

Josephine County Democrats

General Meeting Zoom/In Person

July 11, 2022

The meeting began with a reminder that anyone wanting to become a PCP can still do it but they need to be appointed. PCPs have an opportunity to have their voices heard in the Democratic Party and in the next election as Democrats work to get out the vote. Chair Dorothy Yetter said only 30 percent of Democrats vote but that number goes way up if voters are contacted and reminded what's at stake.

Treasurer Colette Storms reported we had a good month and we now have about \$8,000 in the bank. We got several donations at the Pride Festival and people are continuing their monthly contributions. We also got a \$490 grant from the DPO to cover the costs of outreach which include the Pride booth, the booth at the Josephine County Fair and swag for the booth. Dorothy explained the DPO (Democratic Party of Oregon) makes grants available to local parties that apply.

This meeting had no guest speaker, allowing for a discussion of relevant topics. Those included:

Nominating Committee – Brian Clark, Ted Watts and Vickie Palmerton volunteered to be on the Committee to help find candidates to run for party offices. Chair of the Committee is Rick Flora. Libby Watts is on the Committee. People on the Committee can't run for a party office. Voting will take place this December for Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary and Treasurer.

John Rickert reported he's put together a spreadsheet of people who have been elected to the county commission for several years. Only three have not been Republicans, he said. Lynda Demsher pointed out that Josephine County has been in Republican hands for the past 100 years.

Colette Storms is organizing the Josephine County Fair booth and needs volunteers. When she lines up volunteers she'll put out a schedule. She said CD 2 candidate Joe Yetter is expected to drop by the fair booth to meet people. Dorothy pointed out they are not related.

Jerry Allen is concerned Democrats aren't pushing back against Republicans who seem to be leaning toward becoming Neo-Nazis. He said we need to be the party of truth.

Lynda Spangler announced a fund-raiser for Brady Keiser who is running against state Rep. Lily Morgan. It will be August 28 at her house, 3-6 pm. She also wanted people to go to the Tuesday night Forum where county commissioners will discuss funding for the sheriff's department. That's why this month's meeting was scheduled for Monday, to avoid a meeting conflict for Democrats.

A discussion about funding the sheriff ensued with Jerry saying the best way for the county to convince voters to tax themselves to pay for services is to convince them they'll get better service. Others complained about long wait times when a deputy is needed and worried the

illegal marijuana raids take time away from regular patrols. It was explained that the state has contributed money to pay for officers who deal with the illegal grows.

A brief discussion was held regarding the pros and cons of allowing psilocybin to be allowed for medical use only in Josephine County. County Commissioners are asking voters to approve or disapprove it. Most present wanted to find out more about it.

Caucus reports: Health Caucus Chair Kerry Michele gave a detailed report about the quest for single-payer healthcare in Oregon and what's happening at the federal level where the two main issues are Medicare for All and Medicare Advantage. She said Medicare Advantage may be taken over by private entities and senior citizens need to know about this. She said as far as healthcare, Sen. Jeff Merkley is on-board with a single-payer system but Sen. Ron Wyden needs a bit more convincing. On psilocybin, Kerry said we do need to figure out where we stand on the issue and convey that to the public. This may be a good subject for our newsletter, she suggested.

Libby Watts gave a short presentation about the importance of the Neighborhood Leaders Get Out The Vote (GOTV) project. She said Jamie Mcleod-Skinner attributes her win to the Neighborhood Leader program that worked hard for her. She said each NL gets about 35 or 40 registered Democrats to remind to vote, which usually takes the form of phone calls and postcards but can include personal visits. Turnout in counties where Democrats are in the minority is very, very important and for this year's November election contacts with voters should start as early as August. More NLs are needed, she said, to get the county covered.

Environmental Caucus Chair Joe Stodola announced their next meeting and said their focus right now is on the November election and where candidates stand on environmental issues.

Colette said there is a lot of interest in restarting the Stonewall Caucus but so far no one has volunteered to lead it.

Vickie Palmerton, who is doing our social media, said she attended a Win With Words forum and got some good ideas for messaging. Our posts need to be engaging and repetitive in order to get noticed and need to counter Republican lies.

Brian Clark reminded people he needs volunteers for the road cleanup scheduled for Saturday at 9 a.m.