

Warren County Democratic Committee
February 11, 2016 - Draft Meeting Minutes

Present: Vicki Althaus, Charles Barbour, Hannah and Bret Bement, Jackie Bourque, John and Connie Cermak, Jathan Collins, Kathy and Tom Conkey, Kevin Connor, Kym Crump, Charlotte Detwiler, Brenna Doane, Alicia Dunmyer, Megan Durham, Patricia Failmezger, Denette and Steve Foreman, Barry and Moya Gaffney, Angela Renee Gibson, Barbara Greco, Bill Hall, Elva Harkrader, Laura Henderson, Tamara Houde, Rea and Tom Howarth, Karen Howell-Miller, Lissa Hubbard, Corey Hunsdon, Luann Jacobs, Lisa Jenkins, Barbara Jentzsch, Eric Jones, Sarah Jones, Eka Kapiotis, Kimberly Kemp, Carrie Keyes, Dorothy Landry, Michel Landry, David MacMichaels, Hugh Martin, Pamela Martin, Savanna McCoy, Karen McGraw, Mikaylin Morales, Roy Mullins, Robin Nida, Eric and Carol Olson, Carl and Kevin Olson, Meredith Parnes, Sidney and Bill Quinn, Wanda Rice, Gloria and Jack Rickel, Melissa Yoder Ricks, Stevi Robinson, Kate Rudacille, Naomi Salus, Len Sherp, Sharon St. Amand, Gretchen and Roger Straw, Fern Vazquez, Kat Wallace, Karen Weinberg, Bruce White, Jane Whitney, Alane Yates.

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 11:04AM by Tom Conkey, Vice-Chairman.

Quorum Determination: The secretary and membership confirmed a quorum.

Greetings and Chairman's Comments

On behalf of the WCDC, Tom Conkey welcomed all in attendance, especially those present who were not WCDC members, of which there were many! He then turned the meeting over to Tom Howarth, Chairman. Tom Howarth thanked all present, especially all those who had contributed to the effort made during the election. He then announced that he would resign as WCDC Chairman due to health reasons.

Election of new WCDC Chair

Tom Howarth introduced Steve Foreman as a candidate to replace him as Chairman and asked if there were other nominations. Upon hearing none, a motion to accept Steve Foreman as the new Chairman of the WCDC was made, seconded and passed unanimously by the WCDC membership. As such, the meeting was turned over to Steve Foreman.

Resolution in Appreciation of Tom Howarth

Jackie Bourque proposed a resolution to express the WCDC's appreciation to Tom for the enormous contributions he made in bringing new life into this Committee as well as being willing to enter the race as the 6th District Democratic Congressional candidate. The resolution (see **Addendum I** to these Minutes) was unanimously adopted by the membership.

Presentation of "Grassroots Democrats of the Year" Award

Steve Foreman reported that the third annual 6th District Fund Raising Dinner was held on January 26th in Harrisonburg to recognize Grassroots Democrats from the district. From our area, Jackie Bourque and Peg Goodyear, co-chairs of the Fundraising Committee of the WCDC, were selected to receive the Award. Since neither Jackie nor Peg were in attendance at the Dinner, Steve presented Jackie Bourque with the awards, thanking her and Peg for the enormous contribution they made to the WCDC throughout 2016. Jackie gratefully accepted the Awards on behalf of both Peg and herself. In addition, she announced that both she and Peg Goodyear have agreed to head the Fundraising Committee for 2017, eliciting much delight and appreciation from the WCDC membership!

Legislative Nominating Committee

The purpose of the State Legislative Nominating Committee is to establish a process by which Democratic candidates will be chosen. In District 6, there has been a discussion about determining which districts are likely to elect Democrats and whether and how we might help such districts when we have no Democrat running in our own district. A suggestion was made to seek guidance from the Virginia Democratic Party.

It was emphasized that the Republicans continue to roll into elective offices. In our area, "they are the government". We have to begin with grassroots change and try to get Democratic candidates in some local races.

Steve Foreman noted that there are approximately 7000 unregistered voters in Warren County. He has statistics on those over 18 and not voting in the last election. He encouraged outreach to this population.

Up For Election in 2017

The discussion broadened into the importance and absolute necessity of supporting the Virginia elections for Governor, Lt. Governor and Attorney General which will take place in 2017. Kym Crump, our District 6 representative with lots of wisdom and experience, underlined the importance of this election and how much attention it will get nationally because it is the first significant election after the 2016 presidential election.

In 2017, a member of the Warren County Board of Supervisors will be elected in Fork and Happy Creek districts as well as a School Board member in Fork and Happy Creek districts.

2017 Meeting Location

As of this date, no decision has been made where the WCDC monthly meetings will be held for the remainder of 2017. The Executive Committee has looked into the obvious local meeting places which either are not available (such as the Government Minutes, page 3

Center) or have drawbacks (such as requiring additional liability insurance). The importance of having a regular, convenient and consistent meeting place is noted.

Committee Reports

Finance: Report given by Waller Wilson, Treasurer

Total cash on hand as of December 10, 2016: \$4911.64

Total cash on hand as of February 11, 2017: \$4273.74

He also added his gratitude to Jackie Bourque and Peg Goodyear for their outstanding fundraising efforts and for their willingness to continue into 2017 in that capacity.

Communications:

Rea Howarth, Chairman, thanked Steve Foreman and Kat Wallace for their continued support, and also is in need of additional committee members. She asked for feedback on both the Facebook Page and the Website (**www.warrencodems.org**).

Jackie Bourque asked whether or not there is an option to donate to the WCDC online via the website? It is noted that the WCDC does have an Act Blue account which is currently not active.

Several people suggested that the Communications Committee work on activating the Act Blue account and getting a calendar of events on the WCDC website .

Community Outreach

Kat Wallace reported on her progress on the "Continuing the Conversation" a nonpartisan public forum to help our communities air their frustrations and to focus on community issues which would lead to action. Kat brought a flyer with contact information to become more informed about the project.

Throughout the meeting, there was much enthusiasm and many suggestions of possible actions the WCDC could take related to resistance to the current President and other activities which members might want to get involved in (see **Addendum II** to these Minutes). However, it is important to remember that the mission of this Committee is to elect Democrats, and that remains the primary focus of the WCDC.

Respectfully submitted,

Connie Cermak, Secretary

Addendum I – Resolution of Appreciation

Addendum II- Ideas, Actions, Comments & Reminders

ADDENDUM I
Resolution in Appreciation of Tom Howarth

***Whereas**, Tom Howarth served as Chair of the Warren County Democratic Committee in 2016, and*

***Whereas** he presided with exceptional ability and dignity, and*

***Whereas** he was chair during a very difficult presidential election, with overwhelming odds in the Warren County area, and*

***Whereas** he was and continues to be concerned and caring about all people in Warren County, Virginia, the United States, and the world, and*

***Whereas** he answered the call to enter the Virginia political arena as the Democratic candidate for the 6th District Congressional seat, and*

***Whereas** his knowledge of politics continues to inspire all of the Democrats, both here and in the state,*

***Be it resolved and known to all**, the Warren County Democratic Committee gives our thanks and great appreciation for Tom Howarth as Chairman, his term ending February 11, 2017.*

ADDENDUM II

Ideas, Actions, Comments & Reminders

(listed in random order)

Kym Crump – The local Chamber of Commerce is not a member of the National Chamber of Commerce. It is a community-based chamber.

Len Sherp – we are (should be?) trying to reach out to the Latino community – he speaks Spanish and, with others who speak Spanish, would like to establish a Latino Outreach Committee. Also mentioned the enthusiasm of the “Royal Resisters”.

It looks like we have more diversity in this larger group. Should we establish an “under-30” group?

Moya Gaffney (moya824@aol.com) chairs the Literacy Volunteer Project.

Linda Allen (ljallen125@embarqmail.com) is working on the Center for Workforce Development (“homeless project”).

A number of marches will be taking place, locally (Royal Resisters) as well as Nationally (science, climate change, women’s rights, etc). Does WCDC publish a list of marches?

Stevi Robinson – would like to spearhead a WCDC person-to-person outreach effort to try to educate voters who are virtually voting against their best interests. “They” are not who they say they are and we need to change people’s perceptions.

Megan Durham – joined others in acknowledging the necessity of having good information and suggested the WCDC come up with tips for messaging.

Charlotte Detwiler reiterated that we need talking points.

Patricia Failmezger noted the need for guidance to what news sources are of most value to pay attention to.

Gretchen Straw suggested social event(s) such as a Progressive Dinner to get people together.

Savannah McCoy suggested a river trip advertising an issue, perhaps environmental concerns.

Bill Hall reminded that the Lunch Bunch meets the 4th Tuesday of each month at 12noon at Mom’s in Front Royal.

Hannah Bement announced her next postcard party will be the evening of March 14th. Please RSVP to hannahebement@gmail.com.

Jackie Bourque made the popular suggestion to “storm” Bob Goodlatte’s office.

Ideas, Actions, Comments & Reminders, cont'd

Robin Nida suggested signing up for Goodlatte's newsletter for details of his whereabouts.

Lisa Jenkins, Mountain Home, 3471 Remount Road said in the future they will have rooms available for small group meetings.

Note: The secretary apologizes for suggestions not noted due to the fast-moving conversation.

SOME HELPFUL RESOURCES

For humor in print:

The Political Garbage Chute

Borowitz Report (also in New Yorker Magazine)

The Onion

For Trump products and other family "doings": <http://grabyourwallet.org>

For Virginia General Assembly bill tracking:

LIS (Legislative Information System)

Sunlight Richmond

For Federal Bill Tracking

GovTrack.us (free – bill status delayed by 24 hours)

OpenCongress.org (Free – see changes made to bills as they go from house to house; picture of sponsor(s); co-sponsors list and associated committees and related issues). See also <http://lib.law.washington.edu/content/guides/FedBillTrack>

See also Meredith Parnes guide to legislators, State and Federal, with addresses.