

Business Meeting

Warren County Community Center Front Royal, Virginia June 11, 2011

Minutes of GPVA Business Meeting at the Warren County Community Center, at 538 Villa Avenue, Front Royal, Va., June 11, 2011.

Present were: Kevin Chisholm, Audrey Clement, Miriam Gennari, Kirit Mookerjee, Tamar Yager and Tom Yager (Arlington), Charlie Jordan (Blue Ridge), Chris Fink (Fredericksburg—morning session only), Chris Simmons (Loudoun), and Joe Galdo, Daryl Northrop, and Bahram Zandi (NOVA). Also attending as a guest speaker was Bill Kreml (ILGP).

A quorum consisting of at least half of the five locals participating in the two most recent business meetings (Arlington, Blue Ridge, Fredericksburg and NOVA on 10/9/10) and Arlington, Blue Ridge, Hampton Roads and Richmond on 5/22/10) having been established, the meeting was called to order.

Kevin agreed to serve as facilitator, Miriam as vibes watcher, Chris Simmons as timekeeper, and Audrey as note taker. The previously published meeting agenda was amended and agreed to by consensus as follows:

- I. Introduction
- II. Choose timekeeper, vibes watcher, facilitator, note taker
- III. Ratify agenda
- IV. Guest speaker: Bill Kreml
- V. Guest speaker: Audrey Clement
- VI. Co-chairs report
- VII. Press secretary's report
- VIII. Treasurer's report
- IX. GPUS representatives report
- X. Annual National Meeting report
- XI. Lunch
- XII. Local reports
- XIII. Candidate nominations and endorsements
- XIV. Creation of ad hoc committee on freedom of information
- XV. Discussion of building locals
- XVI. Discussion of recruiting candidates
- XVII. Amendments to GPVA's GPUS mission statement proposal
- XVIII. Closing circle

Guest speaker speakers.

Bill Kreml of the Illinois Green Party and a professor at DePaul University, addressed the group on the bias of temperament in American politics. Audrey Clement described proposed plastic bag and Styrofoam ban ordinances for Arlington County that were submitted to and rejected by Arlington County Board. Miriam Gennari described a meeting with Arlington County Board member Jay Fisette to mobilize support for the ordinances.

Co-chairs report.

Audrey expressed concern that most GPVA locals are inactive and said that more locals need to run Green candidates for office. Chris Simmons countered that he is running as an incumbent director for the Loudoun County Soil and Water Conservation District and expects to win. Tom Yager said that incumbent Blacksburg Town Council member Don Langrehr may run for state delegate and that Eric Sheffield is running as an independent for South River supervisor in Rockbridge County.

Press secretary's report.

It having been noted that the GPUS press secretary has not produced any press releases recently, Chris Simmons, who is the press secretary for the state association of water districts, offered to work with her and others on how to do effective public outreach. It was agreed by consensus that the co-chairs should inquire whether the press secretary still wants to serve in that capacity and if not to conduct a new press secretary election on line.

Treasurer's report.

Kirit Mookerjee indicated that the balance in the GPVA account is \$937 after recent expenditures to renew the party's website domain names and the Falls Church post office box. Miriam Gennari offered to assist Tom Yager in making fundraising calls to the GPVA membership.

GPUS representatives report.

Bahram said that the GPVA delegates are voting on opposite sides of the issues before the GPUS National Committee and cancelling each others' votes. This polarization reflects a schism in the national party over the Israeli occupation of Palestine. Tamar said the delegates should be more diligent about polling the GPVA membership on the proposals voted on by the NC, but Kevin recommended that delegates avoid divisive issues so as not to polarize the state party. In response to information that GPUS is now voting on a proposal to apportion the NC, Miriam moved that GPVA locals advise GPVA delegates on how to vote on the apportionment. The motion was adopted by consensus.

Annual National Meeting report.

Tamar, who serves on the GPUS Annual National Meeting Committee, advised that the 2011 Annual National Meeting is being held in conjunction with the annual New York Green Fest gathering at Alfred University in Alfred, NY August 4-7. She recommended that everyone attend. It was agreed by consensus that Tom would attend as alternate in place of any delegate who cannot attend.

Local reports.

Daryl reported that he has migrated the NOVA local's website www.NoVAGreens.org to a new web hosting platform, SquareSpace, and that it's very inexpensive and easy to use. He also indicated that he is available to assist other Green locals and candidates with their websites.

Chris Simmons indicated that he needs to rebuild his own website, but that the Loudoun Green local is active with 6-10 members showing up for monthly meetings. Chris said he wants to recruit volunteers for the annual Sterling Fest on Columbus Day weekend. Chris further advised that there are 325 directors serving 47 Virginia Soil and Water Districts (SWDs), that all elective seats are up for election, and that 30-50 of those will be write-ins. Chris said he is running on a slate with two other incumbents from Loudoun County, and he expects the slate to defeat any Tea Party or major party candidates. He recommended that the Arlington local ask Arlington County Board to absorb itself into the Northern Virginia Soil and Water District, as did Charlottesville recently, commenting "the last thing we need is a rogue county running its own conservation district."

Chris Fink reported that the Fredericksburg local has largely been on hold for the past couple of years, and Chris has been looking for another strong Green for the 1st CD to take over as coordinator. Chris reported that two weeks ago he held a "spring kickoff" meeting in Fredericksburg to try to draw in potential successors, but unfortunately failed to bring in a lot of people. Chris said he is still committed to the party and will continue to try to find a new local coordinator, while also sending in donations to the local, state and national parties. He expressed concern that SWD director Kathleen Harrigan had recently resigned her position. So it may not be a good time to ask her to run again. Chris Simmons responded saying, "Running and losing is not so bad. Running and resigning is bad," because now people will say "she quit, and she was Green."

Tamar reported that Arlington Greens participated in a county sponsored energy task force that recommended a district energy plan. New member Joe Galdo reported that he developed district energy plans as a physicist, renewable energy expert and former DOE employee. Miriam reported that efforts to jump start a green jobs program in Arlington have foundered probably because unemployment in the county is so low.

Candidate nominations and endorsements.

Right now the only announced Green Party candidates in the state are Chris Simmons for Loudoun County SWD and Audrey Clement for Arlington County Board. Audrey moved that the party endorse both Simmons and herself, which it did by consensus.

Creation of ad hoc committee on freedom of information. A proposal previously submitted by Charlie Jordan to create an ad hoc committee on freedom of information to report on the availability of government information to the party and the public was defeated on a vote of 4-4-2.

Discussion of recruiting candidates.

Tom solicited support to help him identify prospective SWD candidates from the GPVA mailing list and encourage them to run.

Amendments to GPVA's GPUS mission statement proposal.

Audrey advised that the proposal to adopt a GPUS mission statement recently forwarded to the National Committee was likely to fail unless amended to address concerns. There being no support to pull the proposal from the voting queue, she offered several amendments.

Language to amend Section 1-1.2 to read:

"1-1.2 The GPUS is a legally structured Green Party federation of state parties operating in the United States of America." failed on a vote of 1-3-5.

Language to amend Section 1-1.2 to read:

"1-1.2 The GPUS is a legally structured Green Party federation of state parties and caucuses operating in the United States of America." was adopted on a vote of 7-2-1.

Language to amend Section 1-2.2 to read:

"1-2.2 To further its mission, GPUS may nominate Presidential and Vice-Presidential candidates and may approve a Party Platform. Through the operation of a National Committee, GPUS provides ongoing support to state Green parties." was adopted on a vote of 9-0-1.

The GPVA proposal for a GPUS mission statement now reads:

SPONSOR: Green Party of Virginia

CONTACT: Audrey Clement, 571-830-8889, aclement65@hotmail.com

SUBJECT/TITLE: Proposal for a GPUS Mission Statement

TYPE OF PROPOSAL: Bylaws Change, Two-Thirds Threshold

DECISION-MAKING TIMELINE: Two weeks discussion, followed by one week vote

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE:

Insofar as a mission statement is critical to accomplishing an organization's purpose and insofar as GPUS currently lacks a mission statement, GPVA proposes to amend GPUS Bylaws as follows:

PROPOSAL:

Replace Article I of the Bylaws, which reads:

[ARTICLE I. PURPOSE

1. Assist in the development of State Green Parties
2. Create a legally structured national Green Party Federation]

With the following language:

ARTICLE I. ORGANIZATION

Section 1-1 Name and Structure

1-1.1 The name of this organization is the Green Party of the United States (GPUS).

1-1.2 The GPUS is a legally structured Green Party federation of state parties and caucuses operating in the United States of America.

Section 1-2. Mission

1-2.1 The purpose of the Green Party of the United States is to transform government at all levels by electing Green Party candidates to office and engaging in other electoral and advocacy efforts, consistent with the Party's Four Pillars of ecological wisdom, social justice, grassroots democracy and non-violence.

1-2.2 To further its mission, GPUS may nominate Presidential and Vice-Presidential candidates and may approve a Party Platform. Through the operation of a National Committee, GPUS provides ongoing support to state Green parties.

IMPLEMENTATION/TIMELINE:

Bylaws change would become effective upon passage.

REFERENCES:

GPUS Bylaws, ARTICLE I

<http://www.gp.org/documents/bylaws.shtml#article1>

Original Bylaws of the Association of State Green Parties

<http://greenpages.wordpress.com/2008/10/26/the-association-of-state-green-parties>

Closing circle.

The meeting was adjourned with those present agreeing to schedule the next meeting for Saturday, October 1, 2011 in Arlington.

Audrey Clement

Note Taker