

Minutes
Lincoln County Democrats of Oregon
General Meeting
Wednesday, February 28, 2024, 6:00 PM
Visual Arts Center, Newport, Oregon

The hybrid meeting - in which 24 attendees participated in person at the Visual Arts Center and 22 via Zoom - was called to order by Chair Cherie Harbour at 6:00.

Chair Update

Chair Harbour described two recent strategic planning sessions in which 12 members, including officers from the Executive Committee, met to develop messaging for this year's elections (with the possible tagline: "In 2024 only one party is working for: . . . "). She has reached out to local candidates to encourage them to attend upcoming meetings, to share information about candidate training, and to provide assistance with the VAN and pamphlet writing. Chair Harbour also presented her Primary Election Snapshot, a calendar of key events between now and the primary election on May 21.

Treasurer's Report (as presented by Chair Harbour)

Our current bank balance is \$10,821.10, which is a significant increase over the balance a year ago at this time (approx. \$3,500).

Candidate Reports

Jeff Gudman (Candidate for Oregon State Treasurer)

Spoke of his extensive experience and of his distrust of mass movements. He believes that state government should be energetic and emphasized that as Oregonians we must work together. In response to a question from the audience he mentioned that he had previously run for this same position as a Republican but had become a Democrat over a year ago. He answered another question about the kicker by pointing out some of its shortcomings, foremost among them that it does not allow a sufficient reserve for small communities to carry out big infrastructure projects, such as a dam replacement in Newport. It also requires estimates about the size of the kicker to be made up to two years in advance. Despite these problems he said a two-thirds majority in the legislature is needed to overturn it, which is unlikely to occur soon. For this reason, we must find ways to ensure that the kicker is administered more effectively, for example by returning funds to communities each year. In answer to a question about how funds raised by the marijuana tax are spent he pointed out that those funds are not the responsibility of the treasurer. He is in favor of divesting PERS funds currently invested in fossil fuels and transferring those investments to renewables. More information about his campaign is available at info@jeffgudman.org.

Claire Hall (Candidate for Lincoln County Commissioner #2)

Described her 20 years experience as a Lincoln County Commissioner during which time she has always worked for those most in need. Highlighted her service as chair of the Oregon Housing Stability Council and said that through it she has brought millions of dollars to the county. In response to a question from the audience, she mentioned that the number of short term rentals (STR) is decreasing but at a slow rate; attrition as a method of achieving the desired decrease is not working. Suggested that a lottery system or a process in which the county could buy back STR licenses are possible options to stimulate greater reductions. An audience member asked about the possibility of merging community and county governments into a single, more efficient unit; Commissioner Hall responded that such an occurrence would likely meet with active opposition from the cities and communities that wish to retain more local control.

Don Gomez (Candidate for Lincoln County Commissioner #2)

Stated that he is running to bring innovation to the position. Although he is now a publisher, he drew attention to his budget experience as a financial management analyst in the Marines. His priorities include: affordable housing, increased access to healthcare, infrastructure improvements to support the increase in housing units, and protecting oceans and open spaces, which he believes county commissioners haven't supported strongly enough. He answered a question from the audience by saying that short term rentals could be reduced by making the licenses more expensive, as they are elsewhere in the country. He responded to another question from the audience by criticizing the process by which logging interests need only provide one day's advance notice of upcoming harvests or herbicide sprayings; such short notice prevents residents from mobilizing and organizing, he said. Further information about the candidate can be found at www.votedongomez.com.

Reports from Elected Officials;

David Gomberg (State Representative, District 10)

Described a \$100 million bill he supported to provide extra funding for communities that has gone forward with a recommendation to pass. In response to a question posed to a previous speaker, he mentioned that funds raised from the marijuana tax are used to administer the program, to provide addiction-related health services, to bolster associated police programs, and to support education.

Committee Reports

Coordinated Campaign Committee (Lisa Spence-Bunnett)

Described the initial meeting of participants in the Neighborhood Leader Program (NLP) that took place last week. Seventeen Neighborhood Leaders have signed up so far – it's a good start but we need many more. Each Neighborhood Leader commits to contacting 50 voters (usually registered Democrats only) in his or her neighborhood so we are still very far from being able to contact everyone in the county. We need greater participation across the board, in the NLP and otherwise. She encouraged everyone to take the Lincoln County Democrats survey that

identifies all the different ways one can volunteer

(https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSf5BBINrRy5NpcLOk_gIODi8r86eAyr-1BMXa3-PYeKJdQing/viewform). The link is also available through the last newsletter.

Recruitment Committee (Linda Perrine)

Reported that no one so far has stepped up to run against Republican State Senator Dick Anderson. Copies of the postcard the committee created to raise awareness of the local races were made available to the audience.

Adjournment

Chair Harbour adjourned the meeting at 7:30.