeler volunteered to bring his PA system and ice chest. John volunteered to bring ice chests and ice. Carolyn has paper plates and club literature, and she and Mary will bring flowers and tablecloths. Marcene and John will bring banners.

**Human trafficking resolution:** After we heard Sally Lieber’s talk on human trafficking at the March DFA-link meeting, Joel had drafted a resolution encouraging our county and its cities to take action in the areas of staff training, identifying vulnerable populations, and legislative advocacy in support of anti-trafficking measures at the state and federal levels. The club endorsed this resolution at the last meeting. John reported that Swanee is sending the resolution to the appropriate city, county, and state officials. He will send Sally confirmation of this.

**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 July.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

### **Task force reports**

**Good government:** Nancy reported that there is new “follow the money” language for AB 700, the new DISCLOSE Act. (The “follow the money” issue was the sticking point for SB 52, which failed to pass last year.) According to the new language, the Fair Political Practices Commission would use the information on the Secretary of State’s website on campaign contributions for ballot measures to determine the top three funders; thanks to SB 27, the “dark money” bill, all contributions above \$50,000 must now be disclosed on the website. This is a much simpler process than the one that had been proposed formerly and hopefully will be acceptable to labor and others. In answer to questions, Nancy said the bill passed through the Assembly Appropriations Committee last week with all Democrats present voting for it and the Republicans abstaining. She said there is an effort to get petitions or postcards signed over in Assembly member Catharine Baker’s district (Pleasanton, Dublin, Walnut Creek); she is a Republican who may be persuaded to vote yes because of the large number of Democratic voters in her district. We can go to BART stations or farmers’ markets, etc. Contact Nancy if you are willing to help.

**Economic justice:** This will be the topic of our July DFA-link meeting.

**Environment:** Covered earlier.

**Social and criminal justice:** Covered earlier. Mimi Spreadbury asked if we have worked on the issue of police brutality, and John answered that it was addressed in our April 11 DFA meeting and that we are open to further work on this topic.

**Club building:** John discussed the club roster, or list of members, which has to be submitted to the state party by July 1. The California Democratic Council and state party are now using the same form. Our club may possibly get an additional delegate in AD 24. We hope to get a few new members at events in the next month, which would allow us to obtain one more delegate.

**Candidates/campaigns:** Covered earlier. Mary noted that the campaign for the state senate to replace Mark DeSaulnier cost \$7 million, between two Democrats; this is a perfect example of the problems of the open primary. Susan Bonilla, who had the backing of the California Democratic Party and labor unions, lost to the more pro-business Steve Glazer. Voters were deluged with ads and mailers paid for by outside interests.

**Outreach:** John will be traveling to central committee meetings in Fresno and Santa Cruz Counties in the next two months as part of his work on the California Democratic Council and will report back.

**Club membership:** Ralph reported that we have 156 members (including 42 “paid plus members” who have paid for more than one year), 415 Facebook members, and 203 Yahoo members. There were 26 new paid members so far this year.

### **Announcements**

❖ Carolyn had brought a packet of materials from DFA to hand out; Marcene took many of them for her voter registration efforts at the Palo Alto Farmers’ Market on California Avenue. (If you are willing to help with that effort on Sunday mornings, contact Marcene.)

❖ Mimi Spreadbury announced that there will be a Silicon Valley People for Bernie (Sanders) “honk and wave” rally on May 27 from 5:00 to 6:00 p.m. in Cesar Chavez Plaza in San Jose (S. Market and W. San Carlos intersection). Campaign merchandise will be coming out that day. There will be a meeting of the group at the Lenzen Square Community Center, 790 Lenzen Avenue, San Jose, on June 13 from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m. For more information on the campaign, go to [http://www.peopleforbernie.com/ganymede235/silicon\\_valley\\_people\\_for\\_bernie](http://www.peopleforbernie.com/ganymede235/silicon_valley_people_for_bernie)

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

Minutes submitted by Mary Gill

### **Addendum: Letter to the Editor of the *San Jose Mercury News***

The EPA and State of California did a good job in investigating and prosecuting Lehigh Cement's water pollution violations and requiring Lehigh to make an investment in water treatment and pay a penalty. Regrettably, the details of the penalty calculation are confidential. This lack of transparency protects wrongdoers to the public's detriment. The public has a right to know the extent of damage caused. We are concerned that too-low penalties will not deter future violations. Obeying the law and investing in pollution control are business decisions based on expected costs of different courses of action. Punishment for wrongdoing must be sufficient to make it clear that by far the best choice

is to follow the rules. Furthermore, executives who make decisions to break the law should have personal consequences. More information on the case can be found at <http://www.justice.gov/enrd/consent-decree/us-et-al-v-lehigh-southwest-cement-co-et-al>. Public comments can be submitted to [pubcomment-ees.enrd@usdoj.gov](mailto:pubcomment-ees.enrd@usdoj.gov) until June 4.

John Comiskey, Co-Chair,  
on behalf of the Dean Democratic Club of Silicon Valley

4801 Kingdale Drive  
San Jose, CA 95124  
408 410 2806  
[johnddcsv@mac.com](mailto:johnddcsv@mac.com)