

## **Josephine County Democrats Executive Committee**

Jan 29 2022

The February 2022 meeting will be an Education Forum with a lineup of guests who will report on how Grants Pass students have fared during the last two tumultuous years of pandemic, school board harassment and education gaps. Bob Bath, a teacher, Constance Palaia, potential school board candidate and Kevin Marr who has kept an eye on school matters for many years, plus retired school superintendent Don Demsher will discuss the unique factors facing schoolchildren today. The meeting has been moved to Wednesday, February 9 instead of the usual second Tuesday to accommodate the guest speakers. The time, beginning at 6:30 pm with check in and chatter, remains the same.

Chair Dorothy Yetter and Vice-Chair Lynda Spangler said they met with Josephine County Commissioner Dan DeYoung last week where they discussed the code enforcement ordinance recently passed by the board but challenged by Sen. Art Robinson who managed to get the matter on the May ballot. Should we support the code ordinance? Those present agreed we should have DeYoung and possibly someone from Legal Council present at our March meeting to discuss why we need it and then let our PCPs decide whether or not the Josephine County Democrats should support code enforcement. They also discussed finding funding to keep the sheriff's department running. DeYoung's idea is a 3 percent seasonal sales tax with a maximum of \$60 on expensive items such as cars and he will be prepared to discuss that.

The code enforcement ordinance was crafted as a response to the growing menace of illegal cannabis growing in Josephine County. Kevin noted that his brother in Michigan read about Oregon's plight in a local paper there so that's how notable we are becoming.

Also discussed was finding a candidate to challenge Commissioner Darin Fowler who is up for re-election this year. Names were suggested but no Democrat has emerged yet. Nate Seable, a Republican Democrat supported when he ran against Herman Baertschiger last time, has filed.

Dorothy asked if anyone wanted to take on organizing a Neighborhood Leader program for the next election. With no takers, she said she may tiptoe into it but won't have much time to concentrate on it. Rebecca Anderson said she would help but didn't want to lead it. Dorothy said next year she plans to step down as Chair and devote more time to Neighborhood Leader activities. This has been a hard-sell in Josephine County, especially during the pandemic, because it involves canvassing neighborhoods and fewer people are volunteering for that. It also involves phone banking but with today's technology it's hard to reach people by phone. Texting has had some success, however, but takes some training of volunteers.

Sheri Morin, former events coordinator, said she is willing to occupy a Democrat's booth at Riverside Park this year during Boatnik. She said this could replace our usual float in the parade. She suggested a theme of Unity: Uniting our Community on Common Ground. Issues such as police and sheriff support, illegal cannabis and homelessness are places to start working together for the common good and could be emphasized in our booth.

Dorothy suggested we take a look at <https://sites.google.com/view/jococharterreview/home> to keep up with what the Charter Committee, on which she sits, is doing. The Charter Committee has two years to update the current county charter, which will be edited by commissioners and put on the ballot for approval.