

Green Party of Michigan — Spring 2006 Statewide Membership Meeting

Saturday and Sunday, May 20 and 21, 2006 • 9:00am - 5:00pm

Wolverine Dilworth Inn, 300 Water St., Boyne City, MI

Saturday, May 20

9:00 Coffee, rolls, registration

9:45 Discussion of agenda [9:46]

Art Myatt announces two additions to the agenda: immigration-policy discussion and candidates from other parties on our ballot line.

The agenda is accepted.

10:00 Announcements

none

10:15 Officer reports

Chair, two co-Chairs, Treasurer, Membership Secretary, Locals Liaison, Meeting mgr. Elections coordinator, Record keeper (4 minutes or less, each)

Art Myatt – Meeting Manager

Art M says that he hasn't heard anything about locations in Lansing for our convention; absent a location there, he's thinking of something in the metro Detroit area.

Carolyn Dulai objects to meeting in a union hall; unions are tied to the Democratic Party.

Karen Shelley notes that we want to work with unions.

Ken Mathenia wouldn't object to Detroit area or a union hall; it would probably be that or a corporate facility, probably.

Fred Vitale says unions aren't the Democratic Party; he was glad the last SMM in GR was at a union hall.

Kurt Wheelock wants to keep the meeting in the Lansing area.

Art M feels if we're going to get anywhere, we need votes from workers – but he's depending on local volunteers to set up much of the convention. Holding the meeting in a union hall is part of letting unions know they have an alternative. Somewhere in Lansing is fine for the convention – it's sort of traditional.

Carolyn D will try to find a place in Lansing.

Bill Opalicky – Locals Liaison

Bill O says he's trying to build the party. there is a new local meeting in Dr. Bob's ... a talk by a barber there had more people at it than we have here at this SMM. The meetings usually include a speaker followed by an open-mike circle. This local is purely for outreach. We may have a "Meet the Candidates" forum. We also need to take into consideration where other people are coming from ... the new forms of politics include drum circles – so we have them as part of the Green Forum at Dr. Bob's. Bill has talked to his old friend Meruga(?), a professional drummer; he's agreed to do a fundraiser – for GPMI if we want, otherwise for the new local. There is vegetarian food available there, too.

Richard Kuszmar is working to form a local in Macomb County ... maybe more than one.

Art M points out that tomorrow we may create or revise some statewide locals (Rural Greens, Labor Greens). It's a human face that will attract people to the party.

Sylvia Inwood – Chair

Two people from Flint came to the Detroit Greens meeting last week, also a guy from Livonia who wants to run for office. He seemed to be waffling about the "war" in Iraq. When she pressed him on it, he said it was necessary to get elected, and seemed to be willing to say whatever it takes to get into office. She gave him a

copy of the GPUS platform, and suggested he make one of his own and come to the caucus in July. She also talked about running not only to try to win but also to get our issues out there. She talks all the time (about the war, labor issues, etc.) to people who don't think they're political, in addition to this sort of "vetting" experience. She wants to say she doesn't expect everyone in GPMI to like her, but we can, and should be able to, work with each other to promote our common views and issues.

Bill O asks who the prospective candidate was: Frank Kolinski (sp?). He wants to run against McCotter; it would be good to have a candidate in that race, but it should be someone who runs on our platform.

Art M asks about the statement against Palisades – it was a protest against the renewal of their license. (We'd already agreed on that.)

Fred V notes that the statement is published in *Green Light*.

Doug Campbell – Vice Chair/Outreach

It's been a slow quarter for outreach – he got 15 seconds on Detroit Channel 7, not on peak oil, out of a 15-minute interview on that topic. He did an all-day presentation to all six civics/US Government classes at Canton HS, and an appearance on *Off the Record*. Working on the National Committee has taken up much of his time – and it's inwardly focused.

He's been trying to build bridges to Hamtramck, which has a group calling itself Hamtramck Solidarity, not affiliated with national Solidarity – more nearly so with Polish Solidarity (though 1/3 Arabic, as is Hamtramck these days).

The Libertarian Party asked us to join them in opposing a bill that would require more financial disclosure from candidates. This hasn't gone anywhere yet .

The SEMi Green Party Building that has been under consideration is further from completion than it was – Matt Abel has been following this. It's affordable partly because there was a catastrophic fire. However the **bad** news is that the owner of the building has done some work – but without a permit or knowledge of what is actually needed to put the building into a condition in which it could be occupied. The place now has less value and more purchase price.

There is some candidate activity nationally. (MI is among the later primary/filing states.)

OH has candidates for governor and Lt gov, sec'y of state.

IL, IN ballot-access petitions are going well.

ME has matching funds for Pat LaMarche for Governor campaign. Unfortunately, there seems to be little indication in the campaign that it's affiliated with the Green Party.

Nancy Skinner (D running for 9th US Congress) wants us to meet with her. Doug thinks she's not likely to win the primary, but if she did could beat Knollenberg, the incumbent. His first gut reaction is to meet with her and say, "Yes, we're environmentalists – and more – and you're not."

We have a candidate for that seat: Dawne Aumann.

Fred V thinks we should develop a position on that bill the Libertarians asked us about.

JALP suggests asking someone to research it and report back to the SCC.

Aimee Smith asks what's the relationship between this group and the Democratic Party. Doug says the relationship is basically that we live in the same nation and face the same problems.

Pete Schermerhorn – Membership Secretary

We have 211 current members (+2 at the desk today). Three have come back from obscurity to membership. He's removed 63 people who are no longer officially "in good standing" ... 61 of 63 were for people who hadn't paid dues; 2 were people who have moved or just dropped out. 17 memberships came due next month – 56 come due in Feb, 22 in May ... interesting for cash flow. Since last meeting, when we agreed to take Green Card holders if they agreed to the 10KV, 21 people who had nothing other to do with us than being Green Card holders have been added to the rolls. There's also the national 1,000 at \$1,000 program.

George Christian asks if we send people a card when they become overdue; (Pete doesn't drop anyone who hasn't gotten at least one notice.) Is there a possibility that some people are just down on money and need to be made aware of waivers? (Pete tells them.) There are another 25-30 people on the expired list who Pete

knows are active (or at least activists with Green ideas).

Bill O can't remember when his membership is due ; will he get a notice? (There's list at the registration desk.)

John Anthony LaPietra – Elections Co-ordinator

[discussion on how to do more in getting message out – forwarding GPUS releases, seconding or demurring.]

Pete S points out there have been objections to some things from national media committee.

Joanne Bier-Beemon notes the problems of delay..

Aimee S suggests a member on national media committee to participate in preparation, avoid some problems.

Linda Manning Myatt – Recordkeeper

She reports that the job is mostly transforming minutes into narrative. Pete S had a nice description of what a recordkeeper ought to be doing, but nothing has come of this as yet.

Harley M asks if she's gotten a notary's seal yet – (not yet, she hates going to the courthouse).

Pete S asks about surety bond – it is \$10,000, and is obtained through a bond company.

Ted Hentchel asks about the upfront cost – \$50 (used to be \$25, he thinks).

10:45 Break [10:45]

11:00 National rep reports — panel: 4 national reps plus alternates [11:05]

Linda M says the National Committee's a mess – occasionally we pass a proposal (including the one we put forward last time, #220).

Karen S is very happy that this passed; some of us don't want a repeat of 2004 in 2008. We want a strong candidate to oppose the Democrats (as well as the Republicans). People on both sides (Nader versus Cobb) came together on this. It passed by about 80%, she thinks.

Fred V says one thing the National Committee is recognizing is that there's a change in the national political air. The Republicans are falling, and the Democrats aren't being a genuine alternative. What the WI Greens did was really good . They won vote against the war in 75% of the towns despite active Republican opposition. Immigrant-rights issues are connecting into the struggle (via NAFTA, etc.). Also there are some really good campaigns (WA, MD, NY US Senate races; Cara Jennings won in Lake Worth City, FL Council election; LaMarche for ME Governor got matching funds.)

Green Light is here – only 12 pages, but we need more submissions for the election issue next time.

Lou N (alt) applauds fellow national reps for their hard work. He's cast 3 votes himself, including 1 for the one mentioned earlier (#220) to oppose the duopoly. His other 2 votes were on the Delegate Allocation Committee. One thing that has happened in the past few months – there was an impeachment effort against 5 members of the Steering Committee. All failed.

Linda M notes we don't have a state policy on when alts should vote.

Doug C has nothing much to add . . . though we did form an Eco-Action Committee (and are building a list of related experts). We are looking now at some political solutions to the problems of too much carbon in the atmosphere.

Aimee S asks if this is the time to ask about relationship with Democrats (and Republicans).

Linda M notes that our by-laws let people join as GPMI members even though they are also members of other parties.

Karen S would like us to discuss that – it was decided before she joined.

Linda M notes Fred V is a member of the Labor Party; we don't want to keep him out of the Greens for that.

Sylvia points out that some states require party registration when you register to vote.

Pete S asks about Delegate Apportionment Committee – how were members chosen? Accreditations Committee used to do that.

Linda M says it never came up about the Accreditation Committee; Lou N agrees.

Karen S talks about “paper parties” and the risk of infiltration.

Pete’s question is: why did the National Committee set up a new committee when there was a group already doing this job? He volunteered for the Accreditation Committee thinking he’d help do that job (as John P had done last time).

Doug C thinks the reason a new committee was formed was to focus on that important issue.

Pete elicits the information that elected members of DAC were self-selected from the NC; says we need a more open committee.

Fred V agrees that some attention should be paid to that.

Karen S also says she thought they had said anyone in Green Party could get on list and monitor the discussion.

Linda M thinks one problem with apportionment is difference in law – CA has lots of registered Greens; we can’t have any. If CA had to get all their “members” to sign onto the 10KV and pay \$20, their “membership would decrease sharply. “Proportional representation” based on party membership seems to her to wind up being disproportionate in that it favors states that have voter registration by party.

Richard K asks if votes in previous the Presidential election has been considered as a basis; Linda M says several factors were included.

John P says there were 4 factors; each had different weights – our delegation went up as we submitted more information.

Doug C points out there are 52 different sets of election laws. OK hosted last year’s national meeting It has an active party, but ballot-access threshold is so high it’s almost impossible for them to get on.

Karen S thinks MI isn’t a paper state (though not a registration state) because we have a ballot line.

Linda M is concerned about the nastiness of referring to any group as a paper state.

Harley M wants to change the topic a bit. One list had a message about a Presidential Search Committee and he’d like to volunteer (for the committee; maybe for candidacy too. There is general agreement about getting him in.

Aimee S asks about questions on dispute over impeachment, voting/counting methods, etc.

Linda M says the proposal to move forward on that didn’t pass because some folks opposed secret ballots on it. The original mess stemmed from an error in the method of transferring votes (whole or fractional). There was another election, and the position is filled now.

11:30 Nominations for officers

Pete S notes that the by-laws don’t specifically provide for alternates on the National Committee, so we should do that here. We should also put forward people for national-party committees.

Harley M asks if any officers don’t want to run again; Sylvia points out that David Spitzely (not here) doesn’t.

Linda M suggests finding someone for Recordkeeper who can actually take minutes.

JoAnne B wonders if someone could lose in one race and then run in another.

Ted H suggests Robert’s Rules call for a call for other nominations before voting on any office.

JALP asks for clarification of two vice-chairs

Doug C says SCC Whip keeps SCC organized, Committee Manager checks on committees (when they do things). Most of his time spent as the latter has been outreach to the general public.

Art M allows as how vice-chairs back up the chair as the face of the party.

Doug C agrees, and notes the official functions of the chair under election law.

Fred V notes most offices (and current officeholders) are listed on the inside cover of the *Green Light*.

Linda M accepts her nomination conditional on someone else taking minutes. (JALP is willing for now, at least.)

Pete S accepts his nomination conditionally, too – if his desired reorganization takes place, there may not be a Membership Secretary anymore.

(There follows a discussion of the need for a Clearinghouse Coordinator to be from the Ann Arbor area.

The current “office” is in a chiropractor’s-office basement. Because of the location, our phone is a business phone. This is what’s kept us from forwarding calls – we’d be charged for each call.)

Karen S thinks we could do the same thing in someone’s house, and she volunteers hers. She even has a leftover phone number from a business she used to have; we could publish that as GPMI’s.

Art M says that would come up naturally in the course of discussing Pete’s proposal.

Art M accepts his nomination conditionally; he may have to move to Greenville, and may not be able to attend SMMs., so might have to resign.

Aimee S is willing to serve as national-rep alternate if there’s nobody else interested.

Doug C suggests nominating a pool of national reps; the top 2 men and top 2 women would be reps. Joanne B could be freed up to accept as of August or so; she has e-mail at the library only, and is home taking care of her mother 24/7 until then.

Lynn M glad to see people willing to do the same jobs, but would also like to see new faces.

Susan O asks for clarification of what’s involved in being a national rep; Fred V and Doug C (among others) explain. This year’s national meeting scheduled for Tucson in July

Nominations

Chair Sylvia Inwood

Vice-Chair/SCC Whip Chuck Jordan

Vice-Chair/Committee Manager Douglas Campbell

Treasurer Randym Jones

Recordkeeper Linda Manning Myatt

Locals Liaison Bill Opalicky

Membership Secretary Peter Schermerhorn

Clearinghouse Coordinator Aimee Smith

Meeting Manager Art Myatt

Elections Coordinator John Anthony La Pietra

National Representatives

Matt Abel, Doug Campbell, Lou Novak, Fred Vitale, Rebekah Mikkelsen, Linda Manning Myatt, Susan Odgers, Aimee Smith, Karen Shelley

National Committees:

Aimee S says Huron Valley Greens want the SMM to nominate Michelle Kinnucan to G-PAX (Peace Action Committee); Aimee will continue to serve, too.

John P volunteers to be on the Accreditations Committee.

Carolyn D wants to continue to be on the Diversity Committee.

Lou N says newly-formed Eco-Action Committee has 3 MI members now (Doug C, Matt A, and him), but they’d like to see more people involved, particularly women.

Harley M volunteers for Presidential Search and Selection Committee.

Karen S wants to continue to be on the Accreditations and Dispute Resolution Committees.

Fred V suggests preparing a list of all the committees we have spots on, and circulating it on e-mail to the locals.

John P adds that appointments can be made throughout the year; Pete S clarifies that it can be done by SCC, too.

Lou N suggests Joanne B for Eco-Action Committee as of August. (He’ll stay on until then.)

Aimee S, Linda M, and Fred V volunteer to serve on national Media Committee.

Art M says everyone’s on their own for lunch; various talk about possibilities nearby.

12:00 Discussion of office manager, outreach organizer proposals [deferred until later]

Pete Schermerhorn, Fred Vitale

12:30 Lunch

1:30 Election of officers [1:49]

Art M announces that a silent auction wasn't planned, but there are some items up for bids today, and a few more will be offered tomorrow.

We also printed out some ballots for the election of national reps and alternates. The voting method agreed upon after some discussion is: each voter is to rank order the 5 women 1-5, and the 4 men 1-4. When the votes are added up, the lowest scores of each gender win (as in golf). The higher scores will be alternates, and in the case of the women, one person will be dropped.

Sylvia I asks what if we leave a candidate out? They get an automatic 5.

Doug C says that's not the same as the highest number you can assign in the case of the men.

Richard K and Priscilla D will collect and count votes.

Karen S asks if candidates can give speeches; Art M would rather not, because of time constraints.

Carolyn D seconds Karen's motion; about evenly divided, but Art M gives go-ahead if any candidates want. Karen S and Susan O speak.

12:00 Discussion of office manager, outreach organizer proposals; decision on hiring [deferred from earlier]

Pete S, Fred V

2:00 Decision on hiring [2:00]

Art M introduces the two proposers, notes that we may decide the proposals aren't mutually exclusive

Pete S leads off. He thinks Fred's proposal is right on in many ways. Pete says he can't put it gently; we're failing on several levels.. We've had several volunteers, but some who might volunteer aren't here because we have had no way to make use of their time and skills. We have one body that both sets policy and carries it out, and very often policies and decisions are not implemented.

An office is a real part of his proposal, and he wants to get something going now (even for this election, though it's very late) and have it in place for 2008.

Fred V says his proposal was in response to Pete's. He doesn't oppose it, but feels it didn't sufficiently address outreach to the general public to grow the party. He hopes to be(come) able to devote more time to this work in the future. All he's looking for now is a general endorsement for the concept so he can bring back a better plan later in the year.

Ken M likes both proposals – we could probably use both positions. Fred was looking for some covering of materials/expenses rather than a salary, right? (Yes, Fred answers.)

Art M says that pretty well covers what he was going to ask. He was going to say that, if both proposals passed, Pete's organizing of our Fund-raising would raise enough funds for Fred's efforts.

Bill O says the effort would sure be a lot of work – and, in Pete's case, for quite a modest salary. He supports outreach; that's what their new local is about. His advice to Fred: just do it.

Aimee S also agrees that the salary is modest. She wants to know what oversight system we should have in place to make sure there is no favoritism (or un-favoritism).

Tom Shea asks about the percentage of time to be devoted to internal as opposed to external matters.

Carolyn D wants to know what "wide latitude" means. She has bad experience with the phrase from the USGP National Committee. We'd have to put hiring and firing procedures in place first, and, she suggests, a public recruitment process.

Pete S agrees that direct oversight is necessary; has seen experiences like Aimee suggests. He is not sure whether SCC or some other committee of the membership would be best. We don't have anybody overseeing the Web site, or Lou N's work on the GPMI Updates.

Carolyn D suggests that it's money that makes the difference.

Fred V notes that an intended word must be missing in Pete's printed proposal. He thinks the person(s) carrying out these proposals would be on the SCC. As for Tom's question on internal/external percentages,

that would depend on what work is being done – e.g., different in election years. He'd also like to work more on building student locals.

Pete S was also trying to figure out some kind of percentage for Tom's question – but, for example, he has a database of 6,000+ people. It's just sitting there – he wants to grow the party by bringing volunteers into it from the database. We don't actually have people in place in each county to do these things. (That's what County Coordinators were going to be.)

Karen S asks whether this is the time to bring up the idea of an office and a phone and such? She's willing to volunteer to do some of those things, and thinks many of them could be done by volunteers.

Chuck J likes the idea. Can we afford it? We need a job description, goals, and an evaluation process. He doesn't think the SCC is a good forum for such evaluations; we need a smaller group.

Susan O wonders if we've ever used interns, and whether we're modeling this after anything other states have done.

Carolyn D thinks the staff position should monitor the SCC, but not be a voting member. We trust Pete, but we should set a good precedent.

Bill O supports Pete for the position. He also likes Fred's idea, and thinks we need more than one person doing statewide organizing.

Kurt W says that the comments on hiring/firing and evaluation processes are good, but can't be done in time to hire Pete now as we should.

John P says if we're talking about hiring an employee, we should have some sort of contract instead. The term of employment would work better. We also could avoid liabilities, and even open up the prospect of finding more people.

Pete S says he has thought over the employee/contract worker issue. He is not opposed to being a contractor, though, theoretically there is less job security. As for timeliness of an evaluation process, he'd be willing to help put the process into place while he's on the job.

Part of the point is to find more people to do(/help with doing) some of these things. If the fund-raising goes really well, he'd like to hire other people to do key jobs.

Fred V likes the idea of interns. He thinks some other states have a "field director."

(Pete has e-mailed around MN's job description – kind of a glorified Locals Liaison, and they haven't been able to fill the position.)

Fred also notes Chuck's "can we afford it?" question. He says it seems to be the consensus of the meeting that these are good ideas, but we need to raise money to carry them out. Another problem is: too many things to put in place before we start if we want to start this campaign year. (If we gave this assignment to the National Committee, it might be 12 years before they hired anyone.)

Linda M was delighted when Pete made this proposal – we do need some formality in hiring, but not so much as to post the job.

Richard K says, given the money issues, maybe we should try this for 90 days – and have Pete as a contract worker for that period.

Lou N has some serious reservations on this proposal – some raised here and on the SCC list. At previous SMMs and on the SCC list, brainstorming has come up with opening an office as the top priority. Every dollar paid to an organizer isn't going to go to candidates. Maybe the officers should be the oversight group.

Tom M thinks we should advertise the job, at least to every GPMI member and local.

Art M says a practical way to succeed with Pete's proposal would be to hire him through November and re-evaluate at the post-election SMM. We are under big time pressure with the elections coming up. This is an experiment, but we should go through with it for 6 months. The group Lou N was describing is the Steering Committee. There is no time to advertise – all possible candidates are here or at least have heard about it. After the elections, maybe a more formal procedure would work better.

Ken M knows we have money to afford it now. If the treasury got depleted to a certain point, would the SCC review the decision to hire to gauge if we could keep going?

Kurt W echoes Ken's thoughts. We have about \$10k in the bank now, and several people have pledged a total of \$350/month. He thinks this is enough to go on for the 6 months. He thinks we can't avoid payroll taxes

at the moment.

Aimee S suggests that listing the job may not be legally required, but it is a good practice. One possibility from her previous state of MA was that they hired contingency fund-raisers (at 50% of what they raised). For full disclosure, she says HVG would be losing a treasurer if Pete gets this position.

Karen S asks what the Fund-raising goal would have to be to cover expenses, etc.

Fred V says money is the key – and getting it requires time and attention, which volunteers don't usually devote greatly to fund-raising. If There is no motion now, he'd like to have a small group of people put together something that answers today's questions.

Pete S is very sensitive to the argument that something needs to be done now; at the same time, he wants it to be a sustainable, ongoing position (not necessarily for him), where we get key experience for a number of people; and we build knowledge of what we're doing (and want/need to be doing). Lynn M's been an incredible trouper in finding ways to raise money. When he was treasurer in 2000, everyone else assumed he'd be the fund-raiser; he assumed everyone would be raising funds. It wound up being Pete and Tom Ness raising funds, and a debt that lasted for a while. It won't be a big problem if we have a budget – and he's been trying to get us to have one for a while. We have to be either more adventurous and energetic in fund-raising or less expansive in what we want to do otherwise. If a fund-raiser has an activity budgeted and coming up, that's even more of an incentive to raise the money to get it done. He's also sensitive to the trust people have in him, and the accountability a system needs. He even agrees that, in all fairness, the job should be posted – and apparently it didn't get to anyone past the SCC; Tom didn't get it.

Art M says Fred's proposal seems to have consensus for his moving forward. We need a motion on Pete's proposal.

Karen S proposes that we “make an existential leap” and vote to have this position for the six months.

Bill O seconds Karen's motion as adopting Pete's proposal with Art's 6-month trial-period amendment.

Carolyn agrees – could also put it on the Web site for 2 months

Chuck J reminds that there are still a lot of questions out there that we haven't answered here. He would rather not make that leap.

Kurt W wants to vote

Sylvia I thinks the job should be advertised for 2 weeks, and should be a contract worker for those 6 months. She also wants to give the group of officers oversight over the job – for Pete's protection as well as the GPMI's.

JALP asks what if we post the job and get 5 applicants? (Then we interview.)

Harley M says hire Pete now, advertise now for November 7.

Aimee S asks about process – how do friendly amendments work when we have ten ideas that may be put into the main proposal?

Fred's trying to take the ideas down to incorporate them.

Linda M thinks the proposal now is to hire somebody now as a manager.

John P says contracting would answer JALP's question – we'd have people bidding for the task, and saying what they'd do.

Joanne B isn't sure how necessary this would/will be – but suggests hiring an interim person now, with part of the job being to receive all these comments and design the longer-term job and refine the description for November.

Tom M says this person would be kind of like an administrator reporting to a board. We could have a smaller group than the officers as a selection committee, and we could delegate authority to such a committee.

Pete S clarifies Tom M and Joanne B's suggestions

Aimee S suggests that proposer Pete S identify what he considers friendly amendments, and we can vote on others.

Kurt W heard at least three proposals/versions.

Chuck J says first vote on the general proposal whether or not to do something now. and, if it passes, preserve the particulars for action tomorrow.

Harley M notes some people may not be here tomorrow. He suggests let's vote on action or not now, then

if yes, let Pete come up with a consolidated proposal from the ideas later.

There is CONSENSUS on Harley's suggestion.

Pete wants to borrow anyone who's willing to help him prepare this.

Results of national-rep voting

Richard K reports on the vote counting; Susan O and Linda M are reps; Aimee S and Karen S are alternates. Lou and Fred are reps; Matt and Doug are alternates.

3:00 2006 Election – candidates, strategies, introduce people expecting to run [skipped – at least for now]

3:15 Break [3:15]

3:30 Announcements:

Pete and others working on the details of a staff position are in Room 207.

JALP offers buttons – peace and other themes. All contributions made for these will go to the GPMI.

Traverse Bay Watershed Greens have some T-shirts available.

Ellis B gives directions to his house for the dinner gathering.

3:30 Immigration-policy discussion [3:50]

Art M introduces Fred V. He that notes on the Shrub's speech on immigration are in the meeting packet.

Fred V says he's working [along with Elena Herrada, Julio Guerrero, Lolita Hernandez, president of UAW Local 22 (Hamtramck local, formerly the Cadillac local)] with a project in Detroit related to the May 1 strike. GPUS passed a resolution in support of the May 1 strike (article in the *Green Light*), and linked it to repealing NAFTA in an April 11 press release.

According to a *Free Press* estimate, 50,000 people in the streets of Detroit opposing the anti-immigrant bill then in the US House. Fred wants us to discuss outreach and whether we want to require GPMI candidates to support positions on this issue. In particular, do we want some materials translated into Spanish? (Do we have any already translated?)

Richard K moves to support humane immigration policies and to authorize the treasurer to pay for translation.

Chuck J says his daughter Kara could do some translation and her boyfriend, a Latino, might help. Chuck wants us to understand that some companies want to let these workers stay – just with pitiful pay and without any rights.

Linda M says we've talked about literature being translated – flyers or [then] AWOG – in the past. If we're going to do this, we should also say how immigrant workers contribute to America.

JALP likes the idea; he asks about other languages, for example, Arabic for communities in greater Detroit? He also wonders if it would be better to start with more stable documents like membership flyer and the platform summary.

Bill O notes that it's a complex issue. he wonders what we can do? We need to talk about it, think about it, for a while before making a decision. This might wind up a trap.

Ellis B wants to switch gears slightly and give the discussion some local color. Petoskey is the home of a magazine called *Social Contract* which uses racist arguments to oppose immigration. He had a guest editorial in it a few weeks ago. It might also appear in the *Petoskey News-Review*. Also, there was a fantasy novel, *The Camp of the Saints* – a million immigrants from India descend on the U.S.

Doug C urges us to think back to about March – immigration just did not exist as an issue; two months later, it's apparently national #1. We should realize the fervor is being manufactured, arguably to hide the poor records of the incumbents in an election year. We should pay attention to this context as much as to the content of the argument.

Richard K asks if GPMI wants to be only a nice debating society, or to get out and organize the people? We need to have leaflets out quickly if we want to build the party – action is what draws the people.

Susan O says that this week (5/23), Northwest Michigan College is going to have a seminar on this subject.

People are very afraid of talking about their own experiences for fear of retaliation, but we want to be there to support it. The proprietor of a Mexican store/restaurant has been sponsoring such activities. When she and Tom were there lately, the news of the National Guard's likely future deployment to the border was on TV, and customers were watching in shock and concern.

Aimee Dunn [Rural Greens] says literature is important; also, though it's controversial, we need to think ecologically about carrying capacity while avoiding racism.

Linda C wants to agree with both Aimee D and Susan (?), but asks when did it become acceptable??

Doug C thinks who we let in is much more a matter of economics than race. Look at the professional-visa program.

Fred V thanks everyone for the discussion. The GPUS does have a position, and we can decide how we want to develop that – it's for amnesty. We're not for anyone being thrown in jail or out of the country for not having papers, and we blame the government and NAFTA/CAFTA-type agreements for pulling people to come here. Sometimes businesses want people here illegally – so they can be paid less (or not at all). He thinks translations should begin with some basic things like the membership flyer (in Spanish and Arabic) – Detroit can do that

Art M says there was a motion from Richard K for a short statement.

Richard K says the GPUS statement is OK, but maybe we should also invite their input in what we should do (and in running for office as Greens).

Art M suggests the way to do that is to direct SCC to prepare a short statement/letter.

Bill O asks if Richard K and Robert Wicke, who have been elected as the SCC reps from the new Outreach local, would like to be on the list. Chuck J will get together with Doug C on how to do that.

4:00 Candidates from other parties on our ballot line – discussion [4:23]

Fred V wouldn't have phrased it as "other parties", but okay. Some Detroit Greens put out a leaflet inviting anti-war activists to run as Greens. MECAWI (Michigan Emergency Coalition Against War and Injustice), a coalition based in Detroit, has responded. In fact, in response, they circulated a candidate-recruitment/-solicitation message. He thinks it's a win-win, but apparently not everyone feels that way.

Tom S asks if anyone could put "Green Party of MI" on their literature, and so on.

Fred V answers it's all under our control.

Bill O believes in mixing parties. he would welcome people from any other party. In order for us to grow the party, we need people to understand better what we're about. He thinks of himself as on a continuous learning path, so he doesn't disdain similar efforts in others.

Aimee D worries about the Greens and our vision getting more and more diluted. A coalition across party lines would be fine as long as we hold onto our vision.

Richard K feels that people who run on the Green Party ticket should be Green members and subscribe to Green principles. Maybe it is not necessary to have been Green for a long time. If candidates get elected, they should stay Greens. We shouldn't be precluding people from joining.

JALP notes the safeguards in place over our nominations and endorsements. He has passed the "How to Be(come)" literature back up the line, and reads message from Lynn Larsen (Grand Traverse Democrats chair) in angry response.

Chuck J adds that there's the vetting questionnaire, and JALP adds a note on David S's de facto "one bite" rule.

Tom M notes that Grand Traverse Dems will replace Lynn Larsen as chair this November. He wants to know if it's true (as he understands) that the state party does not endorse candidates of other parties,

Some locals may have done so. and we may have candidates from other parties in to speak to us.

Art M notes that this meeting can't make a rule permanently binding on future meetings. We have to handle each possible candidate on an individual basis. The key example is Nader.

Linda M found some things particularly disturbing about David Sole's message. She'd like to see every GPMI candidate put us on their literature prominently.

Linda C thought the discussion started off with recruiting anti-war candidates to run as Greens. Someone

may not be against the war, and we stand for so much more than just that.

Doug C wants to correct a misunderstanding – once we nominate them, they’re on their own. Our only control is not to re-nominate them. Our by-laws now say you don’t have to drop other party memberships to be a GPMI member; they’re silent on the question of candidates belonging to other parties as well as the GPMI. He thinks we should draw a distinction for parties on our side – and parties with their own ballot lines. Also, we should be cautious about assuming that people who’ve been involved with Democrats or Republicans were toeing the party lines.

Ken M feels we should be recruiting candidates from inside the party and in anti-war groups, environmental groups, etc. We should encourage people to seek our nomination (and join the party) if they agree with our agenda.

John P reminds that we don’t have total control over our Presidential candidate.

Fred V sums up by saying that this is a result of an effort on the part of Detroit Greens. Not all anti-war or social-justice groups see themselves as properly being active in the political/electoral arena. It’d be great if we had enough candidates on our own to fill all our slots – but we don’t, which means we should reach out to non-Greens. The ballot line is something we can “contribute” to the overall movement. We do control who gets on that line, at least. Let’s see who comes forward – the sooner we get real names and faces, the better.

4:30 Issues workshop, Part I . . . John La Pietra [4:42]

[JALP explains . . . Chuck J asks about purpose, Richard K on economics]

Pete comes back with his proposal [5:04]

He thanks Carolyn D, Aimee S, and Kurt W, then reads it out:

Proposal for Paid Organizer/Fundraiser for GPMI

“The Green Party of Michigan will hire a contractor for the period ending at the Fall 2006 State Membership Meeting. The Steering Committee of GPMI will be responsible for oversight of the contractor, and may delegate oversight to a subcommittee of its choosing. The Steering Committee will further appoint up to two (2) persons from its members to directly supervise the contractor and to serve a feedback role fo the party and the contractor.

“The contractor will step down from any officer or committee chair roles, but will serve an ex-officio (non-voting) role on the Steering Committee, including discussions held by the State Central Committee.

“The contractor will coordinate party infrastructure and fund-raising efforts. Compensation for the contractor will be 30 hours per week @ \$11.75 per hour.

“The Steering Committee is tasked with creating a permanent paid organizer/fund-raiser job description(s) and carrying out a competitive hiring process to be completed and implemented by the Fall 2006 State Membership Meeting. Ongoing personnel policy will be developed concurrently.”

Adopted 5/20/06

JALP asks for a copy.

George C says it’s unclear whether what Pete read applies only to someone hired now or to whoever gets the position later? He also asks about the complications: personnel policies, taxes and benefits, etc., but says this is not a blocking concern.

Pete says Kurt W said someone’s going to pay payroll taxes either way.

Carl A asks if it should be required that the position raise enough funds to pay for itself?

Bill O seconds Pete’s motion.

Fred V says maybe the only way to address the fund-raising problem is to have the SCC specify fund-raising efforts should occupy 10 out of 30 hours per week.

Pete says feedback allows for fine-tuning.

One thing that bothers Linda M about hiring someone is health care – we’d have to provide it. Could we

join a group to reduce the cost of a policy?

Doug C suggests calling Tim Beck (Libertarian/pro-marijuana).

Chuck J asks if Pete has any children? (No, but he does have a dog.)

Tom S asks: who pays FICA? (The party would.)

Kurt W notes Pete said we'd have to get an employer ID number.

JALP notes that pay may push total annual expenses over a Federal threshold (IRS or FEC), so we may have more paperwork to file.

Pete is willing to waive health insurance, since he has it through his wife.

Richard K calculates total expense through November as about \$10,000.

Pete wants to make sure volunteers get their expenses paid. Many times, folks "eat" those expenses, and they shouldn't have to. We should report them as in-kind contributions (for Federal purposes at least).

Ken M notes it's a fairly complicated process for the Steering Committee to handle; is Pete sure we can do that? (That's why they left it open.)

Pete's concerned about the complications of a contract. (George C says it could be done easily.)

Pete asks for any blocking concerns?

Ken M has a concern, but not sure it's a blocking concern.

Lou N will make one based on the Steering Committee's capability (or not) to carry out the proposal. He'd suggest a possibly-friendly amendment to make it a contractual arrangement instead.

Chuck J isn't sure whether it's been settled whether one way or the other is a significant problem to anybody. If Pete were a "1099 employee", he'd have to pay both halves of payroll taxes – we'd adjust his pay to compensate.

Fred V and George C think Pete should have a vote. They don't see any conflict of interest.

Pete S looks at it as an issue of separation of powers – manager reporting to a board.

Aimee S and JALP support the proposal as made.

John P asks to clarify: is the proposal for Pete or in general?

Pete S says in general by November, but he is hoping to do it now, and he's hoping to be the first.

Aimee D asks if others would feel pressure to waive benefits.

Tom M has a blocking concern that the job be posted for two weeks.

Fred V suggests posting that SMM voted to hire Pete, and inviting others to comment.

Pete wants it to be more than just apparently fair – really fair – just doesn't want to wait 2 wks, then go through another 2 wks giving notice, etc.

Vote: 22-4 . . . proposal passes as amended.

5:30 End session [5:46]

Sunday, May 21

9:00 Coffee, rolls, registration

9:30 Rural Greens MI Local and national caucus – Linda Cree [9:43]

Linda C and Aimee D report on status

There are currently 28 members from 11 states signed up. There are 134 members of the ruralgreens list and there are 15 people on the caucus's business list.

To join the general Rural Greens listserv: RuralGreens-subscribe@yahoogroups.com

To join the business listserv: RuralGreenBusiness-subscribe@yahoogroups.com

The blog is: <http://www.refpub.com/RGC/>

Linda and Aimee are trying to get to annual meeting in Tucson in July.

Maynard Kaufman wasn't able to be here; he wanted to make some points. Food production is the biggest user of energy. Oil-based industrial agriculture is unsustainable. Rural Greens Caucus will only get more important

Aimee D reminds us that UP people feel very unrepresented – there's still occasionally secession talk,

funny and otherwise. Even she gets mad about comments stereotyping rural people as “hicks.” Part of the attitude might be because rural people are a minority nowadays. (Farmers are about 3%.)

The UP has 300,000 people in almost half the land area of MI. There was an extensive effort in the 1920s to clear people off the land.

There is such a thing as sustainable logging – but the industry seems never to have heard of it.

Maynard suggests that rural people can be “eyes on the land.”

There’s a big fight taking place in the UP – Kennecott’s trying to open a metallic sulfide mine. There is also a problem with high-voltage transmission lines; a new company is doing only that. the government is starting to sell off national forests in the UP

Poverty in rural areas is high –there is little work, and low wages. Many people in their area (Marquette) are on public assistance, but there is little talk about what can be done for that special situation.

They have two proposals:

- Some group should represent Rural Greens in GPMI – committee or formal caucus/local
- EPA is due to make a formal decision by June 14 on the metallic-sulfide mining they’d like us to support a metallic-sulfide moratorium. As WI has put it, there should be a moratorium until they can show a mine has both operated for 10 yrs and been shut down for 10 yrs safely.

Doug C asks if they have a candidate for 1st District of Congress to be the mouthpiece of the ?

Kurt W asks: has this issue been in the print or broadcast media? (It’s appeared almost daily in the news in Marquette.) Is there widespread support?

Yes, there were some groups that formed at first – Eagle Alliance, for one – but they’ve been playing by the mining companies’ game plan, says Linda C.

Has there been any writing campaign to the legislature? (That, and more, say Aimee and Linda both.)

Richard K asks: support for the mine or the moratorium? (The moratorium.) He saw massive public opposition to the mine when he was there.

Aimee S compares the situation to a MA buyout on an unused N-plant (maybe a front group?)

She would support the resolution. Nationally, a caucus has to be an identity caucus – rural people would certainly qualify. She is not sure how GPMI handles caucuses.

Chuck J says factory farms are an issue in SW MI, too – there is a huge one in Hartford, with much pollution in the runoff. DEQ won’t admit they’re the problem. DEQ’s the problem (cf. sand mining in the dunes, Engler dividing DNR into DNR + DEQ) Lots of people don’t want the government interfering in their lives.

Lou N is struck by the parallels with water, I.E., the industry is moving out of WI and into MI. He would like to hear more about national caucus status; maybe we could have a GPMI local, too. He would also like to hear the resolution read out and read into the record.

Richard K wonders about infighting – if Sierra Club hasn’t been involved? As for a caucus, what is their proposal?

Linda M asks whether they expect support for the mine because of jobs? (At the last meeting they saw, few did – and the jobs only last about 5-7 years anyway.)

Art M suggests amending the by-laws to create a standing Rural Greens Committee with one rep on the SCC, or a Rural Greens Local. He hesitated to suggest that because of some groups like UpNorth Greens which are mainly local.

Richard K asks which Aimee D and Linda C would prefer

Aimee D isn’t sure which would work better politically. Linda C likes the sound of a committee for the prospect of statewide involvement.

Kurt W wants to see a statewide organization – the current mine may be in one site in the UP, but the issue belongs at the state level.

Aimee S understands that the national-level idea of a caucus is to unite everyone nationwide who meets the identity criterion. The reason to do it is to solve problems of under-representation for the voices of that identity.

Chuck J notes that one issue affecting all of us is how much business we do in this party over the Internet.

We need to think of other ways to get more people involved – especially, perhaps, rural people – driving? snail mail? publications?

Sylvia I would kind of favor the caucus model. It wouldn't be a local, since there are rural areas (and potentially rural Greens) all over MI. She also says there are free conferencing sites available.

JALP notes that the by-laws have caucuses for nominating (per state election law) and locals for other activity. Are either of the two at-large seats on SCC available? There is some discussion of that option.

Fred V (sorry he missed earlier parts of the presentation) says there had been talk of another kind of publication beyond *Green Light* – something more permanent on how Rural Greens (or Greens in general) view the world and its issues. Maybe a DVD taping of a show for viewing in homes or via cable access.

Richard K suggests a separate committee with a dedicated seat for rural Greens would be better; he so moves.

Bill O says he is willing to give up his at-large seat (he's LL anyway); Jim Moreno is the other at-large rep.

Lynn M wants to encourage Aimee D and Linda C to make use of articles in *Green Light* – and to spread info over the business list.

Kurt W asks if the legislature can do something about the mining issue? (They can, Aimee D and Linda C think – but that's only one issue we have.)

There are now three motions to deal with:

Resolution #1 – on the mining moratorium

Whereas metallic sulfide mining produces acid mine drainage (sulfuric acid), a substance that may leach from a metallic sulfide mine for centuries, even millennia; and

Whereas no mining corporation can yet point to a metallic sulfide mine that has operated and that has been closed for a total of only 20 years without contaminating the groundwater or surface water; and

Whereas mining corporations seem intent on opening a metallic sulfide mining district within Michigan; and

Whereas, in a water-rich state like Michigan, the environment would suffer greatly from acid mine drainage,

Now, therefore, be it resolved that the Green Party of Michigan (GPMI) supports a moratorium on metallic sulfide mining, similar to the one passed by the State of Wisconsin, stating: “No metallic sulfide mining will occur in Michigan until it can be proven that one metallic sulfide mine in the United States or Canada has operated for 10 years and been closed for 10 years without contaminating the groundwater or surface water.”

Passed by consensus.

Resolution #2 – on an at-large seat for one of them:

The two of them negotiate: Did Jim Moreno resign his official GPMI positions? Linda M is not sure it's fair to have both at-largers from UP, but then she'd also just as soon have both seats filled. Aimee D moves to withdraw in favor of Linda C. Kurt W suggests having Aimee D on too until/unless someone else wants a seat.

Passed by consensus.

Resolution #3 – on changing the by-laws to create a standing committee

Art M has a blocking concern over making changes on the fly. He asks Richard K to withdraw his motion and send the idea to the By-Laws Committee.

JALP would prefer that, if it goes to the By-Laws Committee, the organization be a local rather than a standing committee.

Lou N agrees with Art that the proposal should be withdrawn or forwarded. He would also like to hear what other Rural Greens want to do.

Aimee D wants something statewide, whatever it ends up being in format/structure. She also wants something with official standing in GPMI.

A discussion ensues leading toward forming a local.

Harley M asks how many Rural Greens there are in MI? (10 or more).

Aimee D notes the formal requirements for national caucus accreditation.

The discussion is to continue hereafter.

10:00 Indymedia Michigan – Aimee Smith [10:39]

We need to support independent media in MI – in particular, michiganimc.org (The site is moribund at the moment.) The immediate need is for 2 tech people and 5 people committed to daily editing work. She's not suggesting that GPMI take this on as its own project, or that we not pursue other media work, but she thinks we should support this. We don't get our views in the mainstream media. There are fewer and fewer different voices. "Free speech belongs to those who own their own press." Having a place that functions as being open to all stories – and to our stories and values in particular – is important. She also shows a copy of *Critical Moment* (SE MI publication to which some of the people who'd been involved in MI IndyMedia gravitated). It might be good to connect things like the UP mining issue to people in the Detroit area, for example.

HVG thought it might be a good idea to work with *Critical Moment*. They were going door to door and handing out 1,500 extra copies printed; "broadening the community of people who are paying attention" . . . finding more fertile ground for our message. Unfortunately, that project may not go forward – *Critical Moment* is understandably concerned about being seen as a GPMI vehicle. One distribution may be all that goes on that front.

One thought is that, if we can get some people running as Greens, they'll get some attention for our issues and views. She'd also like to support the more fundi side by building direct-action movements. There are places in our party for people who focus on either end of this spectrum (all-electoral and all-issues).

It's a relatively low-labor and -cost way to have a place for people to come and learn what's really happening. Activists know they can come there and put their stories out. For "electioneers," it's a place to publicize events as well as press releases; and for those who are more movement-oriented, it's a way to get information out.

Three or four people not in GPMI are asking, "Why is this thing missing? what do we have to do to get it back?"

We can help – what may be especially needed is the tech knowledge to handle the code and security. This Web site is based on a model that exists – software is available. What the site had before can be brought back. The main/international site is www.indymedia.org That's her appeal – no specific motion, since she's not suggesting GPMI take it over.

Aimee D would strongly support it . . .

Fred V was one of the Detroit editors of the IMC site. Most other sites were city-based. The editor function was a bit higher – it took three editors agreeing to put a story on the front page. We could be more formal in our support for it, for instance we could help in recruiting people. Maybe Pinkney and BANCO (who have a blog) would like to have the site up for their news. He thinks the site needs to be more robust. We should contact NY or other sites. He also believes Lou N is willing to help with the ramp-up, if not the actual maintenance. Maybe Campus Greens could help. There is a little bit of money involved in parking the site – maybe GPMI could help with that. (Or, suggests Aimee S, we could offer in-kind hosting on our server.)

Richard K asks about advertising? (Aimee S thinks there aren't any ads at least not frequently.)

Sylvia I wonders if our site is hosted by the national server?

Lou N says it's hosted by the Green Internet Society – and set up predominantly for GP organizations. He is not sure the hoster, Cameron, would be amenable. He tends to keep a fairly small set of tools, but Lou will ask.

Art M wants to know how much time the non-technical people would have to put into it.

Fred V says it depends on how much the editors do. The biggest issue was how to defend the site from attack. Also, the local IMC had a policy of "hiding" articles that were clearly intolerably racist, anti-Semitic, sexist, etc.

Linda M says this sounds like a job for the Media Committee – if it existed.

Aimee S thinks the Media Committee should focus more on getting our message out – but could help find people to write for it. Pete said yesterday we're all supposed to be fund-raisers – well, we're also all supposed

to be recruiting and spreading our message.

Harley M suggests closing the discussion if there's no formal proposal.

Consensus on Harley's suggestion.

10:30 Impeachment – Matt Abel [skipped]

[Matt's not here, and didn't authorize anyone as a replacement, so this is dropped from the agenda. There is some bare mention of possible efforts in IL and CA.

11:00 Break [11:07?]

11:15 Labor Notes Conference; working with organized labor – Ellis Boal, Lou Novak [11:39]

Lou N thanks George C and Sylvia I for staffing the GPMI table at the conference.

Ellis B was a founding endorser (in 1979?) and remained an endorser until he became a Web steward. The conference was started by the group now known as Solidarity, but Labor Notes is a non-Socialist Publication advocating militant democratic egalitarian unionism. They also sell books – the most popular two are *Troublemaker's Handbook* and *Democracy Is Power*. Some folks think power and democracy are antithetical, but Labor Notes believes democracy makes for more possibilities. They have conferences about every two years; this latest one had 700-900 people there. It was larger than the previous one, and also younger and more international – simultaneous translations in Spanish, Japanese, Russian were provided. Attendance had been down from a peak of about 1,200 in late 1980s or early 1990s, but it seems to be coming back.

Lou N notes that they got about a dozen people signed up for Labor Greens – he focuses on two of the workshops at the conference:

“Independent Politics and the Labor Movement” – An organizer from South Carolina talked about how the Labor Party may be running candidates in there (cf. “Charleston 5”). Ben Manski of the GP, now with the Liberty Tree Foundation was also there. He talked about how we had up to 200 elected Greens around the country. A rep of the Working Families Party (which take advantage of fusion in NY laws) also spoke.

In the past, the WFP would usually nominate the Democrat, but most of the labor folks there preferred someone distinctly representing labor values – and Democrats weren't seen as doing that.

The second workshop Lou described was “Water Workers.” Wilfredo Romero from a water workers' union in El Salvador, John Rial, head of the AFSCME Local 207 for Detroit Water/Sewage Workers, Priscilla Dziubek for Sweetwater Alliance, and Sylvia Orduno of MWRO were among the speakers. The story of water privatization in El Salvador is the same as elsewhere. The IMF has given the country \$60M to push privatization. The ways we can help include lobbying Congress to stop funding IMF and similar such efforts; also educating people to inform them, and writing letters to president of El Salvador. Rial noted that the city/suburbs racial split as one dimension of their situation. One thing that struck Lou was the similarity of what has been going on around the world – big multinational corporations trying to take over municipal water systems to squeeze profit out of them. It is an issue that touches many different groups – and can bring us together.

Ellis B passes around examples of *Labor Notes* . . . if we want a single copy of the current issue, sign a list he'll pass around. There were 50 or so seminars at this latest conference. He also has a copy of a DVD they produced from a tour of Iraqi trade unionists. It includes the AFL-CIO's debate on a resolution which eventually called for withdrawal “rapidly.” (Ellis roomed with one of the Iraqi labor organizers .)

Richard K had been to one conference some years ago, when he was with the Teamsters' democratic movement.

Ellis B joined the Labor Party before the Green Party – when he was in Detroit. there is no Labor Party group here, though, so he's more active in Greens now. He'll be going to a UAW convention in a couple of weeks.

Fred V wonders whether there's anything we could do here to improve our work with Labor? He knows Ken M is a Delphi worker, Harley M retired from UAW Local 6000.

Aimee S hopes any such work together would be on issues where we clearly have common ground –

immigrant rights, for one. She is not sure about Iraq, for example – someone she knows wasn't happy about the labor reps – sees them as linked to current puppet government.

Ellis B notes one workshop was on “Labor and the War” – how to get your local to an anti-war position, and spread it to community.

Lou N suggests another issue of common ground would be universal health care.

Bill O thinks he's seen polls saying 35-40% of union members vote R. He asks if there is any reaction to that?

Ellis B doesn't have a good answer; Lou N's reminded of Reagan Democrats (and *What's the Matter with Kansas?*). Maybe people aren't voting their own interests, but what they think should be their interests.

Richard K asks if members of a local have ever tried making a presentation to their executive board suggesting a switch to the Greens? (Lou and Ellis don't know.)

Art M thinks the same – he's planning to run for Congress, doesn't expect to get a UAW endorsement. could he get endorsement from Labor Notes? or US Labor Against the War? or some other unions?

Ellis B thinks Labor Notes is a news magazine; that's how Art would get into it. They don't endorse (neither do USLAW).

Kurt W thinks Republicans have been clever in promoting non-labor-oriented core issues for the religious Right, etc.

Fred V thinks Art raises a good point for his own campaign and all of ours – how long should candidates work for the slim chance of union endorsements? Maybe at least it could be a resource for finding names of people who have bucked the system and might be approachable. We have had, in the past, possibilities of meeting with some unions' (and locals') PACs. It has to be an ongoing effort – but the elections are a particular milestone, an opportunity.

Linda C thinks the switch is accelerated by Democrats not representing labor on the things they need.

Kurt W says they are skeptical.

Alan Maki: one problem is that all parties, even Greens, are weak on some issues like minimum wage/living wage. He's president of the organizing committee for 17 Red Lake Casinos in MN. He has contacts also for WI, MI, and maybe even NY. Over 90,000 people are working in casinos – and none of them have rights under Federal laws due to tribal sovereignty. The people who lost their casino profits in Cuba are the ones who've set up the efforts to promote tribal casinos, and they're vicious. Two members of the organizing committee were beaten up. 86% of the workers signed union cards, but lots got fired. United States Information Services, out of Hollywood, FL, has ex-FBI and ex-CIA agents on staff. The casinos voluntarily go along with the minimum wage (up from \$5.15 to \$6.15 in MN last year) but aren't required to do so, and can't be held to it. The AFL-CIO went behind the back of the organizing effort and offered a sweetheart deal for HERE workers at \$8.50(?) /hr. If a party like the Greens are willing to make this a human-rights issue, it could help, but no political party is willing to push for a living wage.

Linda M tells him that a living wage is definitely in the GPMI platform, and she thinks it's in the GPUS platform, and is sure the GPMN would love it, too.

Alan M says the minimum wage has to be tied to Dept of Labor cost-of-living calculations.

Linda M says living wage has to be livable, and GPUS platform language on guaranteed-income is read out.

Bill O notes that something proposed in NY was to limit salary discrepancies to 10x, top-to-bottom. He thinks the reason some union workers vote Republican is that they get a bit soft/fat.

Kurt W has two questions: Has Alan M met with the GPMN? Alan M answers: yes, and some of the [tribal] band chairpersons are GPMN members and have casino interests. The current chair of the Red Lake Nation now is a Green, for example, and won't talk about human rights for workers *at casinos*.

What does Ellis B know about the status of NLRB with respect to Native Americans? Ellis B presumes Alan M is more aware of that than he is. Federal “taxes” are decided by “compacts” – and those agreements tend not to consider [workers' rights?]. Statistics aren't given out to the public – they're handed in on the condition that they not be disclosed.

Art M quotes from GPMI platform summary: “we are for a living wage” – which is based on actual cost

of living in a community.

Aimee D is glad to hear that. She wasn't sure our position was tied to cost of living. We should check this situation out. This is one more reason we need more voices in GPMI – outreach to Native communities.

End of discussion.

Lynn M asks how many people will be back after lunch? Since there won't be too many, the remaining silent-auction items should be wrapped up.

Next Lynn asks for a quick report on the plant-a-tree project. We got 500 trees which were distributed to various locals.

Tamarack Greens distributed 55 trees, grossed \$238 in donations for \$44.45 expense – the balance (\$193.55) was given to the GPMI treasury.

The other groups didn't have quite as much success. HVG repaid their cost and may have about \$100 to donate in the end. (They donated trees to a church and a co-housing project.)

Detroit Greens have planted trees in pots, and will distribute them later.

Oakland Greens are close to break-even.

Lynn M got a lot of good feedback from the street.

Aimee S said HVG passed a resolution on Michigan PeaceWorks (who has had problems with silencing Palestinian voices). She has copies for distribution.

Priscilla D announces a water series in Detroit area: *Thirst* shown in Detroit May 9 – more to come: panel discussion June 13, town hall meeting in July 11.

Tom M invites people to Traverse Bay Watershed Greens 2nd Sunday of each month at 6:30. He also wants to talk about candidates, and he has T-shirts available.

Fred V reminds us that the new issue of the *Green Light* is out. He wants to put at least one more out before the elections – just after the convention (August 15 deadline to be out before Labor Day); maybe another after that. This one can be as big as we make it. Send articles to him, please, any format. the editorial geniuses in Detroit can fix it up. Send pictures, too.

Chuck J would support every local reporting in via *Green Light* and at SMMs. He urges opposition to Michigan Civil Rights Initiative. (Even DeVos seems to be opposing it.)

Rural Greens will be meeting for lunch

Joanne B wants to bring to our attention, in the GPUS platform summary, the call to prepare for “a hydrogen fuel-cell system.” That's not a fuel, it's a battery at best – and not ready yet. She believes the Apollo Project was funded by the energy industry which envisioned what would be needed to generate hydrogen cells. We need to think about what we need to live – cities and rural. It seems to her that the things we get tromped by are simplistic ideas that appeal to the masses – less taxes/smaller government/prayer etc. We should come together on our own three- or four-point response. (Lynn M points out we came up with that last SMM: peace, jobs, and justice.)

Joanne B also reports that as former Drain Commissioner, she's sued Charlevoix County over unfair compensation (\$1). there will be a hearing on a summary-disposition motion June 16.

12:00 Working with Libertarians – Doug Campbell [deferred – already covered a bit yesterday]

12:30 Lunch [12:46]

12:00 Working with Libertarians – Doug Campbell [deferred to now] [2:20]

Cooperating with Libertarians hasn't always worked well, but SB1216 may be an issue we can collaborate on. Some parts of the immediate bill are read out, and action is referred to SCC.

Lynn M reports that \$92 raised from the unplanned silent auction.

JALP says \$27 more is coming in buttons [later updated to \$33].

1:30 Issues workshop, Part II [2:28]

Issues lists are handed in.

Art M says his list doesn't include the biggest things; it is more focused on the issues characteristic to his area:

Jobs, especially in the failing auto industry

\$100M for hwy construction when local mayors are saying it's wrong to throw it all into a few projects on I-75, etc.

Some local communities have challenged SMART (The buses can't stop in one town.) It's an obvious drive to kill the system.

Vacant, unkempt houses (cf. declining housing market – foreclosures – even in communities like Pleasant Ridge)

School closings and reorganizations – Art thinks this is from the impact of the Headlee Amendment; it's a strong incentive to stay in the house you currently own. If the house is sold, the new owner would pay twice as much in taxes as the current owner, and so would the seller on any new house they bought. That means people stay where they are, and school-age population in districts in their area is going down even as districts one ring further out are building new schools like mad. It has also affected adult education.

Support for local libraries – some have closed, others have created special tax districts (dedicated funding to library, not city). Libraries around the state are in trouble.

Police have had to release some prisoners because of overcrowding – in (by reputation) the wealthiest county in the state. In some local communities, they've found out it's cheaper to close local police dept and contract out to sheriff's dept, or raise taxes to support local police (happened in Clawson). Pleasant Ridge contracts fire service from Ferndale; some places are charging for fire service now, too.

The Myatts got a mailing from State Senator Gilda Jacobs about a proposed bill to mitigate Headlee impacts for seniors, disabled, or 1st-time home buyers.

Richard K from Macomb County – got most of the issues from reading the local paper:

Canadian trash (He thought it was all going to Monroe, but most of it actually goes to a landfill in Romeo.) The county was trying to do a deal with the landfill company to let them expand the landfill if they took less Canadian trash. The previous prosecutor had hired an environmental lawyer to enforce laws – he was being effective, but when the prosecutor got campaign financing from companies, he switched the lawyer to trial court.

Detroit vs. suburbs on water rates (in court).

More and more communities in Macomb County are facing budget shortfalls. The state's been cutting back on revenue-sharing, and other funds forcities are facing cuts to fire and police.

Parts of Macomb Co which are still rural – people move out there to be next to golf courses or other rural-setting uses. The golf courses are now starting to be closed down and sold to developers. This would boost taxes.

Art M forgot about that water issue – it's really a struggle for control of the Detroit Water Department. (Will suburban Republicans take it over?) He'd forgotten about it because it's not really a popular issue – though both the Democrats and the Republicans involved try to paint it that way

Richard K points out that people care when their rates go up (and when they have to pay for sewer repairs; cf. Sterling Hts).

Chuck J notes Greens need to keep in mind that, as services keep getting cut, we need to remind people we were telling them so.

If Art M were to add one issue, it might be exemplified by Royal Oak selling off some land as one-off payment (not sustainable).

Chuck J submitted ideas to his local a few weeks ago
boost rural issues – not just online
support/funding for locals

candidate school in Michigan
more outreach besides on-line
more issue-related forums
we need more candidates – but also more people to vote for them (and thus for us)
oppose Palisades re-licensing
dunes protection
energy solutions (net-metering laws)/conservation

Maybe we should have Web-site-based ability to write standard (or customized) letters to politicians.
Sometimes you get form letters back, but sometimes the responses are more personalized, and it's
a form of education, whether or not they respond to you.

living wage

biodiesel plant opening in Bangor (Willie Nelson may come to the grand opening.)

opt-out of military recruitment info. We need to get more schools sending this information

Arlington Township – Large Meetings ordinance – they want to prohibit large groups from meeting.

This apparently started out from a pagan gathering (which apparently led to less milk, etc. –
ACLU's getting involved).

Stop factory farms.

Stop Michigan Civil Rights Initiative.

Opt-out: Art M says Huntington Woods peace group got its own form into Berkley high schools. Susan
O says military is coming into Traverse City schools and holding lunch-hour exercise contests.

Joanne Bier-Beemon. It's the same issues as from 2 years ago in Milwaukee:

The loss of jobs – the rubble on the lake is companies for auto parts, missile gyroscopes. The jobs
that pay anything are privatized (e.g., we have RoadRunners instead of city crews)

There seem to be abundant grants for brownfield development

Giant developers seem to be buying up our small-city downtowns for huge monstrosities of condos
We're closing schools, cutting down buses, reducing parks, etc., and we're a fairly well-to-do area
around the lakes, but we're losing public amenities. We are building a new library – but she
thinks there was some big money behind that.

We're creating more felons by bringing down the bar on what a felony is, and then they have a hard
time finding jobs. (Fleeing and eluding is a crime.)

Around here, people hate J. Granholm because they have to jump through hoops to get licenses
back after DUI/etc. People can't get jobs without a driver's license.

Heating/transportation costs, etc are driving people from their homes.

They have a saying: "go north on vacation, come back on probation"

muzzling the more – grants from community foundations (?)

Environmental laws aren't being enforced. There is a real attitude of anti-government (and "the
market is God"). We provide all these tax breaks – don't ask for any concessions or promises
– and then the companies leave.

Sprawl is always with us.

Bay Harbor and the "killdust" going into the lake

Aimee D had an uncle whose license was taken away 15 years ago – he still can't get it back
can't even get a "work permit." Do they exist?

Art M notes that ECD's plant in Greenville drew them a package of concessions worth \$37M from city,
county, Community College, and state to cover the cost of reworking the land, tax breaks, etc., etc. They even
agreed to add to the Community College lots of the training company would need in vacuum technicians.

Tom M – these are things we've either worked on or issues we want to work on:

recycling (drop-off points

living wage (has actually been taken to the city as a proposal)

election laws – election laws/[campaign] finance

election laws/add hours and days

election laws/IRV

homeland-border patrol/aggression

homeland-border patrol/tactics

land use issues/farmland preservation

military recruitment (some people working

regional government – how to pay for things (city’s budget is \$400k in the hole . . . and parks are one of the first areas to cut)

Public transportation has been attacked as noisy; on the good side, we have a “green bus” – essentially electric.

public-access TV – governments are backing out of agreements

sprawl is a big area

borrowing from the future for improvements

penny jars

voter-registration drives (other groups, too, in the 2004 season)

alternative energy festival[?] “picnic on the bay”

Linda M asks: wasn’t the Traverse City area successful with some land-conservation programs? Yes, but it’s still expanding – people still selling off farms to build homes. Land-conservation groups aren’t protecting the people as much as they used to. One developer is also chair of Michigan Land Use Institute (Sutherland) – horribly hard to fight – cf. Nestle/Perrier/Ice Mountain in Mecosta County (and now Evart).

Aimee D has also run into elitist conservationist groups in her metallic-sulfide mine fight. They’re also exploring for possible uranium mines.

high-tension transmission wires, esp. American Transmission Company (N WI farmers fought this hard)

selling off national forests (particularly Hiawatha National Forest)

in Lower Peninsula, TB in Alcona Co cows – farmers can’t get compensation without being clear for a year

housing developments going in (along with rules for no loud machines 10pm-7am)

wants to see Greens incorporating more Native issues and working on laws and practices that limit self-sufficiency for those in poverty . . . not just in rural MI, but around the globe.

Linda C also suggests looking closely at local zoning laws – sometimes they just don’t make sense.

Linda M says Dana Stabenow novels suggest AK gives people “subsistence permits” so they can live on the land. Maybe she can connect Linda C with someone in AK.

Tom M notes an NPR story from Suttons Bay about a condo development and a rooster.

Linda C – her list of issues that resonate with her and (she hopes) with some others starts with GMO foods.

universal health care

bringing the troops home now

strict labeling of GMO foods

bring the troops home now

repeal NAFTA

raise Federal minimum wage to a living wage (indexed per USDA[?] cost of energy

protect Social Security

support for alternative energies appropriately sited and appropriately scaled

repeal of the PATRIOT Act

promote bio-regionalism/the Green Vision – That’s what puts it all together, helps us realize that the average food product travels 1,000 miles to get to our table.

revitalize rural areas

no Great Lakes water diversion

moratorium on metallic sulfide mining

eliminate inhumane factory farming; support for small-scale farms. (She thinks the rule of thumb is that, when seven small farms close, one small business does, too.)

Great Lakes water diversion is an important issue to her, too

Tom M said the attorneys had informed us that municipalities have the right to use the waters, corporations don't.

Lynn M says her list overlaps a lot of other issues. Their local has shown some films lately relating to water and oil:

Re-open Amtrak stop in Chelsea (also looking at M-DOT system)

Wetlands are an issue; a recent development started to build, and then had trouble with sewer and water. the problems were dealt with and the developer is going forward with the plans.

Two factories closed, (a plating company and a screw works) leaving the city with heavily contaminated sites.

M-52 goes right through the area.. They have been trying to get a bypass 10 yrs. with no success because of wetlands issues.

Schools and health care are issues. They are looking into a member association to reduce health care cost.

The parks committee is working on expanding walking/bicycling paths.

Low-income housing is disappearing. (Chelsea's becoming an elitist society.)

Joanne B had that on her list and forgot to read it. It is hard for people to qualify for the loan program.

Also, a farmer recently mentioned to her that his property taxes were increasing each year

Linda C says the Headlee Amendment doesn't apply to farms.

Lynn M dunno about that, but knows Europe gives farmers tax breaks

Aimee D said it was official policy in the 1950s to get 50% of farmers off the land.

Linda C says some farms are foreclosed due to the debt burden of mechanization.

Loggers, too, adds Aimee D.

Art M says the biggest water diversion from the Great Lakes is from the dredging of the St. Clair River. that's reduced the levels of Lakes Huron and Michigan by 2-2½ feet because it sped up the current. They should have built a weir to slow down the current. Now it would still take \$100M and 50 years to recover.

Some themes identified as common:

misuse of water (diversion)

misuse of land resources (farms, mines, new developments, etc. – energy)

misuse of democracy

misuse of human resources

One thing that surprised Art was the issues involved in letting people live off the land. Perhaps we could have someone in to speak about that at the post-SMM meeting.

Susan O says lots of their Greens could speak on it. Some are even considering the eco-village concept.

Richard K notes one black farmer who spoke at their local talked of surviving by leasing out 1/8 acres to people. (More talk on food, farms, etc. – could we save family farms?)

Art M suggests the kibbutz as a model.

Linda C wonders if that way of accommodating urban people to farming would work to help keep/sustain rural people on farms.

Aimee D mentions collectives, too.

Richard K says Capetians use urban gardens to teach children – and the food goes to food kitchens. You can also set up inexpensive greenhouses – on condition that they get put in urban areas where there's a house on the land. He suggests Rural Greens make a DVD to teach the rest of us about subsistence living, etc.

2:30 Breakout as desired by members present, any topics (Rural Greens, Labor Greens, Indymedia, position papers, etc.) [4:00]

3:30 End session (We could go until 4:00 or 5:00, but some people will be hitting the road.)

