

45<sup>th</sup> LD Democrats  
Executive Board Meeting Minutes  
April 23, 2007

Attendees: Martin Chaney, Priscilla O'Leary, Kris Rubenaker, Mike Burner, Paul Yarbrough, Ken Jauch, Melissa Waldie, Brad Larssen, Diane Slota, Terry Thorsos, Judith Shattuck, Andrew Villeneuve, Ralph Gorin, Bob Horn

The meeting was called to order at 7:04 p.m. by Martin Chaney, Chair.

### **Adoption of the Agenda**

Martin distributed copies of the proposed agenda, as well a template agenda for future use. The agenda was reviewed and adopted.

### **Previous Meeting Minutes**

The March 2007 meeting minutes were approved.

### **Guest Speaker: Steve Lansing, UFCW Local 21 Community Organizer**

Martin introduced Steve Lansing

- Steve shared that his role as Community Organizer is to reach out & build strong strategic reciprocal working relationships with others sharing common interests.
- The union is in close connection with the party at the state local levels. They have approximately 30,000 members in the Puget Sound area. About one half of the members are grocery workers, about one third of the members are in health care, and the rest are in various retail positions.
- Steve shared that they are currently negotiating a new contract in the grocery industry and shared some historical information about past contract negotiations. They are working with a national strategy covering around 400,000 UFCW grocery workers and the bargaining extends over a 15 month period. This is the largest contract negotiation in our area this year. Steve provided copies of a presentation entitled Share the Success! They are using the presentation to help explain the issues and what is happening to the American worker. Issues extend beyond economic issues of pay and benefits to workplace issues of respect and how the workers are treated on the job.
- Steve shared the results of a yearly study that concluded that of the workers who receive state subsidized health care, the largest work for Walmart, with the second largest working for Safeway and the third largest group working for Fred Meyer.
- Workplace issues for grocery workers include standard practices such as not knowing their scheduled hours and times for a given week until the previous Thursday and not being paid when sick until the 3<sup>rd</sup> day of their

illness. Industry practices like these make it difficult for workers to budget to support their families and cause them to come to work sick to avoid loss of pay. Steve shared that a good contract provides a livable income, fairness in scheduling, accessible & affordable health care, and retirement with dignity.

- The strategies they are using to win include grass roots activism in the stores and members at the table. They are coordinating nationally and working to build strong community allies. Their perspective is that everyone is affected by this negotiation as we all shop.
- They would like to build a reciprocal relationship with groups such as ours and recommend accessing their website, [www.UFCW21.org](http://www.UFCW21.org) to learn more about their activities and get updates.
- Steve passed out copies of the most recent update sent to their members and talked about activities such as public actions, rallies, and community forums.
- Steve provided a copy of their Share the Success form for the organization to consider completing and returning to them. It asks for basic information about the organization and a statement of support. He shared that the process of engaging with the legislative districts is a new one for them, but they see many commonalities and potential benefits. Many of their members already work for our candidates and other party efforts, so they don't see the request for our support as a one way street.
- Ken Jauch suggested that a way to increase the visibility of their members is to encourage them to attend our meetings and Steve concurred.
- Ken also suggested their members could access our website to find something of interest to them.
- Terry Thorsos suggested a good way to begin working together is to have their members join with us in the upcoming parades.
- Diane noted that getting involved with the party is a good way to foster change. She asked if the union was considering universal health care as a way to help relieve the employers' burden and obtain better benefits for the workers. Steve indicated that they are in favor of the concept, but that they need to keep the employer based programs as strong as possible until universal health care becomes more of a reality.
- Mike asked about the scope of the negotiations and if the needs of the 400,000 were being represented all at once. Steve clarified that the negotiations take place over a 15 month period. Mike also asked if all of the big employers were in the room together for the negotiations and Steve indicated that they were.
- Terry commented that it is a good idea to include education about unions in what we do. Brad noted that the education should include what to do when someone encounters a picket line.

### **General Meeting Agenda Review**

Specific items discussed that relate to the General Meeting agenda:

- Martin opened discussions about the proposed agenda for the May General Meeting, noting that he added time for a social hour before the meeting start time. The purpose of this time is to encourage people to come early and it addresses requests that have been received to allow time for socializing since there is not usually time during the meeting. Mike noted that Holly Plackett will be meeting at 6:40 p.m. with the Endorsements Committee before the General Meeting. Terry also noted that several people have agreed to meet at 6:00 p.m. that day to discuss caucus sites.
- Speakers: There are a significant number of potential speakers for the May meeting.
  - Martin is not sure if they will all be attending this month. He will try to get confirmations before printing and publishing the agenda. The board then discussed several of the potential candidates and identified the positions for which they are running.
  - Concerns were raised with the number of speakers and potential time. It was determined that candidates would be given 3 minutes each. Kris volunteered to be the timekeeper at the meeting to help us stay on track.
- Legislative Review: Eric Oemig and Roger Goodman have confirmed that they will be at the meeting. Confirmation has not yet been received from Larry Springer.
  - Andrew suggested that questions be prepared in advance to enable members to have more of the time focused on what they want to have the legislators talk about. One option put forward was to have flip chart paper on the walls and markers available so that people can write questions before meeting. A variation offered was to have known questions already on the paper and give people dots to use for indicating questions most important to them.
  - Brad noted that the legislators are likely planning to give prepared reports about the results of the legislative session that just ended and expressed concern that we not overcomplicate the situation. He expressed the opinion that there would be time over the coming months to have the legislators answer additional questions.
  - Mike agreed we should give them the opportunity to give their report.
  - Melissa noted that we had a good, productive session and she would like them to have the time to share the results.
  - Andrew noted that they might not always be at future meetings and he felt it might be good to get people's questions while they are fresh on their minds.
  - Terry suggested that we give Martin the discretion to gather the questions, determine the ones showing the most interest, and ask one question to each legislator.

- Ralph concurred with Terry's idea and suggested giving the remainder of the questions to the legislators in writing so that they can have time to prepare responses for future meetings.
- Endorsements and Resolutions: The Endorsements Committee is planning on taking up two potential early endorsements – No on I-25 and Alec Fisker for Port Commissioner.
  - Martin requested that the Endorsements Committee send out a message to the Announce list providing information on I-25. Andrew will work with Kathleen to get this done.
  - Mike asked if Martin will include the specific endorsements being considered in the agenda and email reminder of the meeting. Martin agreed he would do so.
- As a separate note, Ken shared that the August election will include a vote on funding for the fire department. Similar funding for the City of Redmond was defeated in the last election. Andrew noted that this is a complex issue that needs more investigation. Ken indicated that the voter's pamphlet for the August election would have information on this issue and they are looking for members to serve on a committee to write for/against commentary for the pamphlet.

## **2 Year Program Calendar – Paul Yarbrough**

Paul recently met with Ralph and compiled a draft of a planning calendar for the program section of the general meetings for the next two years. He handed out copies, noting that this was a planning document and always subject to change.

- The first step in the process of compiling the calendar was to list things we know/believe will be happening in their respective months. An additional list of noteworthy events and activities to consider adding to the calendar.
- Paul asked the board members to review the document and identify any other known items that should be included.
- Mike noted that September and October have a great deal of GOTV activity.
- Terry noted that in January of 2008 there will most likely be precinct preparation and training. She also asked if there were dates set beyond the precinct caucuses. Ralph advised that the LD Caucus will be 4/5/08 and the county caucus will be on 4/19/08.
- Melissa added that there will be polling & agenda development by the LAC.
- Brad suggested including reconsideration of endorsements in September as a post primary activity.
- Paul has volunteered to coordinate speaker requests. He will gather interest and help determine when speakers fit into the overall plan. Terry advised that she has some potential speakers about criminal justice legislation. Paul suggested that if you know of someone willing to speak, it would be best if you've heard them speak before asking them to a meeting to ensure a good fit.

- Andrew shared that NPI is developing a system to categorize issues into 10 major categories. He offered to share these with Paul to help in the organizational effort.

### **Caucus Planning – Site Surveys**

Terry Thorsos shared that she, Gerry Gelow and Duane Wentz are currently putting plans in place to identify sites for our caucuses.

- We need to identify possible sites, as well as the assets and liabilities of those sites. Terry asked everyone to watch for a report on any potential sites.
- Martin and Terry have lists of sites and contact information from 2004
- Bob suggested it would be good to have list of the “must haves” and “nice to haves” for site selection. This would give a list of specifications from which anyone could work.
- Terry noted that they want to limit the number of people making primary contact with these sites, so the preference is to notify the team members of potential sites and let them make first contact.
- Typical sites are places such as schools, granges, and other similar locations.
- Brad asked about the Kirkland Women’s Club and Terry indicated it was already on the list for further exploration.
- Terry asked everyone to brainstorm on what questions should be asked on a preliminary site survey:
  - Capacity
  - Projection
  - Audio
  - How many people
  - Can divide space
  - Cost
  - Earliest date can reserve
  - Earliest date should
  - Who can bump and what is the latest date we can be bumped
  - Accessibility
- Terry will email her compiled list to the Executive Board for further review.
- Mike asked about mapping the sites with the precincts and Terry advised that Duane is working on this activity.
- Terry also noted that the team would like to get the voting patterns and data to help predict possible attendance and better identify how many precincts should be in each caucus location.
- Terry will continue to coordinate the site surveys temporarily, but we need someone to take on this responsibility on a more permanent basis.

### **Chairs Report**

- Representative Appointments

- Martin noted that he likes the idea of having district representatives appointed to other groups and he intends to continue this practice. He feels this helps establish a record of activities for our district and gives us a point person for questions if something comes up.
- Martin recognized the work Ken has been doing to get our meeting information published in various local newspapers. He asked Ken to take on the appointment as our Media Liaison and continue with this activity in an official role. Ken agreed and noted that he would like to ask everyone to bring in hard copies of their local papers so that he can work further in this area.
- Martin referenced a message he had previously sent on the email lists offering to appoint volunteers as Presidential Campaign Representatives for the district and asked if there were any volunteers for unfilled positions. After discussion the current list is:
  - Kucinich – Judith Shattuck
  - Clinton – Gerry Williams
  - Edwards – Ralph Gorin
  - Obama – To Be Named (under discussion)
 Additionally, it was suggested that Joe Lane be appointed as the representative to the campaign to get Al Gore to run.

- PCO Appointments

- Martin noted that he believes we will have at least two new PCO appointments at the next General Meeting.

- State Meeting

- Martin requested to know who will be attending the upcoming meeting in Bellingham. Those identified are: Martin, Ralph, Priscilla, and Judith. Brad noted that he is not yet certain if he will be able to attend.
- Judith shared that the Progressive Caucus' hospitality suite will be hosting Eric Oemig and the Raging Grannies will be providing some entertainment.

- Chairs and other informal meetings

- Martin is holding informal meetings with the Vice Chairs. He plans to hold similar meetings with other members of the Executive Board as time and schedules allow.

- KCDCC Rules and Bylaws Committee

- Martin is on this committee. They will be meeting tomorrow night.

- New Voter File (VAN)

- Martin received a message with connection information to test the new voter file system.

- General Meeting Contract
  - The new contract for the General Meeting location has been submitted. This contract reserves the room for the remainder of the year. The current contract runs out in June.
  - Terry expressed concerns about the capacity of the room. The current room has capacity for 55. As we get closer to the 2008 elections, this may not suffice.
  - It was agreed we would address this need as we get closer to that time or as we see the growth becoming eminent. However, it would be good to be watching for potential larger venues and keep record of them. Obtaining a bigger room at the same location would cause a significant price increase.
  
- Eastside Chairs Meeting
  - The Eastside Chairs Meeting helps compare how the different district groups operate and share ideas. The group is starting plans for the Eastside dinner.
  
- Eastside Dinner
  - Terry asked that if anyone has a summer or mountain place that can be used to auction off for a weekend retreat to let them know. This is a great draw and raises a significant amount of money used to support the organizations. Other auction items are always needed, as well.
  
- Honors Banquet
  - This is a county level event. Suzie Sheary is looking for people who would like to help plan this event.
  
- Election Coordinator
  - Our district is still in need of an Election Coordinator. This is the position Ovina used to fill. Responsibilities include contacting, confirming availability/eligibility, and submitting a list of suggested or approved election workers.
  - Martin has lists of past volunteers that can be used as the base for these efforts.
  - Position needs to be filled within the next month to assist with the August and November elections.
  
- Thank You from KCDCC for Dues
  - We received a very nice thank you note from the KCDCC for the dues payment we recently made. To date, we've paid \$300 and advised we will pay more based on membership renewals and additions.

## **Treasurer's Report**

No report this month.

## **Summer Picnic – Judith Shattuck**

- Discussion was held about a possible date this summer. Due to primary activities it was decided that the picnic should probably be in late August.
- Ralph suggested it be held the Saturday or Sunday after the primary and that parks should be considered for the venue.

## **Parades**

Upcoming Parades:

- June 2, Duvall Days
- July 4, Carnation and Kirkland
- July 7, Redmond
- A coordinator for the Duvall Days parade. Norm Puri is setting up our participation, but he will be out of town the day of the parade. Martin asked for ideas on who might fill this role. It was suggested to check with the PCOs in Duvall precincts for possible candidates.
- Terry suggested that Martin send a message to Steve Lansing letting him know the dates of the parades. This opened further discussion regarding Steve's question about their carrying their banner. Concerns were raised that having both banners might create a mixed or confusing message. Diane suggested that they simply wear their t-shirts and/or caps, carry hand held signs, etc., but not use their banner.
  - DECISION:** The board agreed to invite the UFCW to join with us and wear their "colors", but not carry their banner.
- A suggestion was also made to send emails to our legislators reminding them of the parade dates.

## **PCO Support**

- Bob noted that a phone tree should be created. This could be used to solicit help on tasks as they come up.
- Bob also noted that the PCO Support Committee is looking to work closely with the Caucus Committee.

## **LAC wrap up meeting**

- Melissa advised that the LAC is interested in getting input on how the processes worked this year. They would like to get everyone's feedback and ideas. They are looking for future improvements at Wednesday night's meeting.

### **Other Committee, Officer, and Representatives Reports**

Reports were not given due to time constraints.

### **Old Business**

No topics discussed due to time constraints.

### **New Business**

No topics discussed due to time constraints.

### **Good of the Order**

- Martin requested everyone's input on tonight's venue. We currently have the library booked for May and June, but can change over if this venue is preferred. General consensus was for the new venue. Martin will schedule it for next month.
- Ralph noted that Tuesday, May 1<sup>st</sup>, John Edwards will be appearing at a town hall meeting in Everett.

### **Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:53 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Priscilla O'Leary, Secretary  
45<sup>th</sup> LD Democrats