

Lincoln County Democrats of Oregon Meeting Minutes for February 23, 2022

The meeting began at 6:03 p.m. and was held online via Zoom. Chair Michael Gaskill welcomed everyone and reviewed Zoom protocols and the proposed meeting agenda. Chair Gaskill asked attendees to consider becoming monthly donors to support what he hoped would be a vigorous campaign to elect Democrats up and down the ballot in 2022.

PCP Filing

Chair Gaskill reminded everyone that there are still slots open for Precinct Committee Person positions. [Secretary's note: information about PCP's can be found here: <https://dpo.org/get-involved/precinct-committee-persons/>]

Upcoming County Commissioner Forum

Chair Gaskill announced that Lincoln County Democrats will be hosting a hybrid in-person/online candidate forum for the open Lincoln County Commissioner positions on the afternoon of April 16 at the Newport Visual Arts Center. Candidates who are Democrats and those who are non-affiliated who share Democratic Party values will be invited to participate in the forum.

Approval of Minutes of January 26, 2022

With thirteen voting members in favor and no objections, the minutes of the January 26, 2022, were adopted.

4th Congressional District Candidate Doyle Canning

Chair Gaskill introduced candidate Doyle Canning. Chair Gaskill noted that he is personally endorsing Canning and will also support whichever candidate is ultimately selected to represent the Democratic Party for Congressional District 4.

Canning described her 20 years of experience as a community organizer, strategizer, and attorney focusing on environmental and labor issues. She emphasized the need to elect progressives who will fight to get money out of politics and support climate change policy, strong unions, and a wealth tax. She described Oregon as having opportunities to help fight climate change through tidal and wind energy, carbon sequestration in forests, and regenerative agriculture.

Questions to candidate Canning

Chair Gaskill opened the questioning and asked, "given that climate change is existential threat: 1) will you commit to not accepting fossil fuel money and 2) what will you do to advance climate action in your first term?" Canning responded that she joins the mainstream of the Democratic Party in supporting Biden's Build Back Better agenda and climate change action. She noted there is still a risk that Democrats will lose the majority in Congress in 2022. Although she has seen how the GOP controls the public conversation, Canning said she is able to steer toward coalitions, championing issues on which we can have agreement. She noted that even if in the minority, the oversight role of Congressional Democrats will be strong.

Canning stated that Oregon has best climate in the nation for off-shore wind and that she will champion bringing union jobs to the coast with wind farms.

Rand Bishop asked, "A Democrat winning in Coos and Curry Counties will be a challenge. What's the strategy to overcome the ultra-conservatives in that part of the state?" Canning responded that the diversity of the district helps, and a lot of Democratic candidates focus on the majority where Democrats win. But she stated she believes that the coast matters and that she strives to be a strong partner with local parties and has the support of Indivisible in Coos County. She noted that though we have seen the typical divide-and-conquer tactics, her background is in building coalitions between labor and environmental advocates. She believes in investing in offshore wind energy, noting that turbines aren't currently manufactured in U.S. Canning said she has experience connecting with independent and even Republican voters on specific issues, and that she brings authenticity and commitment to working class people.

In the Zoom chat "katekelly" asked, "What is your strategy for dealing with the Republican obstructionist agenda? How to get Manchin and Sinema back on board?" Canning replied that it starts with having commitment and vision and the backing

of regular people and not lobbyists, and that there are some niche areas where collaboration can happen. But she noted that there are some areas where collaboration won't work.

In the chat, Leigh Evans asked of both candidates, "which public offices have you held?" Canning replied that she was Vice Chair of Democratic Party of Oregon Environmental Caucus.

Robert Westerman asked in the chat, "Val Hoyle has been a champion for organized labor in Oregon. For those of us in the labor movement that are used to politicians pandering to us with talk of supporting union jobs while arguing against those jobs that employ us, what have you specifically done for or on behalf of working men and women in Oregon?" Canning responded that her role in United for Respect, a labor rights organization, was to work with frontline employees at Walmart, Amazon, and other large employers, noting that essential workers can't afford to take a day off work. She advocated in Congress with the Biden Administration for an OSHA standard for the airborne Coronavirus. She also worked for the PRO Act, which some right-of-center Democrats didn't support. Canning's work in California included helping plan to grow the labor movement through the transition to green economy.

Canning has a fundraiser planned in March with Jane Fonda and the Grateful Dead and will be in Newport March 9th at 6pm, location to be announced.

Allen Shen asked in the chat to both candidates, "OPB did a report on lumber companies paying Oregon less than what they pay to California and Washington. What is your plan to ensure the state receive equal pay for one of our most precious resources?" Canning responded in the chat, "There are so many areas where Oregon lags behind our neighbors in terms of forestry I plan to claim a seat at the table in the natural resources committee, our district deserves that. There are ways the fed rules can incentivize states to have better practices and better pay."

Doyle Canning's campaign website and contact information:

<https://www.canningforcongress.com/>

team@canningforcongress.com

<https://secure.actblue.com/donate/canning>

4th Congressional District Candidate Sami Al-Abdrabbuh, PhD

Chair Gaskill introduced Sami Al-Abdrabbuh, who began by responding to the question about public service, stating that he had been elected to school board twice, is president of a the state-wide Color Caucus of Oregon School Board Members, and he serves on the Oregon Department of Education's Fair Dismissals Appeals Board, a position confirmed by the Oregon Senate. He also served on the Central Committee for the Democrats of Oregon. Al-Abdrabbuh stated his engineering background has informed his collaboration with non-profits to allow communities to invest in solar power, membership on a transportation and infrastructure committee, and his support for investment in vocational training.

Al-Abdrabbuh underscored the need for improved school infrastructure across the nation, pointing out that half of children in public schools drink water delivered through lead pipes. He noted the importance of roads infrastructure and health centers at schools in rural areas. Al-Abdrabbuh stated that as an educator and union member, he worked to protect people from being harassed by ICE officials and from racially motivated peer harassment.

The local issues he prioritized included an equitable broadband system and federal support for affordable housing. He stated he supports Medicare for All and reiterated the risk of rural medical isolation due to inadequate physical and digital infrastructure. Al-Abdrabbuh supports offshore wind development, but he noted that he wants to be sure to evaluate its impacts and potential inequities, such as on the fishing industry. He noted the importance of access to child care for all workers.

In response to previous questions regarding reaching out to non-Democratic candidates, Al-Abdrabbuh emphasized the value of framing topics correctly. He stated that we need civility, while at the same time we need to object and be assertive in

response to January 6 and related anti-democratic movements. He said that our children deserve to see public figures as better role models.

Allen Shen asked in the chat to both candidates, “OPB did a report on lumber companies paying Oregon less than what they pay to California and Washington. What is your plan to ensure the state receive equal pay for one of our most precious resources?” Al-Abdrabbuh responded that we can learn from forest management practices in other countries such as Peru and also from OSU research. He stated that sustainable harvesting is important, and that the biggest injustice is that money from timber doesn’t currently stay in communities while timber companies are profiting off of rural and coastal forests.

Eric Sherman asked in the chat, “apprenticeship is a near and dear subject for me. I am a classroom instructor and committee member for one of the only registered apprenticeship programs based entirely on the Oregon Coast. We have been in operation for decades and have trained the vast bulk of electrical workers past and present in our region. From that perspective, we sometimes find it a bit nerve-rattling when elected leaders jump on the apprenticeship bandwagon promising expanded apprenticeship programs, deregulation of existing apprenticeship programs, and so forth. As a U.S. Representative, how do you feel you can strike balance between expanding the apprenticeship model (which is great!) without stepping on the toes of programs that have been operating with great success for years?” Al-Abdrabbuh responded that incentive programs need to respect workers and should be led by people who are doing the work.

Robert Westerman asked in the chat, “what union do you belong to? Have you served in any capacity for your union?” Al-Abdrabbuh replied, “yes I am with UAOSU (part of AFT) and also was with CGE 6069 (part of AFT too). I have represented my local at AFT Oregon and AFT national convention and passed resolutions that originated from Oregon.”

Al-Abdrabbuh summarized that he is good at building consensus and that he is seen as a person who focuses on building solutions with a commitment to represent everybody.

Sami Al-Abdrabbuh’s campaign website and contact information:

<https://secure.actblue.com/donate/supportsami>

<https://samiforcongress.com/>

Phone: 541-602-6478

Chair Gaskill closed the District 4 candidates session and stated that he will share future campaign events and other information with Lincoln County Democrats.

[Questions to CD4 candidates in chat unaddressed:

“Isn't your electric truck hovering around Long Beach?”

“There are many different wind turbine designs. Have you researched the market and can you speak to a design you would support?”

“What is your strategy to get a handle on obscene “shooter drills” Kids need to earn, not worry about being shot!!!”]

Patrick Starnes, Candidate for Oregon Governor

Starnes introduced himself as the only rural Democrat in the Oregon governor’s race and the only candidate that has a platform with concrete solutions. His campaign slogan is “Solutions not Politics.” He noted that his campaign is not getting a lot of media coverage even though he has been traveling through all 36 Oregon counties.

Starnes’s platform includes implementing campaign finance reform within his first 100 days in office, healthcare affordability and access, addressing housing and homelessness, wildfire prevention and response, and climate change. He stated that he is tired of divisiveness and wants to work with rural conservative neighbors, and that as a red county Democrat, he has successfully worked with conservatives on watershed councils and school boards.

Starnes advocated protecting waterways from aerial spray pollution and supports the use of a new Oregon Conservation Corps to remove smaller forest debris to help prevent large-scale wildfires. He said he would raise the severance tax on timber and increase the excise tax on timber being exported for milling out of state.

In response to Eric Sherman's earlier question regarding internships, Starnes noted that although Measure 98 finally brought revenue back to shop classes, it wound up largely becoming an underfunded mandate, and so the issue needs to be brought up again.

Ryan M Parker asked in the chat, "Will you get a rewrite of the Oregon Forest Practices Act to be taken up in the long 2023 session if elected?" and Starnes confirmed he was interested in doing so.

Lisa Spence-Bunnett asked in the chat, "Can you describe your idea of levying a vacancy fee on empty buildings as a way to help alleviate homelessness?" Starnes replied, "The Vacancy Fee idea was developed while my wife and I are restoring abandoned homes around the state. Many are owned by wealthy out of state banks who are using these abandoned homes as a write off since the homes are depreciating."

Carol Shenk asked in the chat, "Latinx people are many of Oregon's frontline workers, and workers in construction, industry, and agriculture. How will you connect with and support Latinx people in our state?" Starnes responded, "I am connecting with Latinx people and communities across the state and was recently the only candidate standing with farmworkers at the Capitol in favor of HB4002 which is the farmworkers overtime bill. my website is in Espanol."

Jaiden Fire asked in the chat, "recently in California, a single-payer bill was squashed after the legislature acknowledged that the Dem majority didn't have the votes to pass it. not bringing the bill for a vote protects Corporate Dems from exposing their true priority to protect the big dollar donors. do you think the same thing could happen here in Oregon and can u re-state the importance of not accepting PAC money like Tina Kotek has from Big Pharma?" Starnes replied, "we can set contribution limits that keep Big Pharma money and private-for-profit health insurance companies!"

Starnes closed inviting anyone with questions to email him for detailed responses.

Patrick Starnes' campaign website and email:
<https://starnes2022.com/>
patrickstarnes@live.com

Updates from Elected Officials

Lincoln County Commissioner Kaety Jacobson

Lincoln Commissioner Kaety Jacobson announced that the state has committed to two tiny-home projects, and that they continue looking for creative ideas to provide more housing for wildfire survivors.

She reported that the Lincoln County Extension Office of the OSU Department of Agriculture just completed a study of adaptations that will be needed for the agricultural sector to respond to climate change, bringing up issues like ensuring access to sufficient livestock feed during drought.

Commissioner Jacobson reported that Lincoln County is also working with a consultant to address housing access and affordability throughout the jurisdiction.

City of Newport Councilmember Ryan Parker

Newport City Councilmember Ryan Parker greeted his fellow councilmember Cynthia Jacobi and noted that the Newport city budget process begins March 1. He announced that the Port of Newport has broken ground on its new facility on the bayfront. Councilmember Parker also announced that the City of Newport has passed the state's most restrictive regulation on plastic and Styrofoam and that they will be working with haulers to go through the new ordinance to make Newport less

prone to roadside litter and oceanic debris alongside rivers. Parker announced he is running in for Position 3 in the County Commissioner race.

Waldport Mayor Greg Holland

Waldport Mayor Greg Holland reported that state funding for water tank rehabilitation and replacement came through and thanked Representative David Gomberg for his advocacy. Holland stated he is also running for County Commissioner

Announcements

Chair Gaskill reminded everyone of the April 16 candidate forum.

Chair Gaskill announced that he is helping Doyle Canning host a meet-and-greet March 9, which he will send out through personal channels.

Gaskill stated that Lincoln County Democrats will continue the candidate series next month.

Martin Desmond, of Newport, announced that Citizens for a Better Lincoln County (CBLC) will be sponsoring a presentation about the Building Back a Better America bi-partisan infrastructure grants at 6:00 pm, March 1st on Zoom. In the chat, he explained that the purpose of the presentation is to alert interested individuals, businesses, and government entities in Lincoln County about the potential for millions of dollars of grant funding that could flow into the county with a concerted effort. The Zoom link to the one hour presentation is: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85353332984>

Newport City Councilmember Cynthia Jacobi noted in the chat regarding the landfill issue that she has been lobbying for SB 1576 , “which would establish a stewardship program for mattresses.” She thanked Amy Thompson for her work on this and broader recycling efforts at Thompson’s Sanitary Service. She added that Representative David Gomberg also supports this legislation.

Robert Westerman announced and included in the chat, “For those who may be interested in knowing more about offshore wind please join us at www.oregonenergyalliance.org To register for the Task Force meeting, go to: <https://www.boem.gov/OregonTaskForceMeeting10>.”

Newport City Councilmember Ryan Parker announced that on February 26 there will be a science event from 2pm-5pm at the Lincoln City Cultural Center, inspired by the the art installation, “Washed Ashore: Art to Save the Sea” [Secretary’s note: information on the event is at <https://lincolncity-culturalcenter.org/events/swimming-upstream/>]

Lincoln County Commissioner Kaety Jacobson announced that there will be a Bureau of Ocean Energy Management taskforce meeting 8:30-3pm on Friday, February 25, on the topic of offshore wind energy and siting of wind leases.

The meeting adjourned a 7:40 p.m., and a few attendees stayed online to continue an informal discussion with gubernatorial candidate Patrick Starnes.