

**Lincoln County Democrats of Oregon
Meeting Minutes for August 25 2021**

Chair Michael Gaskill opened the meeting discussing the importance of the federal budget reconciliation bill and bipartisan infrastructure bill in Congress and of our congressional representation by Kurt Schrader, who has opposed the expenditures.

Vice Chair Cherie Harbour thanked everyone who came to the picnic.

Publicity Manager Eliot Sekuler reported on the cost of the picnic and the success of the auction.

Celeste Goulding of Second Home Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon gave a presentation about the program, which matches host homes with unaccompanied youth. He hosts are not legal guardians, and the youth are not wards of the state but would like to be safely housed. 16- and 17-year-olds legally sign rental agreements, and 15-year-olds who can sign with volunteer host homes. The goal is to let teenagers finish the school year, but the placement can go to three years, developing long-term mentor relationships. The organization was founded in the Beaverton School District. There is also a youth action board. There are currently 112 unaccompanied youth in the Western region. Lincoln County is well-networked and has a strong grant-writing program. Volunteer homes are screened and given training. Support includes bimonthly meetings and ongoing support groups.

Chair Gaskill thanked Ms. Goulding. He then discussed the issue of how to interact with Rep. Schrader regarding his lack of support for the reconciliation bill. He recommended that constituents contact Schrader and demand that he commit to supporting President Biden's agenda.

Eliot Sekuler proposed a vote to urge Schrader to support reconciliation bill.

Monica Kirk of 15 Neighborhoods requested that the Lincoln County Democrats endorse a ballot measure restricting vacation rentals in unincorporated Lincoln County. This initiative began in April/May of 2019 working with County Commissioners to look at how a short-term rental program could be implemented. The work has been collaborative and with mutual respect; there is disagreement over whether there is ever a case where there should be short-term rentals in a residential district. There is agreement on enforcement measures and regulations. The ballot measure calls for a five-year phase-out of vacation rentals in unincorporated Lincoln County residential neighborhoods and a ban on transfers in any sale. "In no case are short-term rentals appropriate in our neighborhoods." There are 54 miles of coastline where these rentals effectively are unregulated mini motels. Issues include sewer, law enforcement, and safety.

Lisa Bunetta: How does your foundation wash over into incorporated areas? Monica: Cities have already rezoned and issued licenses and have capped STRs. 70% of STR owners in unincorporated Lincoln County are investors and not Oregon residents. People who want to move to the coast can't afford to buy homes, and it is known as a "wild west" for investors. The idea is to restrict STRs to local tourist zones. Continuation of licensing and phase out gives investors five years to sell, rent long term, or move in.

Problems: people ignore personal risks on rocks, narrow streets in these residential areas barely accommodate residential vehicles.

Steve [Butin?] asked how “Residential District” is defined. Monica Kirk answered that residential districts are R1, R1A, and R2 zones. He asked if there has been an economic impact study, input from local businesses, or impact on the tax base. Monica Kirk responded that Lincoln County Commissioner Clare Hall reported there would be negligible tax income impact from loss of rental property. Once the measure passes the change would open up housing stock—currently available housing is 1% and housing is not affordable.

Brent Clark of Newport expressed concern over the loss of jobs in the tourism and hospitality industry. He said he disputes the “15 Neighborhoods” study.

Monica Kirk noted that when we lose housing we lose children in schools and thus federal funding for schools. This happened in Sedona, Arizona with loss of long-term residents and housing difficulties.

Vice Chair Harbour confirmed that school funding is based on the number of children in schools.

Shawn Rapier asked for data and said that Via Oregon agrees that septic and road safety regulations can be improved.

Jill N. asked about the potential loss of tax dollars and suggested that it would mean “a couple million” lost for communities.

Chair Gaskill asked speakers to announce whether or not they live in Lincoln County.

Jamie Goodman asked how beachfront homes become affordable. Monica Kirk replied that the goal is to restore long-term housing in Lincoln County.

Kyle Murphy stated that he felt the party should do more research.

Jess Kolikouski asked if 15 Neighbors have a plan to prevent squatters in empty houses.

[Jozi?] reported that Via Oregon does have an economic impact study.

Quincy Powers, homeowner in Waldport asked if 15 Neighborhoods had consulted with attorneys—would this pass constitutional muster? Monica Kirk responded that COPE vs. Cannon Beach 1999, regarding a ban on short-term rentals in city residential zones, found that the city was exercising legitimate governmental authority.

There was discussion over whether to hold a vote during the meeting. Elaine Walsh noted that the vote is for the initiative to become a ballot measure. She noted that Lincoln City did pass such a ban.

Diane Eckstine reported that in her neighborhood almost every other house is a vacation rental and problems include sewer, traffic, and wild parties.

Gina Geary, realtor, stated that this is not an ownership problem but a management problem. He asked about the employment impact for housekeepers for the STRs.

Shawn Rapier stated that he invested in Waldport and that if can't use his Waldport house as an STR his family can't be part of the community.

Kyle Murphy repeated that he felt that Lincoln County Democratic Central Committee didn't seem to have studied this issue in depth, and as a Democrat he finds this troubling. Vice Chair Harbour pointed out that the current meeting was a forum for taking input

Joyce [?] reported that she has lived in Lincoln City for eight years working in the hospitality industry and asked the committee to consider the measure more seriously.

Jade [?] again asked if STRs turn into long-term rentals, who can actually afford them?

Gary Lahmar, Precinct Committee Person, summarized that there are two questions, to endorse, and to fund the voter pamphlet statement.

The vote was postponed to allow voting members to consider the input.

Shane O'Brien, from Representative Kurt Schrader's Office reported that Schrader with Representative Peter DeFazio obtained funding for habitat restoration along Oregon Coast. There will be an upcoming Town Hall August 31.

Ryan Parker City of Newport City Council asked if Representative Schrader is in discussion with Washington and Idaho on the Snake River Dam.

Meeting Minutes Approved 10/27/2021