

Josephine County Democrats

Minutes: July 9, 2019

Present: Forty people were in attendance, including all members of the Executive Committee, delegates, and a quorum of PCPs.

Jean Mount read a beautiful tribute to Dixie Owens written by Judy Williams. Dixie was a long-time Josephine County Democrat who passed away recently, just six months after her husband and former JoCo Dems Chair Howard died.

Action: The June minutes and treasurer's report were approved.

Chair Brian Clark was elected to be a CD 2 delegate even though he doesn't live in the district. The CD2 bylaws allow Chairs of county central committees in CD2 to be delegates to CD2 if they have an unfilled position.

Virginia Moon was elected to be a PCP.

Announcements:

- Chair Brian Clark announced the Adopt-a-Highway clean-up project is set for 9 a.m. Sunday, July 21st. Volunteers are needed to pick up trash along the Redwood Highway in the vicinity of RCC in Grants Pass.
- A Close the Camps Rally will take place on the Courthouse steps Friday, July 11 at 5 p.m. All are welcome to join the Southern Oregon Justice Alliance there.
- The next monthly Hangout at Double Taps in Grants Pass will be held Wednesday, July 17, 6-9 p.m.
- Fair booth volunteers are needed for two-hour shifts. Sheri Morin is taking sign-ups. Also needed are volunteers to help with set-up Tuesday, August 13 at 4 p.m. which is the same day as the Democrats' next meeting, starting at 6:30 p.m.

Reports:

- Treasurer Anita Savio reported the fund-raising campaign has brought our account up to \$5,638 from \$3,965, not counting the most recent donations. In-kind donations, including office space, was up as well.
- Vice-Chair Dorothy Yetter reported the membership committee will be staying in touch with people who don't show up for several meetings, urging them to re-engage. The committee is also reaching out to non-affiliated voters, inviting them to join the Democrats so they can vote in the primary.
- Dorothy also said the Strategic Plan is being completed, thanks to meetings via Zoom. She said a survey has been developed to gather more information and invited people to complete the on-line survey so we can find out how well we're doing, what issues people think are important, what we should focus on, and what we could improve.
- Events Chair Sheri Morin said this is the third year Democrats will have a booth at the Josephine County Fair and invited people to sign up for two hour shifts. The booth will be operating from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. August 14-17. Parking will be tight and people are advised to carpool or park at the YMCA and take the shuttle over. Because of some harassment last year, she said she talked to the Fair Board and they will not tolerate it. This year Democrats have been advised not to engage with anyone trying to harass, and to call security right away. Sheri said volunteers should stay positive and friendly, help people find out about issues, sell t-shirts, buttons and other party items, and

register new voters or people who want to change their registration to Democrat. The fair booth provides an opportunity to show the community Democrats are here to help, and they aren't going away, she said.

Caucuses and Committees

- The Health Caucus and Stonewall Caucus reported they are just getting organized and will be reporting on activities soon. The Youth Caucus is just getting up and running after a recess at RCC.
- The Environmental Caucus, represented by Richard Flora, said it was disappointing that HB 2020 didn't pass, but it will be back. He urged Democrats to write to their state representatives, including the Democrats who didn't vote for the bill, and let them know how disappointed you are with them, especially those involved in the walkout. He also said it would be a good idea to write to those who voted for it, letting them know how much you appreciate them. Flora said currently Oregon allows unlimited donations to state representatives, so even some Democrats voted for their "richer constituents." He will post a list of all the Senators and show how they voted on josephinedemocrats.org soon.

Speaker: Nathan Soltz, the young, energetic Chair of the Democratic Party of Oregon's Congressional District 2, as well as the Chair of the Latino Caucus, gave a lesson on how the state party functions and the importance of having local delegates in voting positions. He started by saying CD2 is the geographically largest Congressional District in the USA, with Harney County alone twice the size of Oregon's CD5. He said CDs in Oregon are given quite a bit of autonomy, but do help shape the state party's platform, recruit people to run for office. He said the Party is now concentrating on getting ready for 2020 and the state convention, and told how people can become delegates to that and the national convention, which, unfortunately, is quite expensive to attend. Soltz said anyone with questions can contact him at CD2@DPO.org.

Discussion: Soltz was asked why it's so expensive to go to a national convention. He said the costs mostly involve transportation and lodging as the convention fees are low. The conventions are usually in cities where lodging nearby can run \$500 a night. People who have family in the area can save on lodging costs, but said he had to stay an hour out in 2016 and his hotel was still \$150 a night. The state party is working on a way to provide more scholarships but he relied on a GoFundMe page to help raise money for 2016. Delegate issues that have come up concerned the way the Party tries to ensure an equal number of men and women are represented. For a while the process left out non-binary people, but that has changed, he said. Concerning people's ability to be a CD delegate if they are low-income, Soltz said the Meredith Wood Smith Fund has been created to help with transportation expenses. Donations to that fund go directly toward scholarships for people who might not otherwise be able to attend. Meetings are also being held around the District as well, getting away from the Portland area to make accessibility better.

Actionable Items:

Volunteers are needed for the July Adopt-a-Highway cleanup.
Volunteers are needed for the Democrats' booth at the Josephine County Fair Aug. 14-17.
People are asked to complete the survey on josephinedemocrats.org
Donations to the Josephine County Democrats are still needed.

The meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

Submitted by Secretary Lynda Demsher