

Saturday, February 11

9:30 am Registration / Continental Breakfast [xx:xx]

delayed due to weather/road conditions

10:00 am Meeting Opens; Discussion of the Agenda for Each Day [10:28]

[start delayed due to weather/road conditions]

Matt de Heus thanks those of us who are here & welcomes us to Bay City

this is where T Roosevelt created the Bull Moose Party in 1912

it also has a lot of haunted buildings, and the highest number of bars per capita (from lumberjack-town past)

& was once the richest ZIP code in the nation (we can see lots of old houses suggesting that)

this location is operated by a non-profit called DoAll which creates employment & training possibilities for people with disabilities

Matt's on the board, tells some of the things they do (all Ziploc bags are packaged by people, not machines)

he's got a rough agenda on goldenrod paper

today's mostly for party business; our biggest problem may be not enough people to fill spots

tomorrow, a town hall-type forum . . . and some other groups may be here (including Tea Party, Int'l Space Monkey Alliance)

Matt's the moderator for 3 of 4 sessions, Lloyd Clarke for the other

Matt goes over the pattern for today

as for strategy, he thinks that, if there ever was an opportunity for a third party, it's this year. . . .

some folks we can tell that they don't have to

10:15 am Committee Reports [10:41]

JALP tells how Media Committee hasn't been active because it hasn't been effective, renews request for help

Jim Moreno (now active with Ds **and** We Are the People) says media are co-operative these days since they're short of staff

Ron Brevard [sp?] of Cary Neuville-Justice's campaign confirms from their experience

there was a radio-based forum – and Cary saved the show when Losey (D) couldn't show up to counter Graves (R)

they make you do the hard work, and you have to be more persistent (and each situation is different, of course) but still. . . .

Candace Caveny-Collins noted Flint Journal covered it – with photos, too

Harley suggests an introduce-around . . . so we do that (and some more people make it here)

including A. J. O'Neal [sp?] of the eponymous café in Ferndale (who, according to Lou Novak, will be a candidate)

he was asked to run as a D for Congress 3 years ago, but didn't want to have anything to do with politics (then)

he's realized from his activism that his voice needed to be heard

so he announced in November . . . but the D hierarchy paid him a visit & suggested that he not get in Sandy Levin's way

here to see if we (he and Greens) are compatible with each other

and Sherry Wells, sister of Laura in CA who got arrested for the cause – she won't run for governor here, but she'll follow otherwise

back to queue on media discussion – but there isn't any more comment for now

Matt talks about the Libya statement

Jennifer is willing to be on the Media Committee

Richard Kuszmar wonders if we can hold a real Presidential candidate forum here

Matt also wants to be on the committee (though not chairing it); Art too, after confirming that it includes the Website

By-Laws Committee . . . who's on it?

Doug Campbell says the list has been dormant, asks if Art Myatt is the chair; Art M says no

JALP checks by-laws, By-Laws Committee is a standing committee

Platform Committee

JALP requests that people feel free to write white papers/etc

Art M says its work is largely done for this year – also notes that the last 2pp of the platform can be a good flyer by themselves

Doug Campbell is working on national platform issues

Finance Committee

Lou Novak doesn't have much to report – we're certainly solvent (about \$6,000 in the two accounts)
the mailing address is in Ann Arbor, Lynn Meadows usually picks up mail (currently Libby Hunter's doing it for her)
Lou N doesn't have the latest figures from bank statements – may have later today or tomorrow
we have had some major expenditures – maybe paying Art back for platforms?
printed Green Light and mailed some (about \$900)
\$300 went to Cary's campaign
and we paid off a debt from Libby Hunter's U-M Regent campaign (late-filing fee)
Art said his 1,000 platform copies (printed on recycled paper, stapled, etc) cost \$635 plus tax
could have been cheaper as digital printing, but got plates to preserve cheaper option for printing more in the future
also could save a little without the heavier-weight paper
Richard K/Sherry W propose . . . ***TWINKLE***
we get a trickle of mail-in or online memberships, but mostly they come in at SMMs
Sharon Feldman isn't here
Richard K suggests not sending renewal notices may be part of the problem
JALP notes that list hasn't been active either

Elections Committee

JALP reports – Cary's campaign, GPUS convention, GPMI convention, caucuses, etc, etc
nobody else wants to be chair

National Reps

Doug C says NC is "moribund with procedure" – now diddling with the 2012 national platform
double-vetted some people for other national committees
can't staff with no budget . . . no campaign schools planned
Lou N is a bit cheerier, says there have been some accomplishments
approved some nominees to attend Global Greens Conference
platform is one of the big pieces of work going on (unfortunately, the new process for approval at convention failed)
probably not as much change as there was in 2010
national convention is in Baltimore in July (7/12~15)
Harley Mikkelson is on the Presidential Campaign Support Committee (though somewhat inactive since running)
he was theoretically a recognized candidate until 11/1, but didn't collect 100 signatures so he's not now
Kent Mesplay was recognized until 2/1 because he hasn't raised \$5,000 other than from self-funding
there's a movement to rescind Roseanne Barr's recognition because in some folks' view she hasn't met the \$5,000 yet either
it's really a movement to get her off the ballot in CA, Harley thinks – his feeling is the national party is behind Jill Stein
the California SOS put Roseanne on the June primary ballot against the wishes of the California Green Party
CA likely to have 65 delegates (out of 400 total)
Doug C says it just so happens we get about a proportional number of delegates for our population (due to average Green activity)
Richard K asks if we can have more proxies than 1:1 ration from Chicago 2008; Doug C doesn't know
Matt speaks for all of us that we want to invite all (main) candidates to a forum at the convention
Lou N says Roseanne didn't present list of her funders, but did offer an affidavit
once she's over \$5,000 she has to report to FEC
Richard K thinks it's wrong for Greens to have a financial means test on candidates
states have the right to put whoever they want on their ballots, etc, says Harley M
he feels the "GPUS-recognized" program should be scrapped . . . sentiment for doing that (but too late this time)

10:45 am Selection of State Officers

[11:44]

Incumbent Reports . . . & Selection:

Derek Grigsby doesn't want to be chair this year

but is a National Rep – and a rep on the International Committee, where (as Doug said with NC) there's also not much being done
if anyone else wants to join him & Aimee Smith as MI reps on Int'l Committee, speak now
of the Libya situation . . . committee members are fairly conservative; hard to demonize a country and avoid giving OK to attack it

on Iran, too, he feels Greens face the problem of knowing what's true (cf fomenting of coup in 1953)
Lou N notes that we removed Rev P as honorary co-chair at his request – & added Derek as a way to add more color to our face
now he offers geographical diversity as well (since he's moved to Petoskey area)
but Derek feels the chair needs to be kicking ass and getting people to do their jobs – and he's not ready to fill that role
he could be an honorary co-chair . . . or more active in outreach
AJ feels this party has the position to be quite relevant
Richard K says the reality is that most people don't have the time or energy to be as active as we need to be
Derek has been a public face as much as he can, but is more concerned about the work
JALP notes that the asskicking role may fit vice-chair/committee manager better
Matt says he hears Derek saying he'll help as best he can but doesn't think he can be chair in a way that satisfies his view of it
he sees himself as another pale version of Fred – but has become chief hippie in charge in this area
OTOH, he works 4 hrs a day 4 days a week (he's a college professor)
national rep is a high title, community outreach chair could be another

let's move on a bit:

vice-chair/SCC whip . . . Matt doesn't feel he's done wonderfully (isn't on line all day regularly)
Harley thinks Art would make a good whip; Doug C said he was one
Art says he was at a Sierra Club meeting last Thursday – and someone came in with a timeline of election-year work to do
that may have been a bit overdone, but it's a good idea
he also thinks it would make sense to combine SCC whip and committee manager
Matt is going to suggest the same thing about combining membership secretary & locals liaison
Art's retired now and should be finished moving by the end of the month – so he'll have time to be on the Internet
so he can do the job of SCC whip if committee manager is combined with it
and he plans to draft a timeline for us
and he wants to move most committees off of Yahoo onto riseup.net – and have everyone sign up with their real name
should help clean the lists of dead e-mail addresses/etc
JALP notes by-laws do talk about avoiding duplication of offices – but SMMs are top authority of party
Art adds that, if we don't have 10x as many members by the end of the year, we've screwed up our big chance
Richard K proposes giving Art wide latitude to make changes
Doug C suggests saying these are administrative changes that don't involve policy & don't require SMM or SCC approval

Treasurer: Lou is willing to continue to serve – and plans to do more on fundraising, especially in this election year

Secretary [what we call Recordkeeper]: is Margaret willing to continue? Lou will check

Locals Liaison: Lloyd C now; Matt wants to combine with Membership Secretary (currently the not-here Sharon Feldman)

Lloyd says we've lost a lot of locals over the last few years; the ones he sees are active or semi-active

Detroit Greens

Flint Greens

Traverse Bay Watershed Greens

Green Party of Western Michigan

[North Country Greens]

inactive [I didn't get the whole list]

UM-Dearborn

HVG

Macomb Co

Oakland Co & Oakland U

WOW

Ypsilanti

Wheatland Greens

Luke Roy will be here tomorrow to present on Move to Amend; he's trying to re-start a Lansing area local

Brendan Hunter is trying to do the same in Kalamazoo

JALP mentions Allegan County (Pat Foster) and Hillsdale County (Richard Wunsch)

4 key people who told Lloyd they couldn't be here: Julia Williams, Lynn Meadows, Fred Vitale & Margaret Guttshall

Lloyd's willing to continue as Locals Liaison & work with groups around the state
agrees with Art that we need to be more active and do more (or maybe
Richard K asks if he'd be able to combine with
Lloyd got the list JALP sent him (from Chuck Loucks 2009) – it's overwhelming
but it's working
Art M wants to continue this discussion while we're eating
Candace said at Flint Greens meeting she proposed to mail out a candidate slate card to "Resident"
and follow up after the election . . . but it's better not to bother with cleaning up the list yet
a mailing is about \$1 per piece, says Matt – but USPS has a new bulk mailing to every address in the neighborhood

12:00 noon Working Lunch (soup & sandwich buffet) [about 12:30]

[* pause for lunch & informal discussion *]

[* back to discussion of officers as we finish up lunch *] [12:55]

Harley's willing to be Membership Secretary and work with Locals Liaison Lloyd – tackling the big contact list first, maybe
would work on building membership – but it's really a responsibility for all of us
talk about defining our current membership more, too (maybe passing the membership-card proposal from the SCC list)
also wants to put members in contact with each other – meet up, maybe
Eric Borregard talks about sharing information that comes in through the Facebook site, etc
JALP mentions county co-ordinators (he's one); Matt notes there's a list on line, but it's probably not too accurate now
talking about outreach . . . Candace talks about how Cary & Ben came to us about the SH051 special election
Matt notes the connection with tomorrow's town-hall forums
Jim M says e-mail isn't effective in his experience; phoning (esp to cell phones) and texting are effective
lots of land-line phone #s are NG now
is e-mail an old people's technology? (well, old people still vote)

Elections Co-ordinator: yeah, JALP's still willing

Meeting Manager: Fred's still willing – with help from locals for nearby meetings
is convention in Mount Pleasant or Lansing? we'll clarify in a moment

Membership Secretary: Lou N will check with Lynn Meadows to see if she's still interested in doing that work

Lou N also says Matt Abel has offered a desk in his new office
maybe move the official address to Detroit area? well, maybe we should make that an administrative issue. . . .

JALP notes we may still need to accept mail in Ann Arbor

National Reps (& alternates): Richard K mentions he's still getting mail as a former alternate

Art M says Linda M is willing to continue as a National Rep

Derek says he didn't know we had 6 seats; usually only 3 vote, it seems – he'll continue

Richard K will be a full rep this time

Doug C is willing to be either a "delegate" or an alternate

Lou N is a delegate and willing to continue

Fred is also a rep

Priscilla Dziubek would be

Candace points out Linda Cree is also a rep

Richard K will shift back to alternate – but wants better co-ordination on when alternates should step in & vote instead of reps

Jennifer L will join as an alternate

Margaret may have been an alternate as well – Lou will check

TWINKLE [in 2 stages – officers and NC reps]

JALP also suggests renewing people in current national-party committee seats (let SCC fill vacancies); consensus

TWINKLE

the elected officers for 2012:

Chair

Fred Vitale and Matt de Heus

Vice-Chair/SCC Whip & VC/Committee Manager	Art Myatt		
Treasurer	Lou Novak		
Recordkeeper/[Secretary]	[Margaret Guttshall]		
Locals Liaison	Lloyd Clarke		
Elections Co-ordinator	JALP		
Membership Secretary	Harley Mikkelson		
Meeting Manager	Fred Vitale		
Clearinghouse Co-ordinator	[Lynn Meadows]		
National Reps [6]	Doug Campbell	Alternates:	Margaret Guttshall
	Linda Cree		Richard Kuszmar
	Priscilla Dziubek		Jennifer La Pietra
	Derek Grigsby		Harley Mikkelson
	Linda Manning Myatt		Fred Vitale
	Lou Novak		

local caucuses:

Art M says he & Doug C are the Oakland County committee (that's all they do) – so they agree they will caucus
 Lou N agrees Wayne Co has traditionally joined with Macomb and Oakland in a joint meeting with 3 cauci – but not in 2010
 now only 1 CD wholly within Wayne Co (used to be 2) . . .
 maybe caucuses are complicating? better to nominate all at convention
 Richard K would prefer a central convention . . . last time around, he got suckered
 because of a late-entry candidate who wasn't so Green after being nominated (& didn't campaign, etc – was related to R cand)
 Harley & Candace want to reserve caucusing rights for Tuscola and Lapeer Cos respectively

Candace asks to move Cary forward so she can speak at close to her originally scheduled time; ***TWINKLE*** on that

1:45 pm Update on Special Election – 51st State House District; 2/28/2012 [1:38]

Ron starts by introducing the campaign and the issues
 state legislator recalled for the first time in 30+ years . . . and by a margin of about 200 votes out of 24,000 cast (at \$10+ per vote)
 people there are tired of the big party games and bad-talking; ready for an independent voice!
 and a good chance for a “free trial” (10-month remainder of term, districts changing next time)
 Cary's been doing well on local media – but the biggest help to the campaign has been Ben Horner
 this ex-R candidate quotes Jean-Paul Sartre(!) on politics being “the art of the possible”
 he wants to invite us to come at a specific time on a specific day to make a difference
 nothing else big is happening 2/28 – come stand with a sign
 after the polls close, meet at Cobblestone Restaurant & Lounge (NW corner of Fenton Rd nr Grand Blanc Rd, just off US 23)
 the theme (win, lose, or draw) is building momentum
 a credible result will bring membership along with it

Cary speaks
 discussion about the ballot flap (introduced by Candace) and what if anything can/should be done about it

proposal to contribute \$1,000 more to Cary's campaign
 Doug C raises the Q/issue of whether it's soft money . . . discussion
 Candace notes we had a policy of donating \$300 per candidate
 Lou N answers that was when we had a lot of candidates in 2010 general election; this time, we have only one
 eventually . . . ***TWINKLE***

GPMI Convention (5/19~20; Mount Pleasant):

discussion of place
 discussion of date – 5/19~20 would conflict with Occupy-ing Chicago to counter a G8 summit there that weekend
 Doug C wants to co-ordinate with Libertarians, etc.
 Richard K suggests Lansing would have an advantage in possible availability of college dorms/etc
 Art suggests moving the discussion to the SCC with a decision in the next two weeks
***TWINKLE*?** – except Harley wants us to have a failsafe
 Matt says use Mt Pleasant May 19~20 as that; Lloyd says open to either of the two locations . . . ***TWINKLE*** on that

and we also *TWINKLE* to starting with “current” rules for GPMI convention

GPUS Convention (7/12~15; Baltimore, MD); national delegates:

multiple steps – how did we do them before?

JALP talks about straw polls . . .

Harley suggests two votes – one on delegates, who state their preference but aren’t bound to it

and another on the preferences of people at the state convention which could be used as guidance

Richard suggests electing as many delegates as we can today, let SCC fill the remainder if any more come forward

there is early registration and room-booking

who’s interested?

Jennifer La Pietra

JALP

Matt de Heus

Candace Caveny-Collins

Doug Campbell

Richard Kuszmar

A J O’Neil

Lou Novak

[Fred Vitale]

[Margaret Guttshall]

Priscilla Dziubek

Harley Mikkelson

Derek Grigsby

Merry Mikkelson

Lloyd Clarke

it’s also possible for SCC to select alternates

Lloyd C says we want to cancel the old land-line number

Lou N suggests letting the old number refer to the new number (313-815-2025) for a month or so

and all after Cary’s campaign uses the number for the rest of this month

1:00 pm **Media Relations**

[3:16]

AJ is willing to share info on how he’s worked with the press

don’t forget Cary’s election-night party at Cobblestone Restaurant & Lounge . . . take the Dort Hwy exit from I-75

food until 10pm, we can stay until midnight

Jennifer suggests getting into as many popular platforms as we can, and cross-referring to each other

Ron adds YouTube – and Matt says LWV/Flint videographer Ernestine is willing to help us

Richard K says we need to update our Website (eliminate obsolete locals) – updating gives people a reason to come back

Jennifer says the most important part is content – and no single person can provide all the content

Harley gives a plug for Erik Shelley, too

best/worst places for ads, collecting e-mail contact points, etc.

2:30 pm **Strategy for November Elections**

[3:30]

Matt says we started out the day agreeing that this is about as good an opportunity, as good a climate, as we’ve had

in terms of strategy, one thing we’ve discussed is focused elections – some races we can win (look at others’ budgets before)

another key point is redistricting

discussion of who’s thinking of running (or standing) for what –

JALP mentions Ellis B & Tom M CD 01 & 04 respectively (Pat T also wants to run for CD 04), reviews his suggested possibilities

<no, that letter was sent by Tom M, but it was written by Pat Timmons>

Charlie Shick for Kent Co Clerk

Matt Abel for Wayne Co Prosecutor

Matt de Heus has a candidate for Co Clerk too (he’s in a new Co Comm district)

Richard K points out one advantage of co-ordinating is doing more without worrying about risks of crossing \$1,000 threshold
similar templates – maybe a unified campaign treasurer?

Matt de H suggests contacting political-science professors at local universities/colleges/CCs – got students volunteering for class credit
we can coalesce around issues like the ones in tomorrow's forums (he also suggests water will be a big issue this year)

delegates talk about their Presidential preferences
TWINKLE on a forum at the GPMI convention

Art M didn't bring platforms here to take them home – so we should be ready to grab big handfuls

Charlie suggests trying to draft Rocky Anderson as a running mate for Jill Stein

4:00 pm Meeting Adjourns for the Day [about 4:00!]

Sunday, February 12

9:30 am Green Town Hall – Doors Open [xx:xx]

10:00 am Moderated Discussion – Move to Amend [10:22]

Matt introduces the pattern of the forums: a short presentation, then Matt (or Lloyd) moderates discussion/Q & A
presentation by Luke Roy of Lansing Area Move to Amend group (with Jessica Kelton & Roman Collins)
they hosted David Cobb last month . . . Roman just got elected the president of the local effort
(Candace mentions that Cobb was GPUS Presidential candidate in 2004)

Luke Roy is a long-time peace activist; he's active in Move to Amend for several reasons
his daughter is expecting his first grandchild; he wants to be able to tell her he tried to do something about this crisis
we're not fomenting a class war – it's been on for centuries, and we haven't been fighting back against the plutocracy
Citizens United decision confirmed that corporations have political free-speech rights; we take great exception to that
now we have superPACs spending millions on attack ads without having to tell where the money came from

Jessica Kelton goes through some of the history of how we got to *Citizens United* – something which spoke to her
legal personhood means corporations can assert human rights
corporations started off as legal entities formed by individuals to conduct business
the first were designed to propagate imperialism
(like the East India Trading Company – and the African Trading Co which traded people)
but they were supposed to act for the public good
they're all chartered by the government – in other words, the government gave permission for them to exist
for a time, state legislatures had to authorize corporate chartering – and they used to dissolve some corps, too
when the Constitution was created, there were two parties – the people and the government
but rights were inherent/innate, not given . . . they were laid out/listed in the Constitution (and amendments)
one way the government was allowed to act was to form corporations
so we the people have the right to tell the government what corporations can do
and corps have duties to the public as well as to their shareholders
Move to Amend is not against corporations entirely – not against their existing
we just believe they can and should be regulated, and money isn't speech
on to Roman

Roman Collins – Move to Amend is a national movement for a 28th Amendment to the Constitution
it would say corps aren't people and can be regulated – and money isn't free speech, and can be regulated
now, corps and their money have too much influence

he reads out Lansing's resolution on the proposed amendment text
to go to the City Council to have that put on the ballot for people to vote on
in Madison, WI it passed by about 84% support (Montana vote was about 70% in favor)

Matt asks some Qs of his own before opening up the floor

one of his favorite images in the Michael Moore movies is when he asked people to show where capitalism is in the Constitution
in Matt's view, this was the greatest commune ever created when it was first started
what do they think? aren't they capitalists? isn't money good?

that's a fallacy, Roman answers; they just oppose corporate personhood and bribery of politicians

Jessica is a political-science professor, and a democratic welfare-state capitalist

trying to integrate personal and local control with some central authority/planning

personally she wants to get away from the socialist/capitalist argument

Luke's personal feeling is that our economic system is a hybrid – R candidates decrying X, Y, or Z as socialism makes him grin
someone said our system now is socialism for the rich and capitalism for the poor

Supreme Court decisions and Constitutional amendments aren't always clear on meaning

one thing financial planners talk about these days is incorporating yourself (to protect your assets) – how would that be affected?
on another tack, what if some day we can build people from parts?

Roman says most Founding Fathers felt the Constitution would be a living document

so an amendment on this subject would be within that

Jessica is unhappy with how the Supreme Court has interpreted the laws and the Constitution

part of it is also how good and creative the lawyers' arguments were which helped get us there

maybe the Constitution didn't contemplate what corporations would become

Luke's comment: the Constitution starts with three words – "We, the People"

some rights are inherent and inalienable and belong to natural people

the Constitution impose duties on the government in service to the people

one thing the government can do is charter corporations – pretty easy to do nowadays

(and Matt points out that a corporation doesn't have to make money to give money after that)

corporations exist through government

so for a government to give individual rights to corporations crosses the line – they don't have that power

Roman: democracy isn't an auction – it's one real person, one vote

1809 court case denied a charter for a corporation because it didn't propose a possible public good/benefit

Matt: when you sign up to form a corporation, you sign up for some obligations – reporting, etc

and there's the concept of public trust/public good . . .

after the BP spill, we found out Obama's biggest contributor was BP . . .

but he wants to open up to comments from the floor

Roman: on the Keystone XL pipeline issue, after Obama delayed the pipeline he hired a lobbyist for his campaign

Derek G: doesn't know a lot about this case, but why is there a Movement to Amend?

was there an amendment or clause in the Constitution saying corporations were people, or is it only the Supreme Court?

why not just overturn the decision? (cf Prohibition)

Jessica: there's nothing explicitly in the Constitution giving corps personhood – but a chain of Supreme Court decisions

they're pushing for an amendment because they don't believe Congress will pass a law or amendment to overturn

their resolutions call for (non-binding) popular votes

Roman: the resolution calls on Federal and state legislators to adopt the amendment

Bernie Sanders proposed an amendment, but it would still let non-profits contribute

Doug C: two important points – well, three

when Citizens United decision was announced, Ds controlled White House and both halves of Congress – and didn't act

Roman: they're playing good cop (bad theatre)

there's a bloc of citizens saying the 28th Amendment should say rights belong only to people "with a pulse"

that could be a way to include fetuses . . . don't use that phrase; say "naturally born" or "drawing breath"

and there's a binding citizens' initiative on 11/6 – take advantage of it to throw Ds out too

Jessica: we're aware of language traps

Art M: reads from the new GPMI platform

we're for rights for people, not corps, and support overturning Supreme Court decisions that way
Roman thanks us for that

AJ: Roman can run his campaign any time

Lou and he held a rally in Detroit on the 2nd anniversary of Citizens United – good turnout despite coldest weather of the year
he understands the premise of this and thinks it's being adopted by parties (but maybe hijacked in some directions)
Lou and he were talking on the way here – it's a fiduciary responsibility the government has on spending the people's money

Matt: this is going to be a message for everyone here today – it'd be great if you all grabbed our platform & read it
but we're already with you – like Ds & Rs aren't – so look at us and vote for us

Jessica adds: they're going to go door-to-door urging people to vote for the referendum
Ds are left relative to the Rs, but they're still Ds
maybe this will push more people

Bill O: agrees with them 22 trillion percent (cf money banksters took out)

we have a Constitution, but unfortunately we're also under martial law and civil rights are suspended
what if we pass this amendment – will the reptilians let us get away with it?

Roman: the people have to re-assert their rights

Jessica: there is still a little bit of democracy working (Roman: enough to salvage)

Matt: doesn't have the statistic available today, but there's a triangle going on here

Move to Amend . . . at the end of the day we'll talk about Right to Work and unions . . . but there's another key fact
in the last 15 years, the net value of the companies on the NYSE has gone up to match the increase in national debt

Roman: to quote Dylan Rattigan, this country is being extracted – through corp personhood

Jessica: not to get too wonkish, but there's an exchange-rate aspect to this; legislators don't want to get tough with China
and the Chinese aren't spending, they're saving – as our debt goes up

Alice Schiesswohl: new today, but wants to recommend *Vultures' Picnic* by Greg Palast (check BookTV.org)

he looks particularly at oil & nuclear-energy corporations

corps are shape-shifters: if they get chastised in one form, they change their name and some directors and go on
cf Three Mile Island – same corporation went on to build Fukushima . . . and is getting the contract to rebuild Fukushima
see also BP oil drilling

Roman: see how corrupt the corporations are?

a Green called Scott Walker (WI gov) pretending to be a Koch brother

Lloyd C: has Move to Amend petitions

Candace C: first time she's had experts in front

she's heard from her husband's UAW contacts that Citizens United also gives union corps extra rights too

Jessica: doesn't know a lot about that aspect, but knows unions are corporations too

but thinks they wouldn't be barred from donating – just without disclosure

Luke is a proud AFSCME member and union supporter

the AFL-CIO is #7 in the biggest donors – and the only labor org on that list

the powers-that-be are okay with suffering that nuisance as long as they can spend their own bigger moneys
and part of that spending is going for Right to Work and other ways to limit unions

Roman: how many people here think our government is properly representing us? (no hands go up)

Jessica: we have some flyers . . . one is on a rally in Lansing 3-6pm next Saturday on the Capitol lawn

(Roman: it's actually an Occupy Lansing rally, with Move to Amend participating)

[break between sessions]

Ben: he's here to talk about medical marijuana, a deeply political and controversial issue
MI passed the MMMA in 2008 – since then, it's become a thriving industry in the state
he opened up the first dispensary in Flint – but it's been a really rocky road since then
before that, he was a chef – one place was at Shepherd's Hollow Golf Course in Clarkston
he used to see corp heads there wheeling and dealing, making decisions that impacted people for good or ill
but no matter what, they were going to enjoy the time
growing up, he read books by Jack Kerouac and so on – and got the message from Vietnam: corps & govt can make mistakes
getting angry by itself doesn't solve such problems, but having intelligent discussions
the Green Party is truer to his values than any other party
still, he is his own person with his own opinions
the video presentation is a documentary he & others made
he pays himself a \$50k salary – could make more, but wanted to focus more on helping people
others focused more on money, didn't care as much about helping people
but we can't throw out the baby with the bathwater
the other makers suggested buying some infomercial time to show the documentary
but the TV folks said no
he said that wasn't fair, so he contacted lawyers
he loves lawyers, because they all try to find ways to make the laws work for good (in one way or another)
but they want \$10-15k to open up a case against the TV stations
now they're trying to get it on public access – but corps don't want that, either
so he challenges people to not be so concerned about our government that we aren't also concerned about our media
if we can't even talk to ourselves, we're lost

on goes the documentary – “MMM Reports: Grass Roots”

Ben wants to thank Cary for being in his district and having the gumption to run, and Lloyd & JALP for making her campaign possible
it's a special election in the 51st District – but it may be possible for her to win . . .

Alice: the elephant in the room is the drug-corp lobbyists, Federal & state
once they can get a patent on cannabis and sell it to us for \$100 a pill, it'll be legal & easy – but they'll fight it until then

Ben: that's very true – cf AG Bill Schuette & his friends at Dow Chemical
those with power will go after a whistleblower like nothing else . . . that's why people are afraid

Derek G: it's a money issue, and of course they'll come after you with everything they have
the pharmaceutical industry doesn't want this – and to him, the elephant in the room is the “illegal economy” of prohibited drugs
there are trillions in it if we add heroin & cocaine
he believes in the transitional goals, but also thinks we should be going for total legalization of marijuana
he knows about selling illegal drugs from earlier in his life

Ben: thinks Lloyd & Cary have the petition for legalization – everyone here should sign it
let's talk about some real numbers: he spent \$1,800 four months ago to do a poll
some people still believe Reagan view that one joint is like taking a nuclear bomb to your brain
two weeks ago, AMA released a report saying medical marijuana is a significantly less of a health risk than tobacco
so we sell more dangerous things to people who are barely adults (or not even)

Candace: remember to separate signatures for people from different counties

Jessica: wants to mention the documentary brought up a good point about speaking up
she also understands that there is research saying marijuana fights tumors
maybe NORML chapters in some communities could hold viewing parties
and if legalization gets on the ballot, there may be more right to put this on TV as an active political issue

Ben: it's still under political issues
the packet he passed out has some political tips and tools – though many people here may get some of that already
contact for lawmakers (& Gov Snyder), sample letters
he's heard several people offer help – contact him after this session

Sherry W: documentary was good, very well done, but the music was distracting – could it be taken out?

Ben: they're working on a new documentary now
maybe some congregations could show it, too

Ben: the video is on the MMM Magazine Website

AJ: his café might be able to show the documentary

Ben: do you know Barb & [Zale?] Agro in Ferndale? their dispensary was raided; a few wks later, [Zale] died of a heart attack
incarceration is also an impediment – so is the alcohol lobby

he likes the argument that this was adopted by the people, obey the people's will/voice

Ben: agrees, thinks the Occupy presenters were good on that approach too

Roman: thinks it's no coincidence that US has the largest prison population in the world and a prison lobby pushing for harsh drug laws

Ben: have you ever been to jail? it's not *that* bad – and anyone in that fight should be prepared for that day
cf Gandhi and his movement, the civil-rights movement . . . Ben himself had his chess game improve in jail)
two wars changed the language on what people were – the War of 1812 and the Civil War

but the same Civil War amendment that made African Americans people was used to make corps people too

Roman also is wearing a hemp hat

Lloyd: what's the window of opportunity for the end-prohibition ballot proposal?

Ben: we need about half a million signatures by about the end of June – but we need to be careful how it's implemented

Ben says Matt Abel e-mailed him asking if GPMI would officially endorse the proposal
quick consensus / **TWINKLE**

[break between sessions]

12:00 noon Moderated Discussion – Occupy Movement

[about 12:25]

Matt mentions that the DoEat Deli (on the bowling-alley side) is being opened up if we want lunch here . . .

then he moves on to preparing to introduce members of Occupy the Tri
but first, a few statistics (on screen)

what people polled thought was an ideal split, what they thought was happening, & what really is happening
where government money is going
where CEO pay has moved

Mike Gonzalez: thanks to GPMI for having this meeting

Occupy movement is about having ordinary people engage with each other – young to old
some people don't want to be active in a political party; they just want to do things that need doing – and that's a great thing
Occupy has enabled direct social, environmental, and political action – and even as a baby, it's still very strong
unfortunately, there's a lot of blame to go around – but there's also more problem-solving happening now
it's the least of your worries to be ostracized or jailed for speaking out for the highest ideals of humanity
Occupy is just a banner, basically – not to be claimed by anyone, but to show that a critical mass exists
we don't have to be afraid to be creative and active

Cindy LeVasseur: asks how many have been active – sees she's preaching to the choir

they're out at Delta College with a table a day or two a week – contact info for elected officials, maps/etc
planned to let people call their reps – but can't use her phone there

have accomplished introducing students to the Occupy movement – have a quick-grab flyer with a link to the Facebook page
now a trifold, too

activities: DTE in Ann Arbor, Move to Amend at the courthouse here, David Camp's office, governor's house, door-to-door, etc, etc
labor activist Larry (Cindy's age) tells labor groups "You can see I'm just a 20-year-old hippie"

they have petitions against the emergency-manager law & would be glad to take medical-marijuana petitions around, too

Mike's made a 30-minute-or-so video on the timeline of the Occupy movement (4 shorter pieces in one) they show to groups

Mike: political parties may have more experience than they do; he doesn't consider himself highly activated yet

but he's come to understand Occupy is a baby – they just want to work together for the greater good
the greed perpetuated by our current system is just another symptom of the lack of problem-solving

he's glad to see that we're aimed at that from this meeting
his role in Occupy (at an emotional and intellectual level) is to connect to people – the movement wants to be a beacon for that
doesn't want people to be afraid to speak out for fear of how they'd be treated
there's a reason why the younger generation tends to vote more liberal; he looks at his own 1-year-old daughter
it's up to us to look at what we can do

Matt: you weren't here for our business meeting yesterday – but GPMI has some jealousy of how fast Occupy has gotten organized . . .
there's some criticism that Occupy doesn't have clear goals; he sees Mike & Cindy as putting a face on the goals
we used to have a system that worked well for personal contact – called the phone book

AJ: you say you're not too political
he respects that, but was glad Occupy was at the forum where he announced his Congressional campaign
do you see us as matching your concerns, and what do you intend to do about that?

Mike: hard to figure out what can be done without losing movement's autonomy

(AJ will share a code at his café – which says among other things, "We'll get up at 1am to support our candidates")

Ben: is it true Occupy started on the Internet?

Mike: not clear; some say it started via AdBusters, etc, etc

Cindy: we meet weekly, then more working groups meet on specific projects; we're on the phone daily, too
then things are brought to the General Assembly

Flint has an Occupy movement, too – dealing with the emergency-manager situation, etc

but on the Internet, there were people talking 2-3 years ago about problems with government

Mike: believes that was mostly a natural occurrence, a culmination of factors; Occupy represents the global outcry of humanity
the powers-that-be try to ignore it, but they can't

a lot of documentaries have come out (some may think them radical)

the Internet allows us to program [for] ourselves

Cindy: interviewed by a political-science major at Delta College – will the corporate media let you X, etc, etc?

her answer was that, whether it's Occupy or the Green Party, we need to keep active and as broad as possible

Roman: thinks a lot of people had predicted some sort of populist uprising was about to happen
talks about union-busting activities and the Arab Spring – he predicted it (so what's next, we ask?)

Mike: Gerald Silente of the Trends & Research Institute (?) predicted in 2010 that this would happen

a lot of the reason for the Tunisian uprising was the inequality people saw

Mike: thinks the Occupy movement should get over some of the blame of the 99% vs 1%

people at the top need to make decisions – until we cure the idea of greed as the center/goal, we can't make progress

he really believes that people are born innocent and only are separated by ideas like that

it's not people at the root of the problems, but problems at the root of the people

AJ: he got sober a long time ago – with the help of two stickers a friend gave him to put up on his bathroom mirror:

first "you're looking at the problem" . . . then after two years, "you're looking at the solution"

Mike: Gandhi said it best – "be the change you want to see in the world"

Matt de Heus mentions a correction to something JALP said yesterday

the letter JALP thought was from Tom M was actually written by Pat Timmons

Pat, not Tom, is the one who wants to run for the 4th District Congressional seat

[break between sessions]

1:00 pm Moderated Discussion – Right to Work

[1:11]

Matt repeats the DoEat Deli mention

then moves on to say that he and Lloyd are going to talk about Right to Work

Lloyd cut his teeth as an activist in labor . . .

Bay City has had two city votes on prevailing wage in the past two weeks – basically repealing it for all city contracts

a few more graphs – this time on income levels

what's happened with household income in MI compared to what would be full-time income at minimum wage (getting closer)

another graph shows how income declines in parallel with how union membership drops – coincidence?

if not, which is the cause and which the effect?

first, let's look at the terminology – it's a misnomer; it's really the "right to work for less"

Lloyd retired at age 49 and is now 70 – and it's all thanks to the UAW and the folks before who won 8-hour day, health care, safety now that's all slowly diminishing . . . but there's nothing more important than having good union jobs

Lloyd returns thanks to Matt for his work in organizing this meeting

Lloyd's statistics start with workers in right-to-work states averaging about \$6,500 less than workers in union-shop states

odds of getting killed on the job are higher in right-to-work states, pensions/401(k)s/etc/etc are less

infant-mortality, bankruptcy, and poverty rates are higher

right-to-work is coming to MI . . . we need to fight it . . .

JALP asks if we want to propose putting GPMI on record against right-to-work; Derek asks for an explanation

Lloyd says, in a nutshell, it lets workers opt out of being union members but get the benefits of union bargaining & contracts

___ clarifies that, under current law, people can opt out of membership but have to pay the rough equivalent to dues

unions can't get political contributions from non-members

the change would be that unions couldn't collect those dues-equivalent amounts

they also would want to take away the right of private/secret ballots over union representation

Matt would also like to put another face on this: Delta College is up in enrollment about 25%

(corps think he teaches operating machines; he actually teaches people not to blow up, not to pollute, & not to give people cancer)

but when it came time for a new contract, do you know how they negotiated? they didn't – don't have to if there's no representation

they had a carrot & stick to encourage retirement; turns out it's illegal; unions sued & won, will get 3% raises back when court done

CC instructors aren't unionized, so they won't get their money back anyway

Candace: her husband is a UAW retiree, but they've had an interesting development in the past 2 years or so

the UAW has put its stamp of approval on the two-tier wage system, so new hires get a much lower wage which will stay that way

Lloyd: that's true – he adds that we need to ask politicians what kind of jobs they're creating (all jobs are not created equal)

(Doug reminds us, in the Clinton era, we said: "I know you created lots of jobs, I have 3 of them")

Dawn French: where did Lloyd's brochure with statistics come from?

Lloyd: from the Steelworkers – there's a strong group (united with chemical and nuclear workers)

Dawn notes that prevailing-wage rule also prevents bidders from bidding too low (and hiring inexperienced workers, etc)

Derek: he's hearing that right-to-work is just a way to bring dissension among workers (over pay, representation)

he used to be a shop steward a long time ago – probably some of them might not give 100% in representing non-members

AJ: the past 5 years, he's had "assembly-line concerts" at his café – integrating customer & worker; he calls it cross-trickle economics

it seems to be one way to address a lot of these things

Alice: she's a retired teacher – when she retired from a charter school (what was available when she returned to the state)

they were told they'd have max 25 students/class – they had 35, sometimes 70 if the other teacher was absent (no subs hired)

happened for 6 weeks when one teacher had to be out that long – when they had to have subs, they used minimum-wage parapros

that's what "right to work" means – the right to work [more] for less

Lloyd: there's an idea called the "team concept" – eg, in the auto industry – if you're there, they can put you on any job/task

if some folks are absent from your work grp, they don't bring in folks from break relief/etc; folks who are there work harder

then, too, workers are desperate for jobs and almost have to accommodate what the bosses want from them

Matt: let's touch on "green jobs" – the operator jobs at somewhere like Dow Chemical typically pay \$24-28/hour

the new jobs are in joint ventures, not technically at Dow, and the pay is \$12-14/hour

probably similar things are happening for white-collar jobs (computer sales jobs now pay half what they did 2 yrs ago, 50k vs 100k)

he also wants to skip back outside right-to-work again to prevailing wage . . . corps involved in it are part of the exportation of wealth

it used to be that local contractors were given preferences, but not now

also cf Delphi – the first time that plant was shut down & machines shipped to Mexico, that was counted as a net export

AJ: in the government agreement, they also removed the right to strike to get the concessions to go through

Lloyd: lots of things have changed

NLRB has vacancies which prevented quorum required for decision-making . . .

Matt: one solution is to vote Green – we're certainly pro-people

proposal to oppose right-to-work

Doug C points out we've always held that position

Lou N thinks it would be a good idea to make a statement of that position

Art points out there are some specific petition drives, some from Committee to Transform Michigan

one of them is for a Constitutional amendment to ban collective bargaining for govt employees, cancel all contracts

another Constitutional amendment would eliminate all requirement to pay union dues as a requirement

legislative to repeal PA 386 of 1947

maybe we could oppose those

Harley proposes that, Derek/Lou props

Doug suggests adding "consistent with our longstanding support for the working class"

TWINKLE

[these are items III-B, III-C, and III-D of the SOS's 2/7/2012 listing of ballot-proposal status; ending marijuana prohibition is III-F]

so what do we do? Matt says first do what we've promised to do
and keep on working

[end 1:48pm]

notes after the meeting

* Here's the text of the letter from Patrick Timmons (wants to be our 4th District Congressional candidate), forwarded by Tom Mair.

Tom asked me to read it at the SMM if possible; it wasn't, really, but (with help from Matt de Heus) some of the message got out:

February 8, 2012

The Green Party of Michigan
C/O Mr. Tom Mair

Green Party Members,

I am sorry that I am missing today's meeting, but I had purchase airline tickets long before this meeting was scheduled. I am very interested in running for Congress on the Green Party ticket and would like to acquaint you with my ideas and plans.

I am motivated to run because of 3 critical issues that face our nation. The first is the dangerous level of debt that we are leaving to our children and grandchildren. We must act now to reduce this onerous burden so that our descendants will have a chance to enjoy the bounty of our great nation. The second issue is the corruption of our government by corporate money and lobbyists. This fourth arm of the government is not a legitimate constitutional force, yet it intrudes into every decision in Washington, displacing the will of the People. I support the Move to Amend and will work in Congress to swiftly pass this amendment. The third issue is that I feel we must restore the environment of this great land. Every rationalized decision that places economic growth above environmental stewardship is destroying our legacy and threatening our very existence. I am sure you notice that these issues align closely with the four pillars of the Green Party.

I have begun to lay the groundwork for a campaign. Ellis Boals and I have discussed the situation and we have agreed that he will run in the 1st District and I will run in the 4th. I have started a bank account and have loaned my campaign \$4,000 to get started. I am working on a web site, stationary and a schedule of town hall discussion meetings to discuss my ideas and solicit input from the citizens. I would like to work with other Green Congressional Candidates and do all we can together to mount a strong effort in this year's elections.

I will do my best to run a vital, thoughtful campaign and bring the Green Party into the discussion of our country's fate. I humbly seek the nomination to run as a Green Party candidate in the 4th District Congressional race.

Sincerely,
Patrick Timmons

Tom and Susan Odgers also expressed their regrets for being unable to attend – prevented by weather (and Susan was somewhat under the weather, too).

* Also, Luanne Kozma e-mailed me with similar regrets during the meeting, saying weather had also prevented her (and Ellis Boal) from attending. Luanne asked if it might be possible to arrange for her to speak to the SMM – she hoped to talk with us about fracking.