

State Meeting

Williamsburg Regional Library Williamsburg, Virginia March 28, 2009

Participants:

Audrey Clement, Josh Ruebner, Tom Yager, Tamar Yager (Arlington)
Charlie Jordan (Blue Ridge)
Mike Rosenberg (Virginia Beach)

A quorum consisting of at least half of the seven locals participating in the two most recent business meetings was not established. Nevertheless the group convened informally to discuss party business.

Agenda

The previously published meeting agenda was amended and adopted by consensus as follows:

- Introduction
- Select facilitator, vibeswatcher, timekeeper, facilitator
- Co-chairs report
- Treasurer report
- Press secretary report
- GPUS representatives report
- Candidate exploration committee report/Candidate Nominations
- Proposal to endorse Pickens Plan
- Proposal to Direct Activism Committee to Request that all sheriffs in Virginia provide information about policies and practices regarding the eviction from foreclosed buildings of tenants in good standing
- Lunch
- Elect Central Committee Members
- Platform committee report
- Finance committee report/Discuss fundraising
- Steering committee report
- Local organizing committee report/Discuss building locals
- Information technology committee report
- Discussion of recent state legislative action: HB 1890 and HB >> 2642
- Other business
- Adjourn

Josh Ruebner agreed to serve as facilitator, Tom Yager as timekeeper and Audrey Clement as note taker.

Treasurer's Report.

Kirit Mookerjee, who was unable to attend the meeting, provided the treasurer's report via cell phone as follows:

- Current Balance is 1828.75.
- Recent donations: \$118 from James Blythe, \$25 from Fredericksburg Greens.
- Expenses: \$367.81 to Chris Fink for Click-2-Mail fundraising.
- Deferred reimbursements around \$350 to Tamar Yager.
- Budget expenditures expected are follow-up fundraising as approved by CoChairs and PO Box renewal.
- No additional Paypal donations since last meeting.

Tamar Yager proposed that GPVA follow up on an offer from Empower Telefundraising to perform a free test fundraising operation using the GPVA phone list. Kirit indicated that Finance Committee approval is needed to conduct the test.

Press Secretary's Report

Josh Ruebner reported that he had revised the GPVA press list and issued two press releases using the revised list. Some newspapers in the state published information from the press releases.

Audrey Clement reported that John Reeder appeared on Hearsay, a Norfolk based NPR radio talk show featuring third parties on Wednesday, February 11. She reported that he presented himself as an excellent contrast to the Libertarian and Constitution Party spokespersons also appearing on the show.

GPUS Representatives Report

GPUS Delegate Mike Rosenberg reported that he'd recently lost access to the GPUS listservs, causing him to miss some recent votes, which were supplied by alternates.. He reported that pending business includes scheduling the annual

national meeting (ANM) at North Carolina Central University, an historically Black college in Durham, NC on either July 16-19 or July 23-26 and a proposal to deactivate the GPUS International Committee (IC) pending adoption of a set of National Committee approved rules.

Tamar indicated that the ANM Committee prefers the second tentative meeting date, and Mike indicated he may not be able to make the first meeting date. Mike solicited advice on how to vote on the IC deactivation proposal. Mike was advised to reject the proposal on a vote of 2-3-1.

Tamar provided some background on GPUS Proposal 383, which would change annual Steering Committee elections from in person to online voting and recommended that GPVA not support the proposal unless it is amended to provide for an online vote after the ANM.

Candidate Exploration Committee (CEC) Report/Candidate Nomination

Tom Yager reported that John Reeder is running for Arlington County Board, and he has recruited a candidate to run for Richmond City Council. Audrey reported that she has recruited Mary Ellen Kelley to run as a Green for Wise County Board of Supervisors, District 4. Josh Ruebner announced that he is running for House of Delegates District 47 and Arlington activist and former EPA employee Marc Antel is running as a Green for House of Delegates District 48.

It was agreed by consensus to refer a plan presented by Tom Yager outlining a schedule for future election campaigns to the CEC to be reported with amendments to the Interim Committee for a vote. Tom also distributed a list designating CEC members to recruit candidates in counties around the state.

Proposal to Endorse Pickens Plan

Audrey proposed that GPVA adopt the Pickens Plan for Energy Independence, which she outlined as follows:

- Replace at least 20% percent of fossil fuel based electricity with wind, solar and other renewable sources of energy;
- Build a national smart grid to deliver renewable energy to population centers from remote locations;
- Implement a national energy conservation program;
- Replace diesel for trucks with natural gas as a bridge fuel.

Mike Rosenberg said he has reservations about the natural gas component of the plan, since he advocates rail to replace trucks, but his concerns were not blocking. Charlie Jordan said he supports the renewable and conservation components, but not the grid and natural gas components. Tamar Yager recommended that GPVA adopt the proposal with reservations. Tom Yager said the renewable component of the plan is a big step forward. He said he supports the plan because it will produce the right result. Josh Ruebner announced his opposition to the plan, saying that Pickens has mercenary motives in promoting both wind and natural gas, having invested heavily in both. He said GPUS ought to adopt its own plan. Audrey amended the proposal to state that:

GPVA endorses the Pickens Plan for Energy Independence with reservations concerning the siting of the national smart grid and the technology and siting of future natural gas drilling operations in the United States.

The resolution was adopted on a vote of 3-2-1.

Activism Committee Proposal

Charlie Jordan reported that he has learned that in Chicago rent paying tenants are being evicted from apartments owned by foreclosed landlords, and he wants to determine whether such evictions are occurring in Virginia by sending a letter to sheriffs across the state inquiring about their eviction practices. Charlie's proposal was referred to the Activism Committee for development of a form letter. In the meanwhile Tamar Yager proposed that individual members send personal letters to their sheriffs requesting this information.

Elect Central Committee Members

Election of Central Committee members was postponed till the next business meeting.

Platform Committee Report

Tom proposed the following additions to the GPVA platform:

- We oppose the widening of I-66 and I-81.
- We support the conversion or replacement of existing coal-fired power plants with alternative energy sources and oppose the construction of new coal-fired power plants.
- Because of our support for clean water, maintaining sufficient habitat for wildlife, individual property rights, and protecting rural communities, we oppose mountaintop removal mining.

Tom indicated that he wants the membership to vote on the amended platform by the end of the year. Josh Ruebner said that while he supports the amendments, he wants to see more detail. So he recommended committing them to the Platform Committee for further work and obtaining membership approval of the amended platform by Labor Day. The proposal was adopted by consensus.

Finance Committee Report/Fundraising Plan

Tamar revised her earlier fundraising recommendation as follows: that the Finance Committee report to GPVA on the best way to conduct telephone fundraising by May 1. The proposal was adopted by consensus.

Steering Committee Report

The Steering Committee report was postponed due to inactivity.

Local Organizing Committee (LOC) Report/Building Locals

LOC made no report.

Information Technology (IT) Committee Report

The IT report was postponed due to the absence of the chair (Susan Dridi) and the webmaster (Chris Fink).

Recent State Legislative Action: HB 1890 and HB 2642

Tom Yager reported that GPVA and the Libertarians had effectively lobbied the state senate to eliminate from HB 2642 a provision that would have outlawed paid petitioners. Tom further reported that he had argued in a letter to State Senator Mary Margaret Whipple, who sits on the Committee on Privileges and Elections, that the provision would have adversely affected candidates in partisan primaries, as well as independent candidates.

Audrey reported that the General Assembly adopted and the governor recently signed into law a bill that increases the signature requirement to get a housing authority referendum on the ballot from 100 to 2 percent of voters or approximately 3,000 signatures in Arlington County. It also limits such referenda to once every five years. Because Virginia has a history of racial discrimination, it is required to submit the law to the U.S. Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights for preclearance review under Section 5 of the Voting Rights Act. Audrey believes that DOJ ought to nullify the law, because it disproportionately affects minorities as the primary beneficiaries of low income housing. But both the ACLU and Legal Services of Northern Va. (LSNV) rejected requests to send a letter to DOJ objecting to the law. Audrey therefore proposed that she draft a letter to the Assistant Attorney General herself. The proposal was adopted by consensus.

Local Committee Reports

- Audrey reported that the Arlington County local had just lost two core members, newsletter editor and treasurer Dana Thompson and webmaster Andrew Vargo.
- Josh Ruebner reported that the local has recruited three candidates to run for office in 2009 and has effectively lobbied the county to expand its recycling efforts. The Arlington local also plans to exploit the fact that the county lost out on the \$4 billion housing component of the federal stimulus bill by failing to create a housing authority.
- Charlie Jordan reported that stimulus money may be used to construct I-73 to link Roanoke, Blacksburg and Martinsville with North Carolina and West Virginia, a move that is opposed by local activists.
- Mike Rosenberg reported that he sent an email to local members announcing the business meeting and will forward the bounced messages to Chris Fink to update the mailing list.

Next Meeting Date

Tom and Audrey agreed to schedule the next GPVA quarterly business meeting on the most optimal date prior to the June 9 deadline for filing nominating petitions.

Submitted by Audrey Clement
Greens of Virginia