

GPMI State Membership Meeting – February 18-19, 2006

Kent-Ionia Labor Council Hall * 918 Benjamin Avenue NE * Grand Rapids, MI

Saturday, February 18

9:45 Announcements

Jane Jarlsberg welcomes everyone to the meeting. She notes that the use of the Labor Hall has been donated, and suggests that the GPMI make a \$200 donation.

Lunch is being catered by Greater Grand Rapids Food Systems Council – Cynthia Price will be here later – food is (as far as possible) all organic and locally grown

We are invited us to tour the WMEAC (Western Michigan Environmental. Action Council) building at 4:30 today – it's a Green building.

Following the tour, there is a potluck at 5:30 at 315 Eastern.

Priscilla Dziubek presents a pledge from Food & Water Watch – for local ownership of water – and asks GPMI (and individual members) to sign on. The pledge was motivated by a city in Germany that had its municipal water system bought up by RWE AG and American Water.

Bill Stant (Indiana Green Party) speaks on getting a ballot line for INGP. Indiana has the fifth most restrictive ballot-access law in the US, and a number of signatures equal to two percent of the total number of votes cast in last SOS election (about 32,000) – must be turned in by the end of June. Stant is running for IN Secretary of State – but he needs to collect signatures to get on the ballot. There's no law that says MI people can't come down & help collect signatures in northern IN.

Lynn Meadows announces Silent Auction going now – to be completed this afternoon at 4:15

Richard Kuszmar asks those present to sign petitions to raise the minimum wage. The petitions will be available throughout the day. (Yes, the petition drive is aimed at boosting Democrats, but more important is that it would fight the corporations.)

Randym Jones reminds us that Ellis Boal is running for prosecutor in Charlevoix County. (That's why he isn't here.) Donations to his campaign can be made on-line.

10:00 Officer and national. rep reports [9:59]

Art Myatt as Platform Committee chair

The platform (including the feminism plank); is now available as a PDF file. It will be posted on line soon.

David Spitzley, Vice Chair/SCC Whip

We've been about as active in the last four months as before, judging from report on Completed Tasks and Queue that has been distributed.

A top topic now is Fund-raising. The GPMI has received an offer from Nicole Walter who wishes to act as a paid fund-raiser. A handout on SCC priorities has been distributed – the top two are Fund-raising and membership recruiting.

Other Fund-raising ideas are active; for example, Lynn has been investigating a tree sale. If you're interested in helping with (or better yet organizing) an activity, please say so.

The back page of the handout is an SCC activity chart listing reps and their participation in discussion and voting. If you're in an area which doesn't have its two reps, think about volunteering.

Lou Novak asks how many votes were taken? Answer – there were five, and one was a straw poll on advisability of pushing for an IRV ballot drive.

David asks if there were any ideas/questions?

Fred Vitale asks if the new queue system is working better as was hoped; David S replies that he's a biased observer, but yes. We might be able to do better yet, but it would take more commitment from all of us.

John Anthony La Pietra says deciding to drop an issue is also a completion. A short discussion of covering “no-brainers” via fast track ensued.

Randym Jones, Treasurer

GPMI made about \$10,000 last year. There were 169 contributors, but half our budget came from about 13 of them. We received \$746.50 from GPUS and \$1,200 via PayPal. We spent about \$ 4,840 last year.

Our bank balance is currently about \$9,000, it will go down because of a big check written today to pay

for *Green Light*.

We've paid \$200 to GPUS for Green Pages; haven't gotten them yet due to non-communication of distribution process.

Lou N asks what is the nature of the money from GPUS?

Ted Hentchel points out that, when people contribute to GPUS, sometimes half the money goes to the state party. The Green Card program is an automatic 50-50 split; on other donations to GPUS, donors get the option to split.

Harley Mikkelson suggests contacting GPUS to check; Randym has been e-mailing one person, and another contact is suggested.

Lynn M lobbies for another service besides PayPal; David S says Mary Anglin is investigating other possibilities.

Linda Manning Myatt says you can also call GPUS office in DC toll-free and donate via credit card.

Fred V asks if we can pass a few simple motions on these issues; Art M points out that the time for resolutions is Sunday.

Randym Jones for Pete Schermerhorn as Membership Secretary

Our membership count is estimated at 220 now; 40-45 people due to pay for membership renewal. Effectively, membership stands at 250 or a bit over.

David S asks whether PayPal donors may not be being flagged as members, and Randym says that he gets a monthly report from PayPal and two e-mails when a donation is made.

JALP as Elections Co-ordinator and for Media Committee

A printed report has been distributed, and a number of questions are asked about it. In response to questions, Art M points out: the next SMM will be May 20-21 at the Wolverine Dilworth Hotel in Boyne City (Charlevoix County), and the convention will be August 4-5? in Lansing.

Fred V reminds us that last time we agreed to two goals: run as many people as possible, focus on key races.

Bill Opalicky as Locals Liaison

New locals and new people are being recruited. (He introduces three new friends from rural Grand Rapids area.) There's a new Oakland local meeting at Dr. Bob's on 7 Mile – a good area for recruiting.

National Representatives

Linda M reports that GPUS finally has a seventh co-chair: Bud Dickinson from CA.

Karen Shelley says that she is on the agenda tomorrow for a proposal; her concern has been to heal the rift in GPUS. She is working to have CA, WA, WI, and MI co-sponsor the proposal to oppose both corporate parties in 2008, and nominate a Green ticket to run strongly in every state as Greens.

Ted H asks if the proposal is to nominate someone at the convention and have them run as Greens

10:45 Break (auction bids) [10:47]

11:00 View DVD – GPMI's response to Granholm's State of the State address [11:06]

After a few technical problems were solved, the DVD is shown. Copies are available on DVD and/or VHS tape

A request was made that attendees of the SMM introduce themselves. The introductions included a few non-members representing World Can't Wait. The next-to-last intro was Richard Clement, running as a write-in for SS23 special election (March 15). The last was a drop-in who had seen the sign announcing the meeting – we invited his wife & children in, too.

11:15 Discussion – using media (DVD, *Green Light*, *Green Pages*) [11:46]

The discussion was truncated by *Green Light* not being available.

Fred V discusses articles in the current issue. He wants more information on candidates for next issue (by April 1). David S adds that GPMI is encouraging people to *stand* for election, even if not actively

running.

Theoretically, the schedule is to publish every two months – but that depends on having local material to run. If the issue is to print on April 1, the deadline for submissions is March 15.

Helen MacDonald suggests it's not too hard to make *Green Light* self-sustaining if we solicit ads.

Linda M asks about sending to media outlets, libraries, etc. as we tried before. She also wants to be sure we can handle the bookkeeping and additional government paperwork such ads will engender.

Candace Caveny-Collins wants to mention where candidates and districts are (in what counties, communities, etc.).

Bill Stant wants to buy the first ad

Jane J reports that lunch is running a little late – aim for 12:45.

11:45 Discussion of proposal for Fund-raising committee, chair [11:56]

A discussion of setting up a committee ad hoc and putting it into by-laws later is begun. The question of whether or not we have a chair is raised

Lynn M reports she's talked to Pete (former Treasurer, currently Membership Secretary) this morning and he's interested in serving as chair.

Art M says that working on this committee won't be just attending a few meetings. Members might have to make phone calls, organize activities; cf. Lynn M's Silent Auction. (She's an unofficial member now; maybe she and Pete could be co-chairs.

Lynn M has brought a booklet about on the prices of trees. the Washtenaw County Conservation Dept. sells yearling trees, mostly for re-forestation purposes; we could order 100 for \$25. When Lynn M asked if the trees could be used for Fund-raising, at first they said fine, but later they mentioned a disclaimer about the trees, but Lynn can't find that in the booklet. Maybe the safest way to sell them is to ask for donations. She also raises the questions as to whether this would be a state or local (or both) activity and how many trees we would want to order. We would get them at the end of April or the beginning of May.

Randym, as treasurer, could see some troubles for reporting/documentation on the state level. If the locals are doing it, then they become the committees responsible for reporting it to the state. (See attached memo* sent to the SCC list.)

Fred V suggests an independent "support committee." Jane J suggests a sign-up sheet on which people can write the number of trees their locals might order.

David S has another specific Fund-raising idea: trying to do a phone bank. It would probably not be by the end of this month, but within the next 3-4 weeks at most.

People may have free long-distance or cell-phone time to donate. These could get together for the group-action benefits of phone-banking without having to find an 8-line office. Some may have phones but not time to make call, and others vice versa.

Richard K suggests sending all members a postcard reminding that it's an election year and asking for support. He'd help with a mailing . . .

Lou N mentions proposal from Nicole Walter (former CA Green) offering her services as a professional fund-raiser.

Helen M and David S lead discussion Nicole's proposal. Ted H clarifies that there is no formal proposal on the floor at SCC

Fred V asks if we need to talk with GPUS on organizing paid Fund-raising. David S notes the GPUS is working on a Fund-raising contract now.

Linda M said proposal might help us focus on what we've done, what we want to do, what we want to pay to do next

Jane J suggests first deciding whether or not we want to pay somebody, then evaluate Nicole.

Bill O says a friend in CA raised funds for Greens entirely on a commission basis.

David S also wants to be on this committee. Richard K also volunteers, but he actively doesn't want to be chair.

1:00 (Indiana petitioning – Bill Stant) [12:23]

Bill S repeats his pitch for the INGP petition drive. He wants help obtaining signatures to get on the ballot. Hoosier Environmental Council Board is carrying the petitions when they're canvassing. They haven't

endorsed INGP or Stant himself, but they do endorse having more choices. He wants us to come down to IN and help. Purdue U/Calumet has a “Meet 3rd Parties” event Monday 2/27 at 3pm. One member is trying to organize in the Gary area.

If INGP gets on the ballot, they can stay on with 2% of the vote. Bill’s own campaign is based on two themes: 1. election reform – easier ballot access (maybe ½%); paper ballots for everyone; making it easier to vote (same-day registration, polls open longer, election day off work); and campaign-finance reform starting with public financing for SOS, who is after all the top election official.

And 2. corporate social responsibility (Stant is an investment rep, specializing in socially responsible/screened investments.) – start with accountability for layoffs and job exports (cf. refunds on tax abatements if jobs not created); businesses should have to sell plants they close to the folks who worked there (and not take any equipment away, either); corporate charters (in IN, filed with Business Section of SOS) should all include covenants on responsible citizenship, environmental responsibility, reporting to the people stakeholder rights & economic democracy; corporations should not be able to just abandon communities; boards of directors should be more democratic (worker representation, whether or not it’s a union shop) (also for communities, suppliers/etc., and regular customers).

Candace C asks if IN SOS also issues driver’s licenses as in MI (and cf. voter-registration connection) – IN just passed a law requiring you to show govt-issued ID card to vote, and license branches are being shut down. Bill thinks any SOS candidate will be asked position on issuing driver’s licenses to people who are not here legally, and adds that he wants anyone who’s driving to have a license.

Richard K says that there is no Green symbol on the flyers; Bill answers that, when they were printed, he hadn’t been endorsed yet. His Web site (citizensforstant.org) now says he is the INGP candidate ... Phone 800-878-6454; e-mail ... w.stant@worldnet.att.net

His Web site also has posted his answers to the INGP questionnaire (which he wrote). One thing he tells lots of different groups is that Greens want a good-faith discussion among citizens on crucial issues. We’re on a mission to bring peaceful political change.

The hat was passed, and \$138 was collected for Bill.

Tom Perry with the Greater Grand Rapids Food Systems Council talks about the group (a program of the Western Michigan Environmental Action Council). They are trying to promote the Grand Rapids “foodshed” (of food grown in the area, environmental impact, etc.). The average household spends \$2,000 a year [per person?] on food; \$3B for the region. They are also trying to connect universities and education with food producers. Richa is one of the Council’s board members.

Lou N wants to know the state of their community-gardens effort: There used to be a funded project, but funding ended; they’re trying to sustain a dozen or so gardens remaining, and to expand the project and find new sources of funding. Grand Rapids is the only major city without this kind of a program.

Ted H asks if they’re prevented from endorsing: They are a 501(c)(3) org., so they cannot.

Lynn M asks about working with schools..

There’s also another group called “Local First.” Cynthia Price notes that all of the food prepared for our lunch (except the oatmeal topping the dessert) was grown locally. The summer sausage was made using humanely raised. Attendees are invited to a conference - flyers handed out.

12:55: Lunch break in union hall (auction bids)

1:35 Senate Bill 777

A bill that would prohibit a local unit of government from adopting, maintaining, or enforcing an ordinance that prohibited or regulated the labeling, sale, storage, transportation, distribution, use, or planting of agricultural, vegetable, flower, or forest tree seeds. (In other words, local units of government can’t prohibit the introduction of genetically modified organisms (GMO) into their ecosystem.)

Cynthia Price speaks on it – their group kept it from getting out of committee. St Sen Gerald Van Woerkom from Norton Shores introduced the bill – but backed off when the group raised an outcry. Neal Nitz (head of St House Ag Cmte) may be introducing a similar bill soon .

JALP points out SCC was considering drawing up a resolution against SB777; could Cynthia suggest language for one here?

1:30 Delphi workers presentation (Ken Mathenia) [1:43]

Uncommon Ground and *Critical Moment* (and *Green Light*) have all published articles on the Delphi flap.

Ken M introduces three guests from the Grand Rapids area group, Soldiers of Solidarity (SOS), a rank-&-file response to the Delphi bankruptcy.

Juanita Cadman tells us that the group got its name (descriptive but not restrictive) at a meeting in Bay City where a steering committee also formed. The group has continued meeting in and out of MI. Their slogan “Work to rule” has a double meaning as a tool of preparation to a strike and a call to workers to work around the union bureaucracy. Marching gets easier – even in Flint recently when union organization had cancelled the event.

Candace asks why the Flint pickets/rally was cancelled – official reason was the weather, but people had come from out of state, and maybe the union organization was worried SOS would be there. Candace also points out some recent research on comparing CEO and typical-worker salaries.

Ted H says it’s been this way in US for 20 years, and getting worse

Gregg Shotwell of SOS thinks Delphi may be a test case for the whole industry – notes that bankruptcy can break the union contract. He also points out the lie of \$75/hour ... \$25 is for legacy costs (retiree health care & pensions).

Delphi is paying legal fees for UAW (as GM did in an earlier situation). Ted H points out they did the same things at International Harvester 30 years ago – and the union bosses have caught on, but they’re having dinner and playing golf with the management . . .

Fred V asked what we can do to help each other, and what’s to be done when the plants close.

SOS is trying to give power back to the workers; they don’t want to replace one hierarchy with another.

Richard K suggests tracking down where jobs have been displaced. Gregg says Internet makes some of that possible – but it’s not really an international issue; it’s a failure of UAW organizing here in the US.

Bill S says it’s the fault of the Democratic Party and the US Left in general for not being a real alternative. We need a real alternative on the ballot to be taken seriously. How do we give the workers a sense of power that makes them feel voting at all is worth their while?

SOS is starting on the shop floor ... we need to make each other’s struggle our own. The person on the street with a sign saying “Will Work for Food” is our ally.

Bill O says what we have is a plutocracy – corporations being absorbed by and taking over the government.

Candace notes that seven other jobs depend on every shop-floor worker.

People aren’t apathetic so much as cynical

Helen asks if “work to rule” is the top strategy? It’s more of a first step. If management says floor workers aren’t knowledge workers, okay, they withhold their knowledge.

Karen S urges SOS leaders to look beyond the moment, build power, and run for office.

Bill S aims instead at asking SOS to make room for Green message in their lives if possible.

There has been some outreach to churches who want to make it a civil-rights issue.

Richard K suggests that, when a strike comes, it’s better to have a Green mayor not spending police time and money to support scabs.

JALP offers to help people who are too flooded to run for office to stand for office. Doug C notes that the State Legislature is a 2-yr \$70,000 contract.

Ted H asks if Delphi had two-tier system, and when UAW let it in . . .

The group Web site www.soldiersofsolidarity.com has interesting and useful information; and has been viewed from 35 countries.

2:15 Elections – Clearinghouse Coordinator, Fund-raising chair, other if needed [2:35]

no candidates, so no election

3:00 Break (FINAL auction bids) [2:38]

3:15 Benton Harbor presentation (The Rev. Edward Pinkney, BANCO) [3:04]

BANCO has located some people who want to run as Greens; one, Carl Pursey a NY anti-trust attorney, is aiming at running for AG there. Another may run for mayor of Benton Harbor.

But first some things about the Pinkney's own situation – they're prosecuting him (with his own money, and ours). The situation isn't black vs. white – it's the haves vs. the have-nots

BANCO is getting ready to file a lawsuit against Whirlpool which had 10,000 jobs in MI; now has only 2,500 – and 1% of those are held by African Americans; and they're still getting the tax breaks (through Renaissance zones), despite record profits (\$1.8B).

Because BANCO called a boycott of Whirlpool; Whirlpool wanted to neutralize BANCO.

Whirlpool controls all the land along the lake – it was the city's, but the commission gave it to Whirlpool free. Whirlpool works thru Cornerstone Alliance to control the Commission (mayor & all 8 commissioners, prosecutor, sheriff, etc.). They're going to build a golf course, \$500k homes, etc. on the property, and the land, once developed, will leave Benton Harbor and become part of St. Joseph Twp.

The city has been raising taxes (on water/sewer/cable bills) to squeeze out people who live in the city of Benton Harbor where 90% of the people live below the poverty line.

Pursey is going to file a suit against Whirlpool to stop them (in development plans, merger with Maytag, etc.).

The president of Maytag used to be president of Whirlpool, and used to work for Cornerstone, too. The only way to hit them is in the pocketbook.

This is how it all ties back to the court case against Pinkney – they're thinking they can stop the resistance by getting rid of him.

“We have to decide if we're going to fight or give in.” There are more of us have-nots; we should be able to win any election. BANCO's trying to do something to bring the whole state (maybe the whole country) together – and we can do this as a group. Pinkney's not going down without a fight.

The way Whirlpool controls Benton Harbor is the same way GM and other corporations control other cities.

We need everyone coming together – we're in control of this situation, but we have to decide to *take* that control.

Candace C asks about a March 11 event – a rally at Pinkney's church (Hopewell Church; 796 Highland) starting at noon.

Ken M asks about charges against Pinkney. There are three charges of being in possession of an absentee ballot (5-year felony for each charge); and one charge of paying \$5 each to 30 people to vote yes (well, 20 . . . OK, 15 . . . maybe 10? . . . now they say they don't know how many).

The witness also said people were taken to vote absentee on 2/22, but you couldn't vote absentee on that date – it was election day. There was no testimony at all that he paid anyone. They've been so comfortable with this they're sending him 3 reminders of the court date which should have been sent through his attorney.

Pinkney thinks his attorney could have filed a motion to dismiss the last charge – but maybe he's just confident of beating it. The other side is confident – and convinced that people would do anything for money.

There are more tales to tell: the prosecutor, with a probation officer present, offered to “accommodate” someone if they'd testify against Pinkney.

You can't have a fair trial for an African-American if you don't have some African-American representation on the jury. We need people in the courtroom, keeping watch over what's going on; we need to support each other.

Richard K: so what are you running for? You should run for governor.

Richard C: or run for County Commission?

Richard C: wants to recruit Pinkney to the fight for HB5470 (Michigan Medical Marijuana Act).

JALP asks about anyone else: Etta Harper (former Commissioner) wants to run for mayor as a Green. It's a non-partisan race, but she'd be willing to be a Green and run.

Ken M suggests passing the hat.

3:45 Resolutions [3:47]

Richa wants to discuss a health-care resolution – one he & others in the GR area have been working on related to MichUHCAN

Michigan Organizing Project (similar to MOSES *et alia*) initially took the lead; they need to get endorsements from organizations statewide.

The campaign is directed to pressing for the governor (whoever it is next year) to set up a Health Care Commission and move towards universal health care. they have been working with/on the Grand Rapids City Commission. It had majority support there until one of the commissioners quit to run for the state legislature. About 100 organizations statewide have endorsed this; some individuals; and some city commissions, both Democrat and Republican dominated

Candace asks for e-mail/Web address ... www.michuhcan.org ... Richard C suggests link to it on GPMI Web site.

Richard K suggests a constitutional amendment ballot petition. (This route may be taken if the current campaign fails.)

Bill O has a universal health care resolution, developed with Gary Benjamin of MI Legal Services, Bill has taken this around to various places.

Jan M notes interesting allies that such an issue brings out of the woodwork

Fred V asks for a column/article on that work for the next issue of *Green Light*

Priscilla has a proposal and a pledge to present.

Food & Water Watch “Pledge for Local Ownership of Water” was discussed earlier; the citizens want to buy back privatized city water system. F&WW used to be part of Public Citizen in DC; we’ve been working with them on international water issues ... consensus/twinkling.

Her proposal is that GPMI endorse the 4th Annual MLK March in Detroit 1/15/2007. We should do this now for next year to avoid the confusion of this year.

Art M offers a friendly amendment to do the same in 2008 and thereafter.

Fred V suggests finding out what it would take to be a sponsor – Priscilla is on the.

Fred V about *Green Light* – wants more stuff for next issue and feedback on this issue. He needs info on where the newsletters are distributed – that can help attract advertisers, etc. — not to mention that we should know.

Art M says all we *have* to mail is to the membership.

Linda M says if we find an error of fact, tell Fred ASAP

Richard K asks for partial bundles

Pinkney thanks all for \$245 from the hat

Time to close up the Silent Auction

First, Jane J reminds folks about interesting information at Western Michigan Environmental. Action Council building at 4:30 today. We get to tour a totally sustainable building

4:15 Finish silent auction [4:10]

4:30 Tour – WMEAC building, explanation of local environmental activism (off-site) Jane J

6:00 Dinner break (off-site)

7:00 Public viewing of movie *The End of Suburbia: Oil Depletion and the Collapse of the American Dream* (78 min. running time)

Discussion of movie, energy wars, & holding movie viewings as a method of outreach..

Sunday, February 19

9:00 Discussion & vote (IRV) on membership proposals [9:33]

Art M discusses three options proposed so far:

A. \$0 dues; anyone who commits to 10KV is a member; we accept donations

would boost membership – & Art M doesn’t think it would hurt Fund-raising if we ask people to support specific projects

B. \$18 dues; accept GPUS “Green Card” as membership as well

Harley says this idea was discussed at a Flint Greens meeting

since GPUS has the \$36 program where \$18 is returned to us, maybe we should just accept the \$18 here

Randym notes odd notification GPUS does: they tell Pete there's a Green Card donation, and send Randym money separately

Pete S adds that "Green Card" isn't really a membership program, and so far, he hasn't counted holders as GPMI members

C. current structure: \$0 / \$10 / \$25 / \$60 / \$1,000

Ted H had suggested keeping things as they are

Discussion

David S says he doesn't see B and C as conflicting.

Harley isn't sure any of them conflict with each other. and also asks if "Green Card" program require any statement of agreement with 10KV. There is general agreement that there is no requirement, but Ken M reports 10KV are on the back of the "Green Card" itself.

Matt A asks how much of our money is from dues; Randym estimates about \$8,000 of our \$10,000

Pete S tried to sort out Randym's donor list; suggests the actual dues total is more like \$3,000. He's on the GPUS Accreditation Committee, and has been listening to comments there and from GDI to get some better idea of where the party wants to go in terms of "one Green, one vote" etc. If we were forced to go by registered membership (in lieu of registered voters), our representation would go down. He's also concerned that our Fund-raising is down significantly – we'd have to get more serious about it.

Pete S says what they have to do to get the waiver is tell him they can't pay dues.

Discussion of how this might affect our representation at GPUS

Lou N, JALP, Pete S, Doug C, Fred V

David S is concerned that eliminating dues may not be a good idea yet. He compares it to cutting taxes and then figuring out how to pay for the cuts.

Art M says maybe a good counter to "one Green, one vote" is to say we'll agree to that if others will accept "one vote, one Green."

Pete S points out that still screws states without ballot access ... it's still going to be a blend. As for knocking people off lists, his work with the contact database has enabled him to dig up all (he thinks) our former members. Even if we get money, we need also to get some indication that people want to be members.

Matt A asks what it would take to send a one-time mailing to all those folks, inviting them to join up/come to the convention/etc.

Pete S says about \$320.

Richa feels core commitment to membership should be the four pillars (simpler than 10KV), with paying dues secondary.

JALP suggests we invite people to participate before the convention, or else they can't vote without Mtg Mgr's OK. Do we want to make Art M or successor work that hard?

Pete S is willing to do whatever is decided here; Doug C says wrap it up, then.

David S notes a transition period might be necessary.

Randym reminds us that we need income for outgo – especially in an election year.

Linda M notes that a transition period would let us use up trifolds.

Rachel speaks as a member of many organizations who doesn't have time to take part in all of them; she points out that the only solicitation she doesn't throw away are the dues ones.

Richard K says people have the option to be members without paying dues; if they don't renew anyway, maybe it's for another reason – if we're not doing anything, why should they pay dues?

David S proposes adopting B and postponing consideration of elimination of dues until May.

Matt A suggests telling people dues are about to go up unless they renew now.

Doug C wants to move to a decision on each of the proposals; Art M says the idea was to use IRV to decide.

Karen S suggests appeals directed to specific things we want to do.

Lou N concerned about accepting option B without having "Green Card" holders affirm support for the 10KV.

Lynn M suggests that maybe we could contact them when we receive notification, and asking them.

Ken M can support B because anyone who supports GPUS is showing some support for Green values.

As for postponing C, 3 months won't be enough – suggests postponing for a year.

Richard K suggests that, for most groups with different levels, joining one level means joining all levels (make it easier).

Helen M suggests a sliding scale.

Richa says, as an interim, write Green Card-holders to invite commitment to 4P/10KV – and urge GPUS to do the same nationwide.

David S says there are standard state-specific materials for some states (e.g., IL); he is not sure how to do it at the national level.

Harley M suggests this points out a failing of our party – taking too much time on such an issue; most have made up their minds already.

Pete S says he is willing to tackle both of Richa's suggestions.

Linda M says people don't belong to GPUS, only the affiliated states do.

What's the actual practice? Lynn M reads out the trifold.

Did \$5 category get changed at Dearborn meeting in June?

Consensus.

Lou N has a proposal to have GPMI buy a table of 8 (for \$400) for Michigan Coalition for Human Rights 25th Anniversary Dinner. (We have the funds available, even after outstanding financial commitments are met.) There will be various recognitions, including Maureen Taylor.

Pete suggests he'd add \$50 to boost Detroit Greens' \$75 1/8-page ad to ¼ page.

Fred V says they could add a line to the ad inviting/recruiting candidates, as we want more like Maureen Taylor.

Consensus.

Before the break, Lynn M discusses close-out sale on leftover auction items and SO info.

11:00 Break [10:30]

Richa announces he has a few flyers on MichUHCAN and its work.

Fred V asks if group wants to discuss briefly a slogan for 2006 campaign – and to pass a resolution declaring a strong effort to recruit for 3 months. Art M says 5 months, and Fred V accepts this as a friendly amendment.

Lynn M says this started as brainstorming in 14-hour drive back from SOA/Georgia. She offers the suggestion that we record our preferences on the big sheets posted on the wall in the corner.

JALP notes one suggestion has already been put out in public: "The Green Party. We're On Your Side."

Richard K suggests "no" circles on elephant & donkey and "Let's Vote Green."

Fred V has a preference for "Jobs, Peace, Justice: Vote Green."

Richa suggests "True Majority Values: Vote Green."

David S (not convinced this is a useful exercise) suggests "Vote Green for a New American Dream."

Fred V acknowledges that we may not want to impose one slogan on everyone.

Karen S puts in a word for "Enough Is Enough," but Jane J wonders if Dems are using that one already.

Linda M reminds that a slogan should be short enough to be read at a glance on a bumper sticker.

10:00 Budget and Fund-raising (Pete and/or David) – Discussions & Decisions [11:00]

David S reviews three tiers of draft budget

Tier 1: minimal "life support" level of the past year or so

Tier 2: roughly on par with previous election years

Tier 3: pie-in-the-sky guess of what it would take to start making some headway as a political force

This is cross-referenced with the SCC priority sheet discussed yesterday; what's wanted is input.

Pete S confirms the tier structure, based on his experience as treasurer.

Lou N says office (which was at the top of some previous brainstorming lists) isn't here.

David S notes no known scale for that; Pete S adds we're still pressed to raise the money to spend

money without it.

Lynn M says an office should still be included in a pie-in-the-sky budget.

Pete S says another intentional non-inclusion was the possible hosting of a 2007 annual meeting. The cost factor could vary widely depending on what we would want to do in an office.

Linda M volunteers to help Pete S figure that out.

Fred V discusses the budget for *Green Light*; also suggests a Fund-raising Committee with every local required to contribute a member. There is general agreement with this.

Linda M wonders about mismatch between cost of paid fund-raiser and additional funds raised, and the cost and income from events.

The budget-drafters say they haven't had a lot of experience.

Richard K asks about focusing on the governor's race and matching funds. A discussion of \$100 per person/\$75k threshold, etc., ensues.

JALP points out that expenses of house parties are generally contributed by the householders, and asks if this would that cut events expenses?

Maybe not, says Pete S; for those, we were thinking more of stadium-based-type events.

Bill O suggests holding smaller events at bars/restaurants/etc.

Randym recently worked on annual campaign-finance reports, and says there's no Fund-raising module in the state's campaign-finance reporting software.

Karen S was recently called by NAACP asking her for money; she told them why she wasn't supporting them and the caller responded to her arguments. It just occurred to her – that would have been \$50 she could have given to GPMI instead. We should all tell such people.

Bill O revives talk of professional fund-raiser working purely on commission.

David S says the only offer we've had so far was from someone who wanted some money up front.

Bill O asks to contact a friend who's done such for Greens in the past.

Lynn M says, to get the ball rolling, she will start calling people using her free-on-weekends cell-phone minutes. She'd be glad to take 10%, and it would give us some data.

Pete S says one problem is how to make determine if the money came in because of her efforts. Even if/when we hire a pro, we'll still have to do other Fund-raising – and thus will need to differentiate.

David S has some old issues of a Non-Profit Fund-raising magazine — which points out one problem of solo Fund-raising: no support. Maybe it would be better to get the initial phone bank set up. We'd have to send a "thanks for your pledge" letter to everyone else, unless donation were made by credit card.

Candace C thanks Lynn M, and throws out a comment for the future — Irish Greens have some members in the national and European Parliaments. Those elected officials pledge 20% of their salaries for supporting future candidates.

Doug C comments on Nicole Walter's proposal – starting by pointing out that she's not here.

Pete S doesn't want to talk about her because she's not here. He sent out something a few weeks ago about how much a fund-raiser would have to raise on X% commission to make a living wage. The minimum was \$320,000. We can't expect to get that from our database list.

Art M says one thing that can be done is to buy a block of tickets at a community theater and re-selling them at a mark-up. He knows it can work – it's been done by MichUHCAN.

Pete S cautions that a non-profit theater can't do stuff with a political party, but maybe private/professional theaters could do it. If a block of tickets is offered generally at a discount, that could be done – locals could do it, too.

Candace C raises the Dally in the Alley as an event where people are looking for alternatives. Detroit Greens have a table/booth there regularly.

Jane J says that, if locals are running Fund-raising events for the state party, the locals should get some financial participation.

Pete S points out that there are special rules for multiple campaign committees sharing costs and income of fund-raisers. Usually, a percentage agreement is spelled out ahead of time (cf. 70-30 split in the past for goods [with 50% cost]).

Another line item here is merchandise. Our old merchandise program is pretty much defunct, but we still have the capacity to get goods and get them out to the locals.

If we did it on line, we'd have to have someone who could warehouse the stuff and ship it out.

Pete S notes one problem with merchandise was lack of union-made goods.

Ken M agrees merchandising can be important to the party, but we should focus on GPMI-specific merchandise candidates could use.

Jane J has some experience from the 2004 campaign – good stuff, but too personalized to Cobb-LaMarche. It seems to her that, if we had an office in Ann Arbor or E Lansing or some such, a college intern could focus on this. The Institute for Global Education uses interns.

Karen S bought several T-shirts (designed by David S) on Café Press – why can't we sell them here? They get a lot of attention and they could make money.

The only reasons we aren't doing that is

- (1) we don't have a union supplier;
- (2) we never decided to spend the money up front; and
- (3) we haven't had someone to handle it.

Karen S is willing to serve as "quartermaster."

Art M's PeaceButtons.info shirt was printed by union shop

Doug C says American Apparel can supply union-made shirts in quantities as low as 12.

Richa would also encourage supporting small family shops as well as union shops.

Matt A says people are disappointed that we don't have merchandise.

Pete S agrees absolutely that mom-and-pop shops are as good as union shops, but we have to be careful about mom-&-pops with 12,000-sq-ft facilities.

David S notes we've had issues/questions about getting money from merchandise because of questions about charging sales tax.

It's not too hard to get license to charge sales tax, or to report it.

Lynn M knows a young woman in Traverse City who does alternative printing – she has access to organic, union-made things. She can check for possible arrangements.

David S says there is a Finance Committee listserv; should that be at least the starting place for this new Fund-raising Committee?

Pete S is a bit worried about the lack of response there; David S suggests having existing members re-subscribe.

Richard K says we could charge round prices that include sales tax

Pete S asks Matt A what it was going to cost for a State Fair booth (and liability insurance, adds Linda M).

There are also county fairs and local events.

For T-shirts, there's Maggie's Organics in Ypsilanti (not union, but Fair Trade), and we have a contact in Nicaragua (Steve Herrick).

Randym, before he was treasurer, got a "d/b/a" license. It was originally gotten for Earth Day at Washtenaw CC for the Huron Valley Greens. He also nominally owns www.MIGreens.com; he bought it to make sure someone else didn't get it.

Pete S raises the question of whether that would be a conflict of interest – being merchandising business agent and treasurer? GPUS does something like that.

Ken M doesn't think it would be problematical, but we should have a written proposal on how much for cost, for GPMI, and for Randym.

Pete S has one more idea about making stuff more generic and more usable by locals and campaigns. One way to do that would be to come up with our own logo. The vignette we now use comes from GPUSA; we got permission to use it from someone who then left that group.

David S says Mary A has re-conditioned the base logo to be more usable on the Web site. Maybe we could change the interior to Michigan.

Lynn M points out the trifold has that already – and a Michigan image with a sunflower superimposed.

Randym reports that \$181 was raised from the Silent Auction.

David S announces the decision made on the SCC list to appoint JALP and Donald Rozsi as election challengers; some twinkling

Jane J asks about efforts to recruit candidates; we'll discuss a bit more later.

2:15 Plant a Tree project and SOA (Lynn Meadows) [12:10]

Lynn M has a 10-minute video on performing civil disobedience set up upstairs – from the SOA (School of the Americas) protest (an annual event which takes place the week before Thanksgiving).

She also reviews the “Plant a Tree” project. The order needs to go in at the end of March.

12:15 Lunch – or brunch (off-site unless we order delivery or have leftovers)

We decide to continue, using up leftovers. If meeting goes beyond 1pm, we’ll consider a break.

1:15 2007 National meeting – Proposal to host (Matt Abel) [12:17]

Matt A says he’s on the National Annual Meeting Committee – which is aiming to be doing things almost a year ahead of time. This year it will be in Tucson July 27-30.

Seattle (which was going to be a host) will probably be interested in bidding again, but Matt thinks there should be more than one bid. Some people want an urban/Midwest site. One advantage of Detroit is that there are several union hotels around

GPUS has a bid-proposal packet detailing the requirements and the information we need to supply (forms we’d need to fill in). Our bid would probably be due around fall of this year for next year. This would give us time enough to see what Tucson does, etc.

Traditionally, Saturday night there’s a fund-raiser for the “local” state party hosting the event, so that there will be no net financial loss.

Karen S wonders if we should go for 2008. (Matt thinks maybe 2007 would go to Seattle and we’d be set up for 2008.) She also wants to urge that the 2008 convention be earlier. (Spring is nicer anyway.)

Matt asks if Karen S wants to skip bidding on 2007 and go straight to 2008; he’s sure CA wants 2008.

David S is concerned that Detroit Greens are on board with it before we actually bid. He has concerns about 2008 – for one, he’d rather spend time focusing on our own candidates that year.

Matt says Helen McDonald was willing to co-chair a committee to work on this.

Candace C supports the idea – and notes that Detroit has convention-planning support staff.

Pete S likes the idea of potentially getting the 2008 meeting, but he still thinks we should put something together for 2007 to get in a better position. Indeed, the national party pays for everything. We’s mostly have to negotiate things and put together a proposal of costs and logistics. Even that much would require a lot of effort and a lot of people. Not that this means we shouldn’t make a bid – he thinks we should; after this, an office would be trivial.

Art M has a question: how many days are involved in an off-year annual meeting as compared to a week’s convention.

Matt A thinks maybe three days of core meetings plus days before & after of committee meetings.

Richard K wonders if we could combine the Presidential convention with the Michigan nominating convention.

Pete S that notes there might be some logistics problems with that, including having people come on a weekday.

Ken M would like us to submit a proposal – while agreeing that 2008 would take a lot more work. Detroit Greens would have to agree, and outstate Greens

JALP notes that previous nominating conventions have been in the center of the country, so some states may object to another one.

Pete S counters that the idea has been to balance out travel as best possible.

David S asks if this is enough for Matt A to go on; he thinks so – agrees that GPUS won’t want to go where there isn’t local support.

1:45 2008 Presidential Candidate Proposal (Karen Shelley) [12:32]

Karen S says that the idea of the propo~~s~~a is that, no matter where anyone was in 2004, we all can support running Greens as Greens in 2008. She wonders if infiltrators helped encourage the split between Nader and the Greens in 2004.

Lynn M asked what GDI was; Karen S explained Greens for Democracy and Independence (as sort of a caucus). They got voted down in Tulsa, maybe because people didn’t understand what was being proposed.

Pete S has no problem with any of the positive goals of GDI; unfortunately, they weren’t above

mudslinging, either. He strongly objects to the term “the corporate two-party system,” etc. We all understand that, but it’s a stumbling block, a logical inconsistency; all parties are incorporated. He’s asked for clarifications from GDI people and nobody has written back. He would support “corporate-dominated.” This is almost word-for-word what came out of GDI, and adopting it would seem to put us behind GDI’s other proposals. He wants to be sure we’re not adopting anything else such as “one Green, one vote.”

Karen S says that the way this proposal started was that she talked with Ben Manski in Wisconsin, who isn’t a GDI person. He put Karen in touch with WI delegates; they’ve been discussing it. Then Karen talked with Jody Haug, who is *definitely* not GDI – and she’s supporting it. Cat Woods of CA, another participant in the discussion, is with GDI; but she and Karen S are the only ones involved in this who are.

Jane J realizes it’s an emotional issue – she was in CA when Camejo was running for governor there. She moved to MI and later helped plan Cobb’s tour here. She thinks there was no need for infiltrators to split Greens.

David S says what’s written here doesn’t seem to him to speak in code to/for any side.

Richa says GPKC made a considered decision this cycle to support a Democrat who has a lot of Green values. This doesn’t say we couldn’t do that, but we’d have difficulty. Does this apply only to the national level?

Karen S says the last paragraph is worded as “encourages.” There are times when we may all vote for a decent Democrat when there is no Green.

Richa would prefer that it be specific about applying firmly only at the national level.

Harley says we need to focus more on the candidates – and determining what our party stands for by who we nominate. This proposal may not accomplish anything. He’d rather the National Committee focus on the process by which we select the candidate.

Karen S says there’s not much progress at the moment because of the fighting over this.

Ken M says a lot of the problem in 2004 came from the trend in 2003 to not run a candidate, so if we say now we want to run a candidate and run full out, that kind of problem would be avoided.

JALP asks if “corporate” could be changed to “corporate-dominated” in paragraph 1 of the proposal.

Karen S agrees. She also asks if Richa proposes that we put in “Presidential” somewhere.

Linda M says that it should specify Presidential. It should also specify “Green Party member.”

Pete S thanks Karen S for the “corporate-dominated” change. But he thinks the proposal might revive the cross-endorsement issue we haven’t resolved in seven years.

Doug C says he has been an alternate national delegate since before Tulsa. To his view, the idea is either not true or not central to the problem. The problem is personal political immaturity – the idea that they who post more are entitled to wield more influence. He fully supports everything the document is about, but urges people not to decide on it today – to table it instead. This is not binding, and if it were binding people wouldn’t pay attention to it. It’s not about factions, it’s not about independence.

Candace C thinks Doug C has said more or less what she would say. Is there something hidden in here, that she doesn’t appreciate, that says we support some other proposals?

It’s not explicit in here, says Pete S.

Art M says if the phrase about all levels of public office were moved to the last paragraph of the Proposal, that would make it clear that paragraph 2 was all about the Presidential race – the other phrase is something state and local parties *should* be encouraged to do, and he’s perfectly happy to vote for it and say GPMI supports it – but doesn’t see how it can bind delegates or candidates for 2008.

Karen S invites people to e-mail her about any further criticism or suggestions.

Matt A asks if there is anyone opposed to it on the national list; Linda M remarks that a somewhat similar proposal failed.

[Return to Jane J’s request for a discussion of candidate recruitment \[1:25\]](#)

Considering that the time left before we have to have nominations in is short, we agree to talk about this a little bit today.

Jane J is thinking Gregg Shotwell (of SOS, who spoke on Sat.) would be a good candidate – and it might be good for him in his other efforts, too. Being a Green Party candidate (even standing for office) would raise his profile another way and give us an excuse to jump in. She’d be willing to put her name up for something – at least at some point. (Health reasons might limit her activity.) One side note was that GPKC paid \$25 for the odds & ends – and have not been reimbursed.

Art M wanted to correct one possible mis-impression – running or standing gives us slightly better access to the press than being in the Witness Protection Program.

David S spoke with the SOS people, and they're concerned about being seen as having any partisan affiliation for now. Maybe after they win (or lose) their union battle Does anyone have any groups to suggest to contact?

JALP suggests contacting groups two ways – inviting them to run and asking them to hear us.

Rachel F says Vern Ehlers gets a lot of progressive votes because he's seen as environmentally progressive. For a Republican, he is. If there were a Green in that race, this vote might shift a bit.

Doug C suggests we might have slightly worse luck recruiting from the Sierra Club than from the White Pages.

Matt A recruited Richard C from MI NORML; he'll approach them and other groups.

Ken M has been running small ads in *Uncommon Sense* to promote the fact that the Green Party exists. At Flint meetings, they've talked about finding candidates for US House 05 & 10 as well as for some local offices.

Linda M says mainstream activist groups have been horrible as sources for endorsements.

Pete S agrees – for issues of timing and being tied to other parties.

Pete S has also been talking with local councils/etc. – as Marc R used to do a lot. He asked his county commissioner how to get on an appointed board – and she explained why he hadn't gotten on before; they didn't take him seriously because he applied for 6 different things; now he's an alternate on a water board. Craig Harvey went to Doug Cowherd to ask if he'd be willing to meet with Greens. He said yes, and told about lots of nasty details of local Ann Arbor politics. He also suggested that Greens might be able to get endorsement with attention to particular issues. Art M has asked already for a Sierra Club endorsement – and been turned down. It takes some actual engagement, and even that won't work all the time, of course

David S mentions his friend Zoe Starkweather (from whom he got the fund-raiser magazines). She suggests that locals contact the social justice co-ordinators of their local Unitarian Churches.

Jane J notes that several people whose offices are in this building showed friendly curiosity about Greens. Unfortunately, they didn't attend – but smaller labor unions with grassroots folks might make good contacts.

Harley is looking for something to run for this year, and he wants a favorite-son candidate for 2008. He's trying to recruit some Progressive Democrats in the Saginaw peace group.

Doug C hates to be the burr under everyone's saddle – but we're not ready to be recruited to help the campaign we hope he'll run for governor again. We need the nuts & bolts in place. We need to be all across the top of the ballot – if only for the free publicity. He wants more help to do better than last time.

Jane J agrees with Doug C.

Pete S recounts Ann Arbor effort for combined committee for 3 Council candidates. It didn't happen and we still got 14-39% of the vote. People who want to run actively do need support. Over 200 people in the database have said in the last year they wanted to volunteer – and he doesn't have anyplace to send them. We need a volunteer co-ordinator.

Pete S thinks Doug C is asking, not just for volunteers, but for key volunteers. (Doug C says he wouldn't not take “just volunteers.”)

David S has said he was willing to work with volunteers Pete sent to him. He sent one a list of things we wanted done – and never heard back; we may need to be more specific. The list of people we have now are tapped out, he thinks; we need more people, and we need to be pulling in money before we could hire someone (for general admin, Fund-raising, whatever).

Jane J asks: have we ever looked into benefactors?

Pete S says it seems to be against people's notions of grassroots democracy (not to mention chicken-and-egg).

JALP offers description of US House District 03; also urges help with County Co-ordinator system.

Candace asks how volunteer information system works. One example led to a teacher who was really just interested for class material. Can we gather information more specifically on what people are interested in?

Pete S says changing the phone system to do this may be possible. It's not part of his job or Randym's, really. We have no Clearinghouse Co-ordinator, who would be responsible for this sort of thing.

David S winds up: lots of us are involved in other organizations outside the Green Party. If those

groups are engaged in issues where there's a shared interest – tell them we have this ballot line.

3:00 Clean up and clear out [2:01]

Art M reminds about slogans posted and Lynn M's video on SOA.

Pete S has a comment on "Michigan Needs a Raise" petition – the tear-off section says "Democrat / Independent / Republican."

Motion to adjourn passes by acclamation.

***Tree sales memo**

First of all, the locals are autonomous. They will each have to **choose** to participate in this; they are not merely "passthrough" entities. Neither the SMM nor the SCC can direct a local to participate in this program. Presumably what you were collecting at the SMM was expressions of interest from representatives of various locals in attendance at the SMM, as to whether their particular local was interested in doing this. Clearly, every local in the state should be contacted about doing this, once the protocols are established..

Ted Hentchel, the previous GPMI Treasurer, spent some time going back and forth with the State over the issue of 'autonomy of the locals', since the legislative code of the State of Michigan is silent on this point; it only regulates sub-entities of State Parties down to the County level. **I** believe that locals do not even exist in the eyes of the state until they have income or outgo over a certain amount; then, they are required to register as Political Action Committees. (But perhaps John or Pete has something to say about this that is more significant.).

Secondly, from the GPMI Treasurer's standpoint, I will reiterate my point from the SMM: the locals **themselves** MUST be the final purchasers of the trees for this to work. Having GPMI assume the burden of buying the trees, then having the locals sell them individually, then passing the money from their sales back up to GPMI is unacceptable..

Let me explain. GPMI is **not** a business. A business does not care who is the final purchaser of its product; indeed, any cash transaction is essentially anonymous. GPMI, on the other hand is REQUIRED by the state to track the name and address of ANYONE who gives it ANY money at all -- whether just as donation or as payment for goods or services. Even if the locals take on the actual burden of selling the trees, the moment any of that income comes into the hands of the State Party, I **need to know** the name and address of that final purchaser. As I pointed out at the SMM, there are 2 problems with this: first the member of the local who sells the tree must get that data, and I do not think they will want to bother; secondly, assuming that they actually did so, tracking hundreds of \$1 purchases puts an intolerable burden on the volunteer treasurer of the State Party. Having the 'final purchaser' be either the local contact person or the Treasurer of a local makes my job **much** easier..

As long as the locals **buy** the trees outright (at an mutually agreeable markup) so that the State Party makes some money from this project, it works for me. Or, if the whole scheme is run through a private enterprise such as migreens.biz, where there is a contract in place between GPMI and the enterprise whereby GPMI receives a fixed amount for each tree sold through the enterprise -- that would be workable..

Furthermore, you raise the sales tax issue. I must remind you that the Huron Valley Greens have run up against this problem at the Art Fair. Only by prominently displaying a sign asking for a "suggested donation" have we avoided actually paying sales tax; once we set a fixed price -- at either the State or local level -- we will run into this issue again. Running the whole enterprise through a private entity with a valid sales tax license -- as mentioned above -- would solve that problem. So would having each local decide for themselves ("suggested donation") how much they give the state party for the trees, but then **they** will have to deal with the sales tax issue on their local level. There are also issues of in-kind donations that will have to be dealt with -- certainly at the State level and **possibly** at the local level..

But your system as detailed below will not work because of the campaign finance laws in place in Michigan. I am sorry..

However, I will make a comment on your numbers. If we choose to do this, and the cost to GPMI is about fifty cents per tree, I would set the "suggested donation" to the locals at about \$1 per tree. (First, however, I would get the various locals to 'pledge' to buy specific numbers of trees, so that the State Party does not overbuy.) Once the locals have made their purchases at whatever amount they choose to donate

to the Party (it **could** be more than \$1/tree), they are then free to sell them for whatever they could get for them. And GPMI has then gained a 'donation' of fifty cents for every tree. BUT the locals would be stuck with whatever they cannot sell; still, I think if they offered them for \$3-5, they could still sell the unbought remainder at \$1 and not lose any money. If I were running this program, I would be seeking out community groups (school groups, service groups and the like) who would be willing to pay \$2 a tree; that would gain the local \$1/ tree and those groups would **still** be paying rock-bottom prices..

I invite members of the SCC to comment on this issue..

--Randym Jones
Treasurer, GPMI