

Green Party of Michigan State Membership Meeting
Saturday, January 19, 2008
Central Methodist Church * 23 E. Adams * Detroit, MI 48226

Welcome & Approval of Agenda

Fred Vitale ****called the meeting to order**** at 9:35am.

Maureen Taylor, for Michigan Welfare Rights Organization (MWRO), welcomed us.

Agenda approved without changes.

Officer Reports

Ken Mathenia (Chair)

* Not present to report.

Harley Mikkelson (Vice Chair/Committees)

* Not present to report.

Aimee Smith (Vice Chair/SCC Whip)

* Reviewed proposals passed by SCC.

* SCC is now voting on amending platform to spell out we favor single-payer universal health care.

* Talked about SCC representation, inactive locals.

Randym Jones (Treasurer)

* Reported \$12,108.45 in the bank:

+ \$2,584.92 in the administrative account.

+ \$9,523.53 in the political account.

* Planning fundraiser for April, postcard to everyone who donated last year.

John A. La Pietra (Elections Co-ordinator; Media Committee)

* Reviewed national/state-level offices to be elected in 2008:

+ Asked those present to check about county/local offices.

* Media Committee now has vetted members & posted e-mail list:

+ Asked for help updating the list with best local contacts.

+ Wants SMM/SCC guidance on how to handle GPUS, other-state releases.

* Asked the SMM to give SCC local caucusing authority statewide:

+ So local groups can come to SCC to get that authority.

==> [CONSENSUS]

Art Myatt (Lobbying Committee)

* Reported on GPMI members lobbying as Greens:

+ Lansing hearings on sulfide mining in UP (Art Myatt, John La Pietra).

+ Sierra Club lobbying day (Art Myatt, Lou Novak).

+ Fred Vitale reported on further lobbying by Detroit Greens.

Matt Abel, Aimee Smith, Fred Vitale (GPUS Representatives)

* Reported on GPUS convention in Chicago 7/10-13:

+ Nomination vote will probably happen Sa 7/12.

+ GPMI will have 24 delegates.

* Reported on the surviving lawsuit vs the Presidential primary:

+ Case filed in Federal District Court; GPMI is lead plaintiff.

+ Issue: protesting voter lists going only to the Ds & Rs.

Election of Officers

* After considerable discussion, nominations gathered; election deferred.

+ Rev. Pinkney nominated as honorary chair:

==> [CONSENSUS]

Discussion of Problems and Solutions

Maureen Taylor proposes agreement on a few survival issues:

* GPMI should work with MWRO, Call 'Em Out (not NAACP).

General discussion of various issues:

* Finding & helping victims of raids on accused illegals who are being rounded up & dispersed in prisons/jails around MI.

* Foreclosure problems.

* Treatment of Rev. Pinkney.

* Linda Cree proposes to adopt specific issues for statewide focus:

+ Ending the Iraq war.

+ Universal health care.

+ The global environment.

+ The economy.

+ The energy crunch.

* Huron Valley Greens are focusing locally on police brutality:

+ A recent case went the right way (Dr. Catherine Wilkerson).

* There will be a medical-marijuana proposal on the 2008 MI ballot.

* Various proposals on health care (single-payer or otherwise).

Two resolutions proposed by Dianne Feeley:

* Inform all GPMI lists about Rev. Pinkney's treatment:

+ Encourage everyone to complain in letters, etc.

+ Have a delegation urge Conyers to investigate Rev P's jail conditions.

+ Have Chuck Loucks draft voter fraud/voter ID position paper.

* Urge Gov. Granholm to declare an economic moratorium:

+ Permitted by state law.

+ Would stop foreclosures and utility shut-offs.

+ Propose 5 years; be willing to negotiate on how long.

==> [CONSENSUS]

Another resolution proposed by Art Myatt:

* Call anyone in the country without papers refugees, not criminals:

+ Art Myatt comments: "Human beings aren't illegal."

* Linda Cree has a blocking concern:

+ Would "refugee" would be used for all immigrants?

+ Understands we're trying to avoid "criminalizing" them.

+ But "refugee" might offend some (disparage their homeland).

* Art's idea is to treat them all as innocent unless proven criminal.

* Consensus not reached.

**** Lunch ****

Fred Vitale thanked lunch organizers Lou Novak & Priscilla Dziubek:

* Suggested \$50-100 donation to MWRO for using the space.

* MWRO is organizing a truth commission on water cut-off issues:

+ Scheduled for May 3 in Detroit.

==> [CONSENSUS] on \$100 donation

Candidate Forum

* Planned: 5-minute speeches, then Q & A; Matt Abel to emcee.

Fred Vitale suggested showing January 13 San Francisco debate:

* Proposal: Show the candidates' introductory speeches only.

==> [CONSENSUS]

* More video available on the mfeinsteintube channel on YouTube.

One possible candidate was represented by a GPMI member:

* Lou Novak spoke for the Draft Nader campaign.

One candidate had arranged to give a speech via the Internet link:

* Instead, Paul Kangas suggested showing SMM a YouTube video.

* Eventually, Fred Vitale suggested Kangas forward the link to us.

One candidate had reported he would attend:

* However, Joe Schriener did not show up.

Discussion of other candidates:

- * Cynthia McKinney is also supporting the Reconstruction Party.
- * Jared Ball has dropped out & thrown his support to McKinney.
- * Candace Caveny says Kent Mesplay "most improved" from 2004.

Matt Abel asks if we want to approve a forum for the next SMM:

- * Aimee Smith proposes the new Meeting Manager & Elections Coordinator be delegated authority to organize a forum (or tour).
==> **[CONSENSUS]**

Officer Elections

- * Chair: Fred Vitale ==> **[CONSENSUS]**
- * Vice Chair/SCC whip: Art Myatt ==> **[CONSENSUS]**
- * Vice Chair/Committees: Aimee Smith ==> **[CONSENSUS]**
- * Treasurer: Randym Jones ==> **[CONSENSUS]**
- * Recordkeeper: John Anthony La Pietra ==> **[CONSENSUS]**
 - + Provisional/pro tem; office will be open at next SMM.
- * Meeting Manager: Matt Abel ==> **[CONSENSUS]**
- * Elections Co-ordinator: John La Pietra ==> **[CONSENSUS]**
- * Clearinghouse Co-ordinator:
Henry Herskovitz ==> **[CONSENSUS]**
- * Membership Secretary: Chuck Loucks ==> **[CONSENSUS]**
- * Locals Liaison:
<* left vacant >
- * At-Large SCC Representatives:
Aimee Dunn, Linda Cree ==> **[CONSENSUS]**
 - + Discussion about adding more at-large positions; deferred.
- * GPUS Representatives: multiple candidates; after votes counted:
 - + 3 women: Aimee Smith, Karen Shelley, & Priscilla Dziubek.
 - + Sandy Williams said no to being an alternate.
 - + Aimee Dunn volunteered Linda Cree as alternate, she'll do it:
==> **[CONSENSUS]**
 - + 3 men: Matt Abel, Lou Novak, & Fred Vitale.
 - + Male alts: Doug Campbell, Harley Mikkelson, Frank Harden.

Delegate-Selection Process Proposal

- * Suggestion: Leave it to SCC to decide (target date February 11):
==> **[CONSENSUS]**

Committee Work – Separate Sessions; Results

* Elections:

- + We want to run candidates for all statewide offices.
- + Maybe a candidate/campaign workshop at 1 of next 2 SMMs.
- + We need to do more advance planning, recruiting.

* Fundraising:

- + As Richard Kuszmar found in 2006, people can raise funds with house parties:
 - > Maybe build some around McKinney or Nader videos.
- + Hierarchy of quality of attention in chances to get support.
- + We should target specific constituencies – for example:
 - > Owners of small bizess threatened by Wal-Mart.
- + Add to last-year-donor postcards a plea for more this year.
- + We're going to put together a budget!
- + Team up with Eric Borregard to make decent radio/TV ads.

* Media:

- + Replace the Ann Arbor answering machine with a cell phone.
 - > (Still needs someone to answer it.)

- + When we do pay for ads, concentrate on alternative papers.
- + Upgrade the Web site to be more dynamic.

Other Business

Aimee Smith reads a resolution from the Huron Valley Greens:

- * Asked for Brent McMillan's resignation, GPUS SC's apology to Elaine Brown.
- * Much discussion; various blocking concerns; vote:
 - + 17 yes, 5 no, 3 abstentions
 - ==> **[ADOPTED by 2/3 majority vote]**

Further discussion of Maureen Taylor's work-together topics:

- * Fred Vitale shows a flyer on the water-rights truth commission.
- * The utility cut-off problem is spreading to more neighborhoods.
- * Suggestion: Put water bills on property-tax bills, but with a 7-year moratorium before foreclosure (instead of 1½-2 years).

Future SMMs and Related Issues

Hillsdale should get right of first refusal as host for the next SMM:

- * Target date: Around April 19 or 26.

GPMI convention: before or after the GPUS convention July 10-13?

- * Aimee Smith notes "endorsed-candidates" list (passed previously):
 - + For group endorsements, etc.
 - + Publish our list by 5/13 (in parallel with the SOS primary list).
 - + Spring SMM is a target for candidates to decide/announce.
- * Richard Kuszmar asks for convention in Detroit/Ann Arbor area.
- * Art Myatt notes it's possible to have SMMs both before and after:
 - + One in June (before the GPUS convention).
 - + Another in late July or early August (just before the primary).
- * Maybe June 21 or 28 for the pre-GPUS-convention SMM.
- * Latest post-GPUS date would be the Saturday before the primary (August 2) -- or the weekends before? July 26, or 19?
 - + 7/19 conflicts w/ Benton Harbor event unless we meet there.
- * Location not settled.

Announcements

Marquette will have an Indigenous Earth Day Summit 4/22-23.

GPMI Platform -- Health Care

Aimee Dunn notes GPMI universal single-payer health care platform:

- * Proposed platform change got 18 votes on SCC but failed quorum.

Chuck Loucks notes Huron Valley Greens were concerned about decentralization:

- * They agree single-payer is better than what we have now -- but if we're replacing the current system, why not meet all our values?

Lou Novak brought up the proposed GPMI platform change on universal health care here:

- * There's a petition drive with some language in it that some folks objected to.
- * But what SCC was considering was adding one sentence to GPMI's platform:
 - + "Therefore, GPMI supports single-payer, publicly-funded universal health care."

Discussion, a few text changes; Chuck Loucks stood aside:

- * He wanted to present HVG's issues, and was glad to have them talked out.

==> **[CONSENSUS]**

*The meeting was ****adjourned**** at 5:11pm.*