

# State Meeting

University of Richmond  
Richmond, Virginia  
January 18, 1997

Present: David Smith, John White (facilitator), Eric Sheffield, Brandon Smith, David Laibstain, Mark Yatrofsky, Tim Morton, Kathy Fox, Steven Krichbaum, Ron Kahlow, Howard Greenebaum (guest), Jim Lowenstern, Linda Martin, Muriel Grim (facilitator), Sherry Stanley (note taker), Peter Robinson, Stephen Jones.

1. We opened the meeting at 11:00 by finalizing the agenda.
2. Treasurer's report: The GOV has a current balance of \$332.46, of which \$445 is earmarked for the write-in lawsuit appeal. The annual membership fundraising letter will be going out within the next two weeks.
3. Website report: Eric reported that the problems we had anticipated have been smoothed out. We are continuing to get memberships via our web site; we have had 5,000 visits since September. We plan to get our data base on the web site with restricted access so the locals can get to it.
4. Write-in appeal: We have received \$400 in contributions to allow us to go ahead with the appeal and have asked our attorney to do so; at this point the process moves slowly. If Senate Bill 667, which provides for casting write-in votes for President and vice-president, passes, the appeal will be irrelevant. Chances of passing look good at this time.
5. Press team report: Peter reported that the press team had no particular accomplishments at this time. Peter said he is setting up a fax network and we should be able to use that soon. Sherry suggested that we look at what individual members are doing and publicize this with their blessing and our name included.
6. Minutes: Excluding those people attending their first meeting, everyone had received and read the minutes. There were no corrections.
7. Membership list proposal: Harmony Periman, from Oct. meeting, proposed the GOV members list be sent out to each local twice yearly. This list will not be given out to other organizations, but each local will have access to it for the various public functions. This list will include all e-mail addresses. Mark suggested we have an opt-out for members so individuals could ask that their phone numbers and addresses be deleted. Sherry said the wording of the proposal could mean Green candidates for public office could be barred from using the list. Eric said there should be restrictions on the use of the list but we must be careful that we do not restrict all use of it. Brandon asked that we postpone this proposal to the next meeting. We did so.
8. GOV internet forum: Harmony Periman, from Oct. meeting, proposed that the GOV create a forum similar to the GPUSA forum. Any member of the GOV shall have the authority to post on it. Peter said he would be willing to get this done. Eric pointed out that if this would require funding, we need to know how much ahead of time. We accepted this proposal.
9. Introductions and local reports: We went around the room with each member or guest introducing himself or herself and, when possible, speaking for a local.  
  
Charlottesville Greens: Brandon said the Charlottesville Greens formed for the principal reasons of city council elections, lobbying, and grass roots action.  
  
Tidewater Greens: Mark said the TG have grown since the Nader campaign. They have started a discussion group in collaboration with other organizations centered around Howard Zinn's A History of the People of the United States.  
  
Blue Mountain Greens: Peter reported that this is essentially a dormant local. He has checked out the idea for an on-going discussion group that could meet once a month at the Prism Coffee House in Charlottesville.  
  
Northern Virginia Greens: Muriel reported that NOVA Greens are still trying to find themselves. Member Mike Looney will run for the House of Delegates; they will work on his campaign. They are trying to get a half-hour public access TV show to introduce Greens and show Green-type films. They are concentrating on attending other meetings and gatherings, such as the Virginians Against Handgun Violence, as Greens and have not decided whether they should continue to meet on a regular basis.  
  
New River Valley Greens: No members attended the meeting, and we had received no report from them.  
  
Rockbridge Greens: Eric, Sherry, and Kathy reported that we also continue to struggle. We have just elected a new steering committee and at our last meeting stuffed and addressed fundraiser letters for the GOV. We are putting together a directory of locally owned businesses and have made the decision to create an electronic version only at this time, with plans to get it in print some time in the future. We have lots of active members, including Elise Sheffield, who edits the newsletter, and Nell Bolen, who maintains our web site.
10. Recognition of Charlottesville Greens: Brandon asked to represent the Charlottesville Greens. Peter responded that in order to do so, Brandon would have to resign from the Blue Mountain Greens because our by-laws prohibit dual

membership. Charlottesville Greens have not been officially recognized because they have not met by-law requirements. Heather Gaye had said she would try to attend this meeting as a representative but was unable to do so. Mark maintained there is a credentials problem here. Brandon spoke against the by-laws and asked that this be moved to the spring meeting. We agreed to urge Charlottesville to request recognition as an affiliated local at the spring meeting.

11. Feminism: The GOV hereby affirms the key value Feminism. This proposal came from Sheila Lamb, who was unable to attend. Sherry read Sheila's message affirming the key value of Feminism. Eric clarified that the GOV had not suggested a change but Sheila was responding to continued discussions she had seen on the Greens' internet forum. Linda said these continued discussions are divisive. Brandon called for a vote. The proposal was accepted.

12. GOV PAC proposal: Harmony Periman, from the Oct. meeting, proposed the GOV affirms that the GPVA is a PAC (political action committee) and will have status as such at all meetings (no different than any other committee of the GOV). This proposal to separate the GOV and the GPVA met widespread opposition but led to a discussion about the formation of PAC's in general. Peter suggested that this push to separate the political from the movement is something we see in many places right now, but that he opposes. Tim and Mark agreed to form a PAC investigation committee to serve our purposes, and the proposal was not accepted.

13. Proposing agenda items proposal: Harmony Periman, from the Oct. meeting, proposed that each member of the GOV will limit the number of agenda items per person per meeting to three. This proposal was rejected with the accompanying suggestion that we encourage members who have serious proposals to show up at the meetings to present them.

14. House and senate bills report: Sherry reported on bills before the General Assembly that could influence our political future. The first was SB 667, allowing for write-in on presidential ballots. The second was HB 2003, which would reduce the number of signatures required on statewide candidate ballots from approximately 16,000 to 3,200 and the number for congressional candidates from 1500 to 300. This bill also reduces the strict requirements for the circulator of the petition. The last was HB 2010, which would reduce the party-status requirement of votes received from ten to three percent.

David also mentioned the two anti-gay marriage bills, the parents' right amendment bill, and the 21-day law, which states that no new evidence can be brought forth for an appeal after 21 days after the trial. Muriel added the earned-income tax bill. We discussed methods of stating our support of bills, and Mark said we should use the 1-800-889-0229 number between seven in the morning and seven in the evening. He said these calls do get to their destinations.

15. 1997 House of Delegates elections: Eric said 100 House of Delegates seats will be available this year. One hundred twenty-five signatures are required to get on the ballot. Mark suggested recruiting early, establishing a committee to work on paper work, etc., maybe a workshop for candidates, and even fundraising to lift that burden so the candidates would be free to speak to the issues. Eric, Sherry, Linda, and David agreed to form such a committee. Ron volunteered to coordinate bulk mailings.

16. Executive races: Mark proposed that we field a slate of candidates for the upcoming state executive race, at least for Governor and Lt. Governor. He continued that if we can find a Green attorney willing to work long hours for no pay, then we can also field an Attorney-General hopeful. Charlie Jordan had sent a similar proposal with emphasis on Lt. Gov. Mark said that if we do not do this, we should have a shadow candidacy slate, candidates that could be written in but have not met the requirements of ballot status. He said these candidates could draw some interest to particular issues. We brought to discussion the signature gathering, resource, and fatigue issues. Peter said he would support the slate if we have even one volunteer. Mark said he would offer himself as Lt. Gov. if a strong woman would run for governor. We decided to continue this discussion at the spring meeting and review what has happened by that time.

17. Student campaign proposal: (Appendix A) David made this proposal based on the fact that he is finding Green potential all over the state, especially with strong membership in other organizations such as PETA and Amnesty International in Virginia. We agreed that the potential is there, and we have not tapped into it. Eric suggested changing one clerk to two (appendix reflects this change). David asked for funds to support printing costs to start; Linda requested the SGVA to bring a funding proposal to the next meeting. The proposal was adopted by consensus. We recognized David Laibstain and Mia Terry as the temporary representatives of the SGVA and urged the SGVA to select its own representatives as soon as possible.

18. Green t-shirts: Ron has designed and should soon have available t-shirts for all ASGP members and all state parties too.

19. GOV flyers: Sherry said that we had been discussing the idea of designing flyers to leave at various places or distribute to let people meet the GOV. Peter, Kathy, and Sherry agreed to begin the design on this.

20. Dam resolution: (Appendix B) Tidewater Greens Jack Balkwill and Tyla Matteson are working hard on opposing the construction of the proposed King William reservoir. We adopted by consensus the Tidewater resolution by changing TG to GOV (appendix reflects this change).

21. Future meetings: We left it open to switch the summer and spring meetings, with a possibility that the summer gathering will be in northern Virginia. The spring meeting is set for April 19.

22. Platform meeting: We agreed to form a special platform committee to work on the revision ideas we have received. We will get the revision to the locals and then to the spring meeting and finally post it on the website. Sherry, Peter, Kathy, Eli Fishpaw, Muriel, Stephen Jones, and Eric volunteered to be on this committee.

23. Interim committee: The interim committee has been running on a trial basis, in accordance with the by-laws demand for a second ratification of amendments. Eric proposed that we make this committee permanent. Brandon abstained; all others approved. Tidewater Greens said their representative to this committee will be on a rotating basis, and the SGVA asked to be a part of the interim committee.

24. Proposed budget: (Appendix C) The budget proposed by the treasurer was approved with some math corrections.

25. Proposal to increase levy: Eric proposed that the GOV/GPVA shall increase the levy on locals from the current \$2.00 per year to \$3.00 per member (address) per year. We accepted the proposal.

26. NOVA TV : Muriel explained that the Northern Virginia Greens had planned for quite a while to get half-hour spots on public access TV to run Green films with intros and outros to advertise Greens. Jim Lowenstern is working on this. They would need to purchase some films so they are inviting locals to join them in this. Jim and Muriel agreed to write an article for the newsletter asking people to join this effort.

27. Brain trust: This idea came from NOVA Greens and centered around creating a center of information that candidates could use to inform them about issues. SGVA will work on this. Stephen Jones cautioned that we should not have a group of specialists because we all are specialists coming from our communities. Stephen said he would work on a proposal for the spring meeting.

28. Alternative voting processes: Muriel said she wanted to focus her attention and energy on alternative voting processes such as NOTA, write-ins, and proportional representation. Mark mentioned that write-ins and NOTA carry weight because candidates must have a majority of the vote cast. There was discussion about whether NOTA hurts third parties.

29. National affiliation: Jim and Sherry gave reports on the Middleburg meeting that focused on forming the Association of State Green Parties, a confederation designed to assist new and already existing state parties in the areas of creating by-laws, advertising, legal advice and research, graphics, etc.

Peter explained his proposal for unity(Appendix D) saying the current GPUSA wants to be the national Green party and predicting that ASGP will want the same. He said the Unity people say there are not enough Greens to populate two Green parties. Peter maintained that it is important we not separate movement and politics, as he interprets the formation of ASGP. He gave a history of the Greens nationally.

We read the several proposals by Eric (Appendix E), Muriel (Appendix F)and discussed the intricacies of this situation. We affirmed our commitment to retaining autonomy regardless of national affiliation. We called for a vote on all proposals. Sherry's proposal (Appendix G) calling for affiliation with ASGP was the only one to carry the required three-quarters vote.

Eric asked us if we would then reconsider the unity proposals. We did and agreed to adopt A Statement of Belief by the Greens for Unity and a Proposal for a Unity Convention.

Finally we nominated Jim Lowenstern and Linda Martin as delegates to the next meeting of the ASGP in Portland, Oregon.

We closed at 5:40 P.M.

#### APPENDIX A:

From: David Laibstain

#### Proposal for a Student Organizing Campaign

Whereas it is of the gravest importance that the Green Party of Virginia recruit new members among the students of this state, and

Whereas other organizations within "the movement" have had immense success recruiting among an increasingly liberal student pool, and

Whereas The GPVA has not to this point inspired an overwhelming amount of support from students, therefore be it

Resolved that the GPVA formally begin a campaign to recruit and involve students as active and vital members of the GPVA, according to the following methods and goals.

#### Methods:

1. The GPVA should start an organization called "Student Greens of Virginia" (SGVA).
2. The SGVA would provide information and organizational materials to all interested students, encouraging them to open chapters (which, once chartered would act as fully recognized local groups) at their schools or becoming part of the SGVA network. (Similar to the GOV network)
3. Members of the SGVA and school chapters would act as members of a fully recognized student caucus within the GPVA.
4. The SGVA would be clerked by two co-clerks, to be selected by the SGVA, and assisted by regional contacts.

Goals:

5. The SGVA should have at least a hundred members by the end of the 1998 school year, and at least three local groups.
6. The SGVA should have had at least three full caucus meetings by this date.
7. The SGVA should have a firmly established network of regional contacts who regularly attend, support, and report on the activities in their region.
8. The SGVA should have participated in or planned at least one lobby day, and been involved in at least ten other legislative efforts.
9. The SGVA should have a student contact working with every GPVA member running for public office in order to coordinate student efforts in campaigning.

APPENDIX B:

"Resolution to Stop the King William Reservoir:

Whereas the construction of the 2,200-acre reservoir in King William County will inundate 924 acres of valuable wetlands, and

Whereas the flooding of this area will submerge over 100 native American archeological sites, dating back 8000 years, and

Whereas some of these sites are burial grounds of ancestors of the Mattaponi and other middle Peninsula Indians, which in their belief are sacred grounds and should not be removed, and

Whereas up to 75 million gallons of water will be pumped daily from the Mattaponi River, and

Whereas the salinity of the tidal Mattaponi River will be changed, harming the flora and fauna living in and along the river, which include nests of the endangered bald eagle, and

Whereas the spawning grounds for the shad and other fish will be altered, compromising the livelihoods of those who depend upon this fishery, and specifically the Mattaponi Indians who have lived along the river for hundreds of years, and

Whereas the need for diversion of water to the lower Virginia Peninsula has not been established and present-day conservation measures are not being executed, and

Whereas this project is contrary to most of the ten key values of the Green Party,

Be it resolved that the Green Party of Virginia is opposed to the construction of the proposed King William Reservoir.

APPENDIX C:

From: Eric Sheffield, treasurer GPVA  
January, 15, 1997  
PROPOSED 1997 BUDGET OF GOV/GPVA

Income:

Dues and Donations 2635  
Levy 600  
GPUSA Dues 100  
Total 3335

Expenses:

Newsletter 1800  
Bulk Permit 85  
Fundraising 200  
Misc. 200  
Platform Revision 150  
GPUSA Dues 100  
Meeting Preparation 200  
Total 2735

APPENDIX D

Proposal 1 from Peter Robinson for GOV Meeting on Jan. 18

That the Greens of Virginia/Green Party of Virginia endorse the two Unity proposals and simultaneously join the Association of State Green Parties.

(See appendices 1 & 2 for Unity proposals)

Proposal 2 from Peter Robinson for GOV Meeting on Jan. 18

That the GOV/GPVA not send delegates to the next meeting of the ASGP to be held in Oregon but instead 1) send a statement of intent to be read at the meeting, and 2) host a regional gathering for all of the surrounding states on April 25-27, specifically inviting the states of North Carolina, West Virginia, Pennsylvania, Maryland, the District of Columbia, Delaware, and New Jersey.

This regional gathering would be for the purpose of exchanging information and experience among these states. The cost would be approximately \$15 per person per night.

Appendix 1:

A Statement of Belief by the Greens for Unity

December 1996

The undersigned Greens affirm the crucial importance of unity as the Green Movement/Party enters a new millennium in human history.

We believe that Green Politics incorporates a unique approach to political, economic, and social transformation which includes such elements as issue education, movement activism, community organizing, and electoral politics.

We believe that where Greens decide individually to focus on one of these areas, they should unite their efforts with Greens of other persuasions in Green locals and Green state parties.

While both The Greens/Green Party USA and the Association of State Green Parties have inspired the allegiance of many old and new Greens, we believe that, at this time, neither entity satisfies present needs for an inclusive, democratic, united national Greens organization. We hope to see a unifying national Green organization which supports the full range of Green activity, and which welcomes all Greens in the USA who are committed to the Ten Key Values.

The social and ecological crises of our times demand that we combine all of our Green energies in creative ways. Our children, born and unborn, demand that we reduce internal strife in order to focus our attention on these looming problems.

Please join with us in a journey to discover and apply the power of the ten key values to restructure and reharmonize our world.

Appendix 2:

PROPOSAL FOR A UNITY CONVENTION

It is vital that a national Green Party be formed which acts as a supportive network for the full range of Green activity.

Currently two entities claim this role: the Greens/Green Party USA and the Association of State Green Parties. While both groups have inspired the allegiance of many old and new Greens, we do not recognize that either organization satisfies present needs for an inclusive, democratic, united national Green Party.

The GPUSA and the ASGP are in direct competition for the legal status of Green Party National Committee. This is an unacceptable situation which can't help but have a negative effect on Greens at all levels of organization.

Therefore we support holding a non-partisan, consensus-based Unity\ Convention in 1997 to work towards the formation of a national Party. We would like this convention to be as inclusive as possible, involving in its planning and facilitation people from all Greens organizations, including GPUSA, ASGP, the state Green Parties, activist locals, caucuses, affinity groups, and unaffiliated individuals who identify themselves as Greens.

APPENDIX E

From: Eric Sheffield  
January 15, 1997

In the spirit of Green Unity I would like to put forward the following proposal for consideration at the Jan. 18, 1997 meeting of the Greens of Virginia:

PROPOSAL I

The Greens of Virginia/Green Party of Virginia, upon adoption of this proposal, shall become affiliated with both the Greens/Green Party USA and the Association of State Green Parties.

It is our intention to work for the melding of these two organizations within the next two years. We will work toward the goal of a single Green national organization which embraces and supports all Greens in the United States, and all of the multitude of strategies which they are employing to bring about a Greener planet.

If the goal of a single national organization proves unattainable, we will work for an agreement between the two organizations for a non-competitive division of constituencies and responsibilities.

## PROPOSAL II

The Greens of Virginia/Green Party of Virginia, acknowledging the priority of local and state work over national organizing; and acknowledging the poor history of benefits vs. costs as related to national organizing; adopt the following:

The GOV/GPVA will disassociate itself from the G/GPUSA, ASGP, Unity Movement, and any other attempt at national organizing, for a period of one year from the adoption of this proposal. During that year we will not discuss issues related to national organizing at our statewide meetings.

### APPENDIX F:

In accordance with the Key Value of Decentralization, the Greens of Virginia/Green Party of Virginia exists independent of control by any national organization of which it is a member and has the right to assent national Green organization. Decisions regarding national issues will not change the status or affiliation of the Greens of Virginia/Green Party of Virginia with the national organizations.

Muriel

### APPENDIX G:

From: "Sherry A. Stanley"  
Date: Wed, 15 Jan 97

The Greens of Virginia/Green Party of Virginia, upon adoption of this proposal, shall become affiliated with the newly formed Association of State Green Parties.

We recognize that the states are autonomous entities that will work in cooperation with but independently from other states and that the Association is not the national Green Party.

To participate in the building of the ASGP, including the proposed agenda of forming by-laws and developing a communication network, we will nominate two delegates to attend their next meeting on April 4 to 6 in Portland, Oregon.