

Martin County Democratic Executive Committee minutes

July 19, 2021

Hybrid Zoom/live meeting

Attending: Mary Higgins, David Cross, Gayle Ryan, Paula Albright, Dennis Fruitt, Jackie Williams, Hank Bonner, Catherine Hilton, Jackie Trancynger, Bob Cunha, Louise Cunha, Barbara Buckles, Bennett Buckles, Patty Koff, Lori Fritsch, Ed Matson, Ellyn Stevenson, Erin Fogerty, Glen Kellis, Renita Presler, Richard Brooks, Dave Dew, Elizabeth Grossman, Bill Smithson, Oz Vazquez, Zina Fayache. Guests: Falon Loffle, Janet Tuffy, Susan Stutz, Larry Key, Marnell McNamara, Marilyn Mordes. Debbie Kent was excused. Others may have also attended by Zoom.

Note: the meeting was preceded by an approximately 15-20 minute, separate Zoom event with Congressman and gubernatorial candidate, Charlie Crist. Chair Mary Higgins called the regular meeting to order at 7:00 PM, confirmed a quorum, and led the Committee in the Pledge of Allegiance. Mary noted that the Agenda listed a 7:30 PM start time and asked that the change in times be noted. Dave Dew moved that the Agenda be approved with the amended times, Liz Grossman seconded the motion, and the Agenda was approved as amended. The minutes were approved as distributed to the membership.

Mary introduced guest Falon Loffle, Chair of the St. Lucie County DEC. Falon spoke about the campaign to elect EJ Bernier as Mayor of Port St. Lucie. EJ is the only Democrat in the nonpartisan race. The special election is scheduled for September 21. Falon told the group how they can help EJ.

Dave Dew gave the State Committeeman report. The Florida Democratic Party recently voted to amend the State Bylaws to switch from a weighted vote system to a one-person one-vote system. The result of that ballot is being contested by the State Committeeman from Broward County. FDP's Judicial Council will meet in approximately two weeks and vote to uphold or reject the complaint.

Chair Higgins noted that the Florida Democratic Party has scheduled a hybrid Zoom/live Leadership Blue event in Orlando for the weekend of August 27- 29. Dave Cross, reporting for the Data and Strategic Planning Committee, noted that we have a live phone bank scheduled for every Monday, 4- 6 PM, at our office. There is also a virtual phone bank that people can use to participate. Dave reported that EJ's campaign received the endorsement of St. Lucie County Sheriff, Ken Mascara. Also, there are three Democrats running in the race for Port St. Lucie City Council, District 3. They are Travis Walker, Tavaris Williams, and Fritz Alexandre.

Suzanne Fox, Chair of the Events Committee, reported on this fall's Docktails fundraiser. She reminded people that we continue seeking items to add to the silent auction portion of the event. Paula Albright had nothing new to report from the Social Media Committee. Hank Bonner, reporting for the Website Committee, noted that he was going to add a Hall of Fame area to the website starting with Jackie Trancynger. Mary Higgins added that we would start posting monthly meeting minutes and the Treasurer's Report to the website.

There were no reports from the Democratic Club or the Democratic Women's Club. Carol Ann Leonard reported that the next Democratic Environmental Caucus meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, July 20. She urged people to check out the Environmental Caucus' extensive presence on our website.

Bill Smithson shared the monthly Treasurer's Report. The previous balance was \$25,390.42 and the current balance, as of June 30, is \$23, 811.92. Zina Fayache reported for the Progressive Caucus. The caucus had a VAN training, has been canvassing for EJ and Travis, and is assisting with the Democratic Club's September 24 fundraiser. She also pointed out that they continue to have weekly social meetings.

Oz Vazquez reported for the Treasure Coast Chapter of the Florida Democratic Hispanic Caucus. Their next meeting will be by Zoom on Thursday, July 29. Caucus members have been helping with the elections in Port St. Lucie. They published two articles in the free local Spanish media outlets. Oz urged people to join the caucus in supporting SOS Cuba events. He remarked that the events are not just for Cubans and are not critical of Joe Biden. He also reported that the Army Corps of Engineers selected the locally favored CC LOSOM option. The Lake Management plan will now be "optimized" before it is finalized, so that process also needs to be watched carefully.

Mary Higgins noted that the Democratic Club agreed to cover New Monrovia's annual Bahamian Day Festival on the first Saturday of October.

Mary gave the Chair's report. The recent rapid spread of the Delta Covid variant, combined with the increase in "breakthrough cases" affecting fully vaccinated people, has resulted in adding a Zoom component to the Pinot and Politics fundraiser, featuring Dave Aronberg, on July 22. People can still attend in person but they must provide proof of vaccination and be masked the entire time. Also, food and drink will not be served. Attendees will receive a goody bag instead. EJ Bernier and Corinna Robinson are also expected to say a few words. We have taken in approximately \$9,000 in receipts for the event so far.

Mary noted that we need someone to clean the office once a month. Barbara Buckles volunteered her spouse, Bennett. Mary noted that the candidate training, scheduled for July 31, is still planned and a group of about a dozen is expected.

There was no New Business or Old Business. Zina Fayache moved that we adjourn, Dave Dew seconded, and the meeting was adjourned at 7:34 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Dave Cross, Acting Secretary