

45<sup>th</sup> LD Democrats  
General Meeting Minutes  
August 1, 2007

### **Call to Order and Flag Salute**

The meeting was called to order by Martin Chaney, Chair, at 7:03 p.m. and commenced with the flag salute led by Ralph Gorin.

### **Adoption of the Agenda**

The agenda was adopted by a show of hands.

### **Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes**

The minutes of the last month's meeting, previously posted on the website for review, were adopted by a show of hands.

### **Reports by Elected Officials**

Martin noted that Larry Springer requested a few moments to speak early in the agenda. Larry then came forward to speak about a couple of legislative items being worked on during the interim between sessions.

- The first topic Larry addressed was further work on the 520 bridge and what will take to get it fixed. Larry recently went on an operational tour of the bridge with a group of elected officials, which included climbing down into the pontoons to see how they work. He commented on the amazing engineering job that had been done and how the bridge was designed to work. He noted that every time there are strong winds, workers have to go out and tighten the bridge cables. Studies have shown that high winds are the biggest risk for this bridge and the point at which it is most vulnerable. Current procedures call for the bridge being closed to traffic, and the drawspan opened, whenever there are sustained winds of 45 MPH or more. This helps mitigate some risk to human life, but that is only a precaution and does not fix the problem. Also on the tour were representatives of the homeowners associations for Montlake and The Points, as their constituents will be the most impacted during the repair process. Larry shared his belief that having the funds to repair the 520 bridge is dependent on the passage of the RTID package. He stated that if it fails, there will not be a funding package for the 520 bridge and we will be back to square one for finding a solution. He encouraged support for the upcoming vote on the RTID measure.
- Larry then turned to the topic of the recent Zinnick tragedy. He noted that this issue has created a lot of emotional debate. There have already been a couple of town hall meetings, including one in Federal Way that was followed by a press conference suggesting the implementation of a law supporting "1 strike and your out" for sex crimes. Larry noted that it is possible that tougher sex predator laws

may be passed in the future, but only under special circumstances. Republicans need to work with Democrats between legislative sessions to work out the laws. The Democrats won't allow drawn out, emotional floor debate to take place during the session. He also noted that had the laws being discussed now already been in place, the person who has been charged with the Zinnick crime would have still been in jail at the time the crime was committed. The legislators will be looking very, very carefully at how to beef up monitoring convicted sex offenders when they get out of jail, but they do not intend to have a special session for this topic.

- Q&A:
  - Wayne Farrer noted that there are often laws in place from decades ago to address current issues. He feels if we executed on these laws we would not need to have a lot of the special sessions and new laws. He feels a lot of problems could be solved by executing those laws already in place.

### **Presentation – Region Transportation Issue and the RTID Measure – Andrew Schmid**

- Paul Yarbrough introduced Andrew Schmid and gave a brief overview of his background, including his work with Cynthia Sullivan. Mr. Schmid provided 3 handouts to the members.
- He shared that there has been a three year process of putting together next phase of light rail and public transportation. In 2006, they were set to go forward with a ballot measure, but the governor asked them to hold back and continue working on package. With this package there has been a great deal of collaboration between roads and transit. It contains all kinds of projects that extend up to 20 years out.
- Mr. Schmid shared background on light rail and provided a handout with examples from other western states, including Salt Lake, Utah and Denver, Colorado. A second handout covered light rail and Sounder examples. The third piece regarding roads and transit highlights the integrated plan and shows the major choke points identified around the region.
- The RTID measure is focused on improvements for the key choke points. Mr. Schmid emphasized that it is not just about more pavement and lanes, but also HOV lanes to give a good foundation for bus and rapid transit.
- Mr. Schmid then provided an prepared presentation focused around the five areas addressed by the package:
  - Improve mobility for people transit and freight
  - Expand light rail and transit
  - Improve highways and bridges
  - Create reliable alternatives to driving
  - Fix safety problems

- Build on existing investments and complete projects
- By 2008 the completed Roads & Transit package, combined with current state and Sound Transit investments, would (measured against baseline without investments):
  - Reduce total traffic delay by 25%
  - Increase speeds by nearly 10%
  - Reduce annual freight shipping costs by \$160 million
- Key safety problems:
  - High accident locations (50)
  - Replace or upgrade 3 seismically vulnerable bridges
  - Invest in signals, lanes, etc.
- Expand light rail by 50 miles
  - Expand street care network in Seattle
  - Add transit and business access lines
  - Study future high capacity transit options
  - Move over 300,000 riders a day on light rail
  - Construct 25 new light rail stations
  - Service up to 20 hours a day across the region
  - Provide bicycle paths and walkways
- Extend light rail service
  - 186 new lane miles, including 34 miles of HOV lanes, 75 new miles of general purpose lanes
  - Finish HOV system on SR-167 and King County and connect it to 405
  - Provide 2 way HOV (SR-520 and I-90)
  - Expand buses and vanpools
- Eastside:
  - Light rail across I-90, connecting Overlake, Bellevue and Seattle
  - High priority rail extension to downtown Redmond
  - Improved I-405 corridor with new lanes and better interchanges
  - Rebuild SR-520 bridge with six lanes
  - SR-167 and I-405 interchange: direct connection between northbound and southbound HOV lanes
  - Thousands of new Park & Ride slots
- Mr. Schmid then briefly reviewed some roads and transit key projects and shared the impacts of lost funding due to past Eyman initiatives.
- Costs: \$17.7 billion in total – \$10.8 for transit and 6.9 for roads
- New revenue would come from .6 of one percent of sales tax (.5 for sound transit; .1 for RTID). This equates to six cents on a 10 dollar purchase and \$80 for every \$10,000 worth of value on a vehicle (RTID only). He also noted that the new valuation schedule for vehicles is much closer to blue book value than the old one.
- Mr. Schmid also shared results from polls about the RTID package when a variety of questions were asked. Overall, the results were in the mid 60's supporting the package.
- Q&A:

- Ken Jauch asked which three bridges are those identified as challenged and the percentage of federal matching funds. Mr. Schmid responded that the bridges are the South Park Bridge, the SR-520 Bridge, and Spokane Street viaduct. \$500 million has been received in FTA grants and they have elected to take a conservative approach and assume \$1 billion in federal funding for the proposed \$17.7 billion dollar package. He spoke further about how funding is obtained.
- Bill Roman shared how pleased he is to see an emphasis on public transportation. He then asked if there is going to be anything done about the difficulties of getting public transportation across King and Snohomish County lines. Mr. Schmid responded that the plan includes building out I-405 and completing the HOV network. He shared that the key is to get the HOV lanes completed to fill in missing links. The focus is on increasing bus technology, speeding up dwell times, and completing the HOV network.
- Dave Asher explained in more detail the difficulties of what is happening at SR-520 and I-405 interchange and the concept of braided ramps. He suggested that people who would like to know more access the website: [www.wsdot.wa.gov/projects](http://www.wsdot.wa.gov/projects). At this site you can see the projects with graphical representations showing what the ramps will look like. He then asked Mr. Schmid to explain when the new taxes would go away. Mr. Schmid responded that the nickel package does sunset, but the nine cent package does not. He was unsure about the sales tax for RTID. He further shared that a reason for continuing the tax is to get the revenues necessary to operate and maintain the projects once they are built.
- Henry Brown asked who in Bellevue is fighting the Eastlake project. Mr. Schmid responded that much of the resistance has backing from Kemper Freeman, who is ideologically against mass transit even though his development projects continue to increase traffic in the Bellevue area. He also noted that Microsoft strongly supports the package as they realize the necessity of transportation improvements if they are going to be able to expand in this region.
- Henry Brown then asked if any research had been done on transportation project in the Bay area or Los Angeles. Mr. Schmid indicated that they are currently researching Bay area projects; however their projects are more medium to heavy rail solutions that are fully separated. He noted that Portland has a good system and near half of Portlanders will ride buses and trains at least two times a month.

## **Reports by Elected Officials, Candidates, and Ballot Measure Proponents**

- **Eric Oemig**

- Eric introduced Georgia Requa, his legislative assistant. Previously, Georgia worked for 5 years for a Representative who

was retiring when Eric first took office. A member of the Senate leadership told Georgia to check out Eric's website, which she did. She recalled one of the first things Eric shared with her was his philosophy that constituents come first. She was both impressed and appreciative of this stance. She also shared a couple of examples where Eric took on issues for constituents.

- **Dave Asher**

- Dave spoke about the RTID transportation package. He shared that he is on the Eastside Transportation Partnership representing the City of Kirkland and that he has a personal appreciation for public transportation in that he rides the bus across SR-520 every day. It is an integral part of life and an essential service.
- Dave shared that he can't get behind supporting the proposed package. He believes one of the fundamental things you need to do is fix the worst problems first. He feels that the "cobbled together" approach for the SR-520 Bridge is built on too many assumptions. He noted that heavy contributors from Montlake championed adding \$500 million dollars to the bridge so that it would not go through their neighborhood, which changed the assumptions and that less than \$2.5 billion dollars of the \$4.4 billion dollar bridge is paid for in the package. It assumes additional future funding and consumes planning and money for through 2050.
- Dave noted that in looking at this from the perspective of the City of Kirkland, the package actually reduces the Sound Transit investment in Kirkland. He shared that in the City of Redmond there are approximately \$5 million dollars in improvements underway that will be abandoned before they are even completed if the package is improved.
- Dave does not feel the package is put together well. He noted that the 10 year plan that was passed in 1996 will probably be completed sometime around 2010 or 2011. He urged everyone to consider that with this package they are making a generational decision.
- Q&A:
  - A comment was made that on the maps previously show, Renton, Kirkland and Bothell are clearly shown but the rest of the eastside looks like an afterthought. Bellevue gets recognized, but other eastside routes are even shown.
- Martin suggested holding any further discussion on this topic until the endorsements portion of the agenda since we will be considering endorsement of the RTID measure at that time.

- **Jessica Greenway**

- Jessica is currently campaigning for re-election to the Kirkland City Council. She thanked the members of the 45<sup>th</sup> Legislative District for their endorsement and shared that she was proud to have recently gained the unanimous endorsement of the King County Democrats. She has also received endorsements from the Kirkland Police Guild and Kirkland Firefighters, as well as the Washington Conservation Voters and the Sierra Club.
- She seeks to be a voice for environmental leadership, open and transparent government, and fair employment practices. She takes pride in her reputation for speaking out and working hard for the things we believe in and our needs.
- **Brad Larssen**
  - Brad introduced his campaign manager, Adam White. He noted an urgent need to phone bank about 12,000 voters and solicited volunteers. The phone banking efforts are focused on getting out the vote and letting them know they need to write Brad's name in and fill in the bubble next to it. For those who volunteered, Adam had phone lists available to begin as soon as possible.
  - Brad shared that he has received the endorsement of the Seattle P.I. and they stated that they believe he is someone who can give Jane Hague a run for her money. Originally the P.I. said that they usually don't interview write in candidates, but the endorsements and volunteer support that Brad has received made them reconsider this position in his case. He also shared that he interviewed with the Seattle Times today and looks forward to the hearing the results.
  - Brad thanked Kathleen Reynolds for her hard work in getting the mailer piece created. There were continual changes during the process and he appreciated her dedication to getting as much information included as possible.
  - Brad also shared that he taped an interview with the Bellevue community college radio station that will air tomorrow evening at 7:00 p.m.
  - Q&A:
    - A question was raised about the need to have an accurate spelling of his last name on the ballot. He shared that the county has obtained a ruling that any reasonable spelling will be accepted.
    - Bob Horn noted that a second canvas day is being organized for Brad's district. He praised the volunteer efforts of Gerry Williams, Gary Gelow, Bob Osrowske, Aileen Carter and Dwayne Wentz for both the organizational support and their willingness to walk multiple precincts. There are 4 or 5 precincts remaining to get completed. They will be meeting Saturday morning at Noah's Bagels in Kirkland at 10:00 a.m.

to kick off the day's canvassing efforts. He also shared that all the volunteer work being done in the 45<sup>th</sup> LD frees up the candidate to concentrate on the 48<sup>th</sup> LD and 41<sup>st</sup> LD where additional organizational oversight is needed.

- **Kurt Peppard – Barack Obama Campaign for Washington State**
  - Mr. Peppard introduced himself as a volunteer grassroots organizer who used to be involved in politics many years ago and is returning to being active because of Barack Obama. He feels the campaign is giving hope to many.
  - He shared that significantly beyond the dollar amounts for the second quarter funding is the fact that well over 250,000 individual contributors gave to the campaign. He also noted that Senator Obama is not accepting PAC money as he wants to represent the people and not be beholden to corporations and PACs.
  - He also noted that many recently recruited PCOs are coming into active party work because of the campaign.
  
- Martin noted that in giving Mr. Peppard time on the agenda he is not being biased towards any one Presidential campaign and we are interested in all of the campaigns coming to our meetings and giving updates. He also noted that the campaigns are great sources of PCOs for us, as well.
  
- **Garrett Oppenheim – U.S. Congress**
  - Mr. Oppenheim introduced himself and shared his desire to run for the 8<sup>th</sup> Congressional District Representative position in 2008. He passed out a flyer and shared some of his goals, including:
    - End the occupation in Iraq and help stabilize the country with the help of United Nations peace-keeping forces
    - Halt global warming by improving fuel efficiency of our cars, removing fossil fuel dependency and promoting mass transit
    - Increase the number of representatives in Congress to around 1,000 to improve the representation of Americans
  - Q&A:
    - Mr. Oppenheim was to tell us more of his background. He shared that he has been in Redmond since 1993. He is currently in his second year of law school at Seattle University.
    - Martin asked if he had filed his candidacy. He replied that he had not yet done. He is currently reaching out to test the waters.

## **Endorsement Committee Recommendations**

Kathleen Reynolds led this portion of the discussion on behalf of the Endorsement Committee. She reminded everyone that the Endorsement Committee's report on tonight's topics was posted to the website for earlier review.

- **Referendum 67**

- Kathleen gave the background of this referendum and noted that the Endorsements Committee recommends approval of Referendum 67. The insurance lobby is heavily funding opposition and is supporting a multimillion dollar campaign over the next few months. The Trial Lawyers Association is supporting the referendum. Washington State Democrats have also endorsed the referendum.
- Kathleen moved to endorse a "yes" position on Referendum 67 and the motion was seconded.
- DISCUSSION:
  - Paul Yarbrough asked about the purpose of a referendum and if it was a law. Ralph Gorin clarified that a referendum is similar to an initiative. It comes from the people, but it refers directly to a law that has been passed by the legislature. An initiative can be on any subject.
  - Jessica Greenway asked for clarification on exactly how we should mark the ballot if we agree with the endorsement. Kathleen shared that by approving the referendum you are voting to approve the law that the legislature passed.

**VOTE: PASSED, unanimous**

- **RTID Measure**

- Kathleen shared that the Endorsement Committee is recommending we vote yes on the RTID measure. They feel that transportation investment is long overdue. It is understood that this package will not please everyone. Of the three counties involved in the creation of the package, there was only one dissenting vote.
- Kathleen moved to endorse a "yes" position on the RTID measure and the motion was seconded.
- Discussion was called for and there was none offered.

**VOTE: PASSED, with majority**

### **Election Operations Update**

- Bob noted that he had already shared the information for this topic as part of the discussion during Brad Larssen's presentation.

### **Chair's Report**

- Martin review key items on the calendar of events from the back of the agenda.
  - Primary: Martin noted the upcoming Primary Election on August 21<sup>st</sup> and asked how many poll workers were present (2). He shared

that King County is always in need of poll workers and there is still time to call and sign up for a training session. Henry Brown noted that the King County website has the poll work position listed as an open ended position for application.

- All Mail Balloting: Martin shared an update from the King County Council. The intent is still to completely move to all mail ballots by the fall of 2008. The decision has been made to do so with the same equipment we already have and supplement it with the same type of equipment if needed.
- Picnic: Martin asked who present was planning to attend the 45<sup>th</sup> LD picnic planned for August 25<sup>th</sup>. At least 14 indicated they are planning to attend. Paul Yarbrough passed around a sign up sheet. He also noted that donations are needed for raffle items. They can be created or donated. Martin has volunteered to bake bread as one of raffle items. Anyone who has donation should contact Paul Yarbrough or Judith Shattuck.
- Eastside Dinner: This annual fundraiser and fun-filled event will be held October 7<sup>th</sup> at the Westin Hotel in Bellevue in the Grand Ballroom. Patty Murray confirmed she will be there. Rob Estes will be the Master of Ceremonies. Tickets will be \$95 per person. This fundraiser provides most of the money we need to pay for meeting room and expenses throughout the year. The organizers are targeting an overall attendance of 200, so the target for the 45<sup>th</sup> LD is around 50 people, or 6+ tables of 8 people each. Martin is asking our legislators and Darcy Burner to host tables, among others. When you sign up to attend, you can request the table where you would like to be seated, depending upon availability.
- September Guest Speaker: Martin share that Dwight Pelz will be attending our September 5<sup>th</sup> meeting to talk about organizing caucuses and improving Democratic performance.
- Posters: Martin shared that between now and the general election, we want to put up posters of our endorsed candidates during our meetings to make the room more festive and remind everyone who we are supporting.

### **PCO Appointments**

- No PCO appointments made this month

### **Committee and Officer and Representatives Report**

- **King County Democrats Central Committee Report**
  - There was a great turnout at the last meeting. The meeting was focused on endorsements, with some races generating a fair amount of excitement. The county endorsed both Democrats running for the King County Prosecutor's office – Bill Sherman and Keith Scully. Jessica Greenway also received the county's endorsement for Kirkland City Council.
- **Treasurer's Report – Terry Linkletter**

- We did not have the usual food present at the meeting tonight, so we won't be getting our usual donations in that manner. However, everyone was encouraged to place donations in the button bin and feel free to take a button. Wayne Farrer passed around the bin for contributions.
- Terry provided an update on our current revenues, expenses and balance. We are still well below what we had budgeted for revenues at this time. Expenses for the caucuses will begin very soon, as we need to start placing reservations with the schools later this month.
- **45<sup>th</sup> LD Committees Reports**
  - None were offered.
- **Other Officers Reports**
  - None were offered.

### **Short Topics / Open Forum**

- Bill Roman shared that it was his understanding from today's news that Barack Obama stated that if he was President he would use the military to attack Al Qaeda members in Pakistan without Pakistan's permission. He asked Mr. Peppard if he could give any clarification on that report. Mr. Peppard noted that he was a volunteer and not a spokesperson for the campaign. He then shared that Senator Obama has said in the past that he is not opposed to any war, just stupid wars. He indicated he was not sure of all the facts as he had just heard this on the news, as well, and that he would need to study it further.
- Inge Theissen shared that she received a call today letting her know there is a need for poll observers for all day events in Tukwila.
- Henry Brown noted that on Tuesday, June 12<sup>th</sup>, his wife gave birth to their second daughter, Alexandria. He received congratulations from those present.
- Terry Linkletter rose to remind everyone that dues are always welcome and shared dues levels available for anyone present interested in joining.
- Adam White shared that he had phone lists for all the relevant precincts with him and he could distribute them to anyone interested in making calls on Brad Larssen's behalf. The calls are to Democrats only and are a slightly wider list than was used during the canvassing efforts.

### **Old Business**

- None was offered.

### **New Business**

- None was offered.

**Good of the Order**

- None was offered.

**Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 9:01 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

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