

MINUTES
Lincoln County Democrats General Meeting
Wednesday, April 28, 2021

Chair Michael Gaskill brought the meeting to order at 6pm

Chair Gaskill reviewed ground rules for the meeting and how to interact and vote on the Zoom platform. He then introduced guest speaker State Treasurer Tobias Reed.

Treasurer Tobias Reed

Treasurer Reed described the year's economic challenges, most notably the pandemic and the wildfires. He stated that he supported President Biden's vision of "building back better" in a way that is more inclusive, just, and resilient. His office is prioritizing early childhood education and community colleges as key to that goal, along with rebuilding infrastructure. He gave examples of the state's opt-out retirement system and the college savings plan, which creates a \$25 seed account for babies in Oregon, which is shown to increase the likelihood of those children attending college. He spoke in favor of the idea of giving extra support to teachers and medical professionals. When asked if the State's retirement plan had a carbon-neutral policy, Reed responded that they have created a position to advise on environmental and justice issues, but that investments currently focus on investment return and not environmental or social issues.

State Representative David Gomberg complimented Treasurer Reed's support for schools, businesses, and wildfire relief. He noted that Reed also serves on the State Land Board, and he expressed appreciation for Reed's advocacy for the coast.

Candidate recruitment for local elections

Fundraising and Publicity Chair Eliot Sekuler provided an update on campaign support for candidates endorsed by Lincoln County Democrats: Susan Wahlke for mayor of Lincoln County and in the Lincoln County School Board races, Mike Rawles (District 3) Peter Vince (District 4) and Senitila McKinley (District 5). . He thanked Marta West for her graphic design work, stating that she had done a spectacular job. Three thousand postcards had been mailed based on the VAN lists from the DPO. An additional 500 cards being printed will need to be addressed and mailed by volunteers. Advertisements were placed in the *Lincoln City News Guard*, *Oregon Coast Today*, the *Newport News Times*, the *News Lincoln County Online* site, and *The Yachats News*. Letters to the editor

were also published. There is a total budget of \$2,992.80, \$600 of which will come from the Lincoln City Democrats Club. Treasurer Wendy Girard reported that there were \$1,285 in donations this year.

Chair Gaskill described ways in which volunteers could help get out the vote, including addressing and mailing postcards, phone banking, and sharing social media posts. Asked who was being targeted by this campaign, Chair Gaskill explained that there are three tiers of Democratic voters: those who identify strongly with the Party and who have high voter participation, those who identify strongly as Democrats but vote infrequently, and those who do not identify as strongly with the Party. The first two groups are generally the target for get-out-the-vote campaigns in local elections which normally have a lower turnout.

Vice Chair Cherie Harbour announced that in addition to the candidates officially being endorsed by the Lincoln County Democrats, there are many Democrats running for other offices. All Democratic candidates running for office in the May 18 Special Election in Lincoln County are listed on the Lincoln County Democrats Web site.

Update from State Representative David Gomberg

Representative Gomberg explained that the Republican requirement that all bills be read in full on the floor before a vote, a tactic to slow the legislative process, was finally ended with an agreement to allow equal representation on the state redistricting committee. Gomberg said that he was not concerned about the impact this representation might have on the redistricting process because Secretary of State Shemia Fagan is a Democrat, and she would serve as the tie-breaker.

Gomberg reported that he is working on a package of police accountability bills and he sponsored a bill requiring training on gender bias. He is working with State Senator Dick Anderson to ensure that funding from the American Rescue Plan Act benefits the coast, in particular local capital projects.

In response to a concern about logging underway throughout the county, Gomberg explained that the concurrence of Oregon Department of Transportation wildfire cleanup, utility right-of-way logging for fire prevention, and private timber cuts---all being undertaken by contractors---makes it hard to know who is accountable for what logging and who might be profiting from logging public lands in the name of wildfire cleanup and prevention. He questioned that accuracy of the computer app used by arborists to identify trees

that need to be removed.

Newport City Councilmember Cynthia Jacobi

Newport City Councilmember Cynthia Jacobi reported that the City budget is improving, in large part thanks to the American Rescue Plan Act, and the city will be able to rehire some employees.

She is advocating for funding for a playground near the new low-income housing complex in north Newport. Short-term rental legislation that would cap the number of occupants in a vacation rental is being considered on May 7.

Newport, Depoe Bay, and Lincoln City are jointly petitioning ODOT to improve safety around Cape Foulweather.

Chair Gaskill thanked Councilmember Jacobi for her report and her advocacy for the needs of low-income residents.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:00pm