

Benton County Democrats General Meeting

Online via Zoom

09/23/2021

Call to order 7:06pm

Present: Carl Baker, Kendall Miller, Richard Reuther, Kitty Tominem, Ragan Faylor, Regina Speer, Jesalyn Cole, Chris Tracy, Julie Soderquist, Kurt Conrad, Carly Rang, Leona Hassing, Cedar Kennedy, Justin Raffa, Jayce Wright, Richard Badalamente, Sebastian Malachar, Allison Ball, Bonnie Baker, Mark Nameth, Allison Dabler

Chair amends agenda to add presentation by Carly Rang, Community Engagement Coordinator for Scout Clean Energy.

Motion to approve amended agenda, seconded, approved by all.

Secretary (Julie)

Motion to accept August minutes as presented, seconded, approved by all.

Treasurer

Current balance: \$8888.91 in checking, \$7681.84 in savings, for a total of \$16,570.75. Refund has been requested from the fair; we might be able to use this as credit for the 2022 fair. Motion to accept Treasurer's report, seconded, approved by all.

Scout Clean Energy

Carly Rang presented an overview of the Horse Heaven Clean Energy Project

Chair (Richard)

Announced the passing of our PCO Michelle Levenite and Yakima progressive Matt Tomaskin. No services planned at this time. The group held a moment of silence to honor them. AG Bob Ferguson was in town and met with several locals. Covid numbers are increasing, complicated by Idaho's sending their overflow patients to eastern WA. Sunday Oct 3 we will have a potential 4th CD candidate coming to town. Time and place TBD. Redistricting is in full swing; 8th, 9th and 16th LDs are affected. All are encouraged to go online to view the proposed maps and give testimony. Need to begin considering the pros and cons of acquiring office space.

Elections (Justin)

Candidates are now going through the process of interviews and forums. TCH editorial board interviews are in full swing; League of Women Voters will film another forum in early October. Received message from Question PAC, based in Ephrata, a group dedicated to defeating GOP candidates in rural districts. They hope to make a presentation to our group.

VC1 & Organization (Alison)

Continuing to work with local candidates, and trying to recruit more volunteers. Any PCO looking for a way to help contact Allison. Save the Date for that potential 4th CD challenger has been changed to October 9.

VC2 (Open)

SCM #1 (Regina)

Attended Rural Committee meeting, discussed Snake River Dam breaching/Simpson Plan. Simpson Plan does not force Congress to address the issue of water and electric power being addressed before dams and breached.

SCM #2 (Sabastian)

Attended Rules Committee meeting, not much to report. We do want everyone to provide feedback on the redistricting maps.

Resolutions (Kitty)

Working on consolidating resolution language; hope to put it before the body in October.

Labor (Jessica)

Not present

Events (Carl)

Signature gathering for I-1362 Whole Washington suspended due to covid surge. TC Democrats September 10 and October 8 candidate forums - virtual only. Benton County Fair parade was successful. September 24 - Climate Protest. October 2 - Womxns March. Attended Teach Truth protest at CBC in response to anti-CRT propaganda. Possible Veteran's day parade participation.

8th LD (Chris)

Attended Chair's Meeting for state party. After redistricting if there are two PCOs for the same precinct, both remain in their positions until the next election. State Committee members will remain in their positions until the next election. Preliminary maps are out - the feeling is this will go to the state supreme court. All are encouraged to visit redistricting.wa.gov, view the maps, and give either oral or written testimony as a resident of a county or city rather than as a registered Democrat. Testimony will be helpful if it goes to the supreme court. Congressional maps are also of concern, whether the 4th and 5th CD will grow vertically or horizontally.

16th LD (Evertt)

Not present

Unfinished Business

Return to in-person meetings: there was a state zoom meeting regarding return to in-person meetings. Eboard meetings are hybrid but this may not work for the larger general meetings.

Cedar: Progressive Caucus has held hybrid meetings successfully many times. Lotus of the Moon in the Uptown has meeting space, \$55/hour for a three-month contract, includes wifi, space for 150 people. May be good option for the future.

New Business

Discuss pending election of 2nd VC. Candidate should ideally be male. Notice of election goes out 10 days before the general meeting.

Cedar: trending in Seattle news --AG Ferguson is going to sue the Biden administration because the federal government is trying to eliminate laws that allow hanford workers to access benefits after exposure to toxic chemicals. Also trending in Seattle news is the narrative that the key to saving orcas and salmon is to breach the dams. Inclined to vote against the Simpson plan because the issue is much more complex than the plan allows.

Richard - Easterday has proposed a 28,000 head livestock operation at Boardman. The Dept of Ecology has several listening sessions planned through October 24.

Good of the Order

Follow the redistricting process. At the very least, send written concerns.

Sept 28 is national voter registration day.

Get your flu shot!

8:38pm move to adjourn, seconded, approved by all