

State Meeting

John Marshall Library Fairfax, Virginia April 19, 1997

Present: Muriel Grim (facilitator), Jim Lowenstern, Eli Fishpaw, Mike Maraney, Eric Deschamps, Margaret Rood, Ron Kahlow, Linda Martin, Eric Sheffield, Sherry Stanley (note taker), Stephen Jones, Peter Robinson, and Brandon Smith.

1. Minutes -- The minutes were not read because everyone had copies of them. Brandon Smith asked if the minutes were distributed; they are, by both mail and e-mail, and posted on the website. The minutes were unanimously approved.

2. Treasurer's Report -- The Greens of Virginia currently have a balance of \$564.28. Eric has collected the levy from the locals for the first half of the year. The balances for the locals are \$38 for Blue Mountain Greens, \$410 for NOVA Greens, \$22 for New River Greens, \$131.50 for Tidewater Greens.

Linda said we have a possible donor in northern Virginia who may be willing to donate sizable amounts to us. Ron presented us with his green lapel pins that we could sell at \$5.00 each at a cost of \$2.50 each. We have received a bill for \$2,449.06 from Matt Pethybridge, our attorney for our write-in lawsuit, and Eric sent him \$450, which is the amount we collected. Matt had agreed to take on the case for this amount although it would involve more time and work than that amount would cover.

3. Membership report --- Eric has updated our data base and reported the following memberships: 339 members total, 27 in the Blue Mountain Greens, 13 in the Charlottesville Greens, 92 in the GOV at-large local, 13 in the New River Greens, 34 in NOVA Greens, 131 in the Rockbridge Greens, 10 in the Tidewater Greens, and 15 in the Student Greens of Virginia.

4. Reports from locals ---

Rockbridge Greens are still meeting monthly, nominated six candidates for the General Assembly at the last meeting, often turn their meetings into combination work sessions and business meetings, and continue slow, but steady work on their Green Pages.

Charlottesville Greens are working to having a candidate or some impact on the next city council elections.

Blue Mountain Greens are not meeting.

NOVA Greens are trying to start a newsletter to keep people in contact and asking their members to attend activities (such as recent tree planting) as Green groups. They want to focus on changing the winner-take-all voting system, especially working with schools to make sure alternative voting systems are a part of government class curriculum.

Richmond Greens --- Richmond, still a forming local, is focusing on a revised civil rights policy for Richmond and meeting with the AFL/CIO and NAACP in those efforts. They are attending state meetings on solid waste and contributing in that discussion and subsequent action. They are considering bids for the school board election next year.

Tidewater Greens and New River Valley Greens were not represented.

5. Virginia Green Forum --- Peter has arranged for a GOV e-mail list that we can subscribe to and keep in touch. Jim suggested that those with e-mail subscribe and then keep in touch with other members of the local without e-mail.

6. Interim Committee --- Sherry expressed concern that some members of the ic were not responding in time to make a decision. Linda suggested making a time limit and then moving ahead even if not all members responded. Brandon asked if we would attach a list of the decisions the interim committee has made to the minutes. We all agreed.

7. Solid Waste Report --- Stephen has attended two meetings (March and April) of this statewide coalition. The focus is on interstate commerce in waste and has recently evolved into recycling and other issues. There are seven landfills in Virginia that accept out-of-state waste; no locality can say no to this. The group is researching this to see what the story is in various places with full awareness that there is not enough local involvement. Stephen asked more of us to attend these meetings, which are all held, unfortunately, in Richmond, but show increased attendance at each meeting. They are discussing education of a move toward zero waste.

8. Association of State Green Parties --- Linda and Jim attended the meeting in Portland, Oregon the first weekend in April. The purpose was to finish and ratify the by-laws. There were 24 official delegates (from the 15 associated states, D.C., and an advisory group) and 18 observers, who all participated in the meeting. They, therefore, heard from many and did not finish their agenda. Their newly stated purposes are (1) to assist in the development of state Green parties and (2) to create a legally-structured national Green Party federation (modeled on the European Green Federation). They decided against provisional state voting and retained the two-member per state membership. They elected officers, with Linda Martin and Patrick Mazza (Oregon) as co-chairs. They endorsed a unity statement presented by John Rensenbrink (Maine) and Greg Jan (California) and established committees to try to do some of this work on-line. They worked on ways to release state-generated national press releases; Linda urged us to take advantage of this. The next meeting is in Portland, Maine, in October. The co-chair terms of office will end then unless the Association asks them to continue.

9. Green Party USA -- Peter attended the spring meeting of GPUSA in Chicago. Thirty-six people represented 14 states. They accepted a proposal to have a gathering in Lawrence, Massachusetts in conjunction with Bread and Roses. They endorsed the Labor Party's livable wage campaign. They voted to place on hold the FEC filing as long as no other national group files and agreed not to use names for this filing without permission (referring to any possible filing in the future). They appointed a unity liaison committee with Peter as co-convenor.

10. Unity --- Peter reported that the Unity Group was encouraged by the statement from ASGP. He announced a meeting in Minneapolis for planing purposes to be held between May 30 and June 1. He said they would talk about how to create a unified national party, inviting anyone wishing to attend. Linda said that the perception in Portland was that the process is so open in ASGP membership and with a sense of agreement, they assumed we are moving toward unity.

11. Press team --- Peter said there is no press team at this time. He is learning to use his fax machine to get out press releases. Linda said that ASGP can facilitate getting out articles that promote the Green Party. The process involves a statement from the state Green party, review by the media committee, forward to the delegates, and then after 48 hours it goes out nationally.

12. Charlottesville Greens --- Brandon said he would resign from the Blue Mountain Greens to represent the Charlottesville Greens. He asked for and received affiliation for the Charlottesville Greens with the Green Party of Virginia. He also asked that we at some time visit the dual-membership by-law and reminded us that the Blue Mountain Greens had not endorsed electoral politics. Peter disagreed. Peter expressed his concern that the Charlottesville Greens had not had a public meeting in the 18 months they have existed. (Both Brandon and Peter requested that the minutes reflect their disagreement.) Stephen and Eli suggested that we bring up the idea of what regular meetings are to clarify our by-laws.

13. Nominations --- Starting with nominations already made by the Rockbridge Greens, we nominated the following people to run for the General Assembly: Charlie Jordan in the 9th district, Eli Fishpaw in the 18th, Daniel Metraux in the 24th, Sherry Stanley in the 25th, Dale Diaz in the 26th, Ron Kahlow in the 36th, Watt Bradshaw in the 15th, Jim West in the 58th, James Ford in the 59th, Bruce Weiner in the 41st, Mike Looney in the 40th, Tyla Matteson in the 94th, and Jim Lowenstern in the 46th. The deadline for filing is June 10. Brandon opposed the slate and agreed to step aside. We accepted the slate with one stand-aside.

14. Platform --- Sherry presented a history of the platform process ---- beginning in October with a a call to the membership to contribute possible additions or revisions, formation of a platform committee, meetings of the platform committee, several drafts, all culminating in the draft distributed to the members present. Peter & Eric proposed an amendment to the by-laws (Appendix A) that would change voting at a state meeting to voting by mail from the statewide membership. Discussion followed with concerns about getting a platform by the time the candidates would need it. Because the core platform has been condensed into a document called Political Vision, which the candidates could use without the longer list of planks, we agreed to accept that part and send out the revisions and additions for voting. We, therefore, accepted the proposal for an amendment to the by-laws. Jim suggested that we encourage the locals to meet and discuss the platform before the voting deadline. Eric agreed to be the tally clerk. He and Peter proposed to get together the following weekend to prepare the draft platform for inclusion in the newsletter and mail it in two weeks.

15. Summer Gathering --- Eli Fishpaw and Kathy Fox are organizing the gathering to be held in Rockbridge County on July 11, 12, and 13. We also discussed the possibility of a winter gathering in Richmond.

16. Fall Meeting --- We decided to meet in either Richmond or Charlottesville and noted the low attendance at meetings in northern Virginia.

APPENDIX A

Proposed Ammendment to the Bylaws of The Green Party of Virginia
From: Peter Robinson and Eric Sheffield
March 30, 1997

XIX. Platform Revision Process

A. The platform of the Green Party of Virginia and all revisions will be approved by the following process:

1. Platform revisions shall be drafted by a meeting of the Green Party of Virginia or a designated committee.
2. The recommended changes shall be mailed to each member of the GPVA in a format by which they can indicate approval or disapproval of each new or changed plank .
3. Returned ballots will be tallied 30 days after the mailing by a person or persons designated by a meeting of the GPVA. The tally clerk will forward all ballot materials to the co-clerks for archiving.
4. New or changed planks in the platform are approved if the votes in favor are 75% or greater of the total votes for or against that change. Deletions are approved if supported by more than 50% of the total votes for or against the deletion.

B. The GPVA will institute the above process in odd-numbered years. In extraordinary circumstances, the GPVA may ammend the platform at any regular meeting as specified in Article VII Section C.

C. The Platform and all changes made through the above process shall remain in effect until changed by the same process.

D. The GPVA , or designated committee, may approve non-content changes to the platform without the need for the above described membership ratification process. Such changes may include: titles and arrangement of the planks of the platform; grammatical and stylistic changes to the wording of planks; creating and naming various subsets of the platform to be used in cases when the entire platform would be too cumbersome; combining planks; and other similar changes.

<Latest Update: June 24, 2010