

Minutes  
GPVA Business Meeting  
Teleconference  
8 August 2020

12 MEMBERS AND 0 GUESTS IN ATTENDANCE:  
(An asterisk \* denotes a local representative.)  
(Corresponding timestamps on the recording are listed in parentheses.)

Arlington: Kirit Mukherjee (treasurer)  
At-Large: none  
Blue Ridge: Charlie Jordan\*  
Fairfax: Dianne Blais\*, Jonah Thomas (webmaster)  
Fredericksburg (inactive): none  
Hampton Roads: Kyle Rockett\*, Tina Rockett (co-chair), Blaizen Bloom  
Loudoun (inactive): none  
Lynchburg: Rosana Fernandez\*, B. Sidney Smith (Gen. Secretary)  
New River Valley: Steven Gillespie\*, Ryan Wesdock (Press Secretary)  
Richmond: none  
Shenandoah: Tom Yager\*

Guests: none.

Meeting convened at 1pm

facilitator: Jonah Thomas  
time-keeper: Ryan Wesdock

(1:00) The agenda was amended to add consideration of a proposal to co-sponsor the GPUS Women's Caucus Code of Conduct Proposal.

(3:00) The minutes of the January meeting were accepted.

#### REPORTS:

(4:00) Co-chairs: Ryan reported that he has been busy with ballot access, and that a number of people have been registering on the website, and that there has been interest in starting new locals. Tina reported that she was in contact with the Shockhoe Bottom Virginia Defenders, and they we had endorsed the Shockhoe Bottom proposal to make it a historical site. She also reported that Richard Winger with Ballot Access News had inquired about our ballot access success, and wanted to remind us that the Virginia Constitution requires that they allow Hawkins to run as a write-in if we don't make ballot access.

(6:30) Kirit gave the treasurer's report. There is \$1200 in the operating fund. Most contributions are by PayPal, but some come through the Post Office box. We had a generous donation from a member of the Fairfax Greens.

(9:30) Jonah gave the webmaster's report. He noted that few members sign up for the list-serves, although they are invited to in the welcome packet they receive. Sid suggested that we try to make it "opt-out" instead of "opt-in". Jonah said that he will see if there is a way to implement that.

(11:15) Sid gave the General Secretary's report. He said there are 7 active locals: Arlington, Blue Ridge, Fairfax, Hampton Roads, Lynchburg, New River Valley, and Shenandoah. Apparently Fredericksburg has gone inactive after Sean Imanian dropped out. He said that there have been many people in Richmond making inquiries about the local there, so it would be very nice to see it becoming active.

(16:15) Sid gave the GPUS Delegates report. He said that there has been considerable controversy about the Dario Hunter campaign. Hunter alleged several improprieties. The Credentialing Committee reviewed the complaints and found that they did not have standing under the bylaws. At that point Hunter and his running mate Darlene Elias determined to run an independent campaign. This has caused great disappointment among most Greens, who feel that once the party has made a nomination unity is expected. Another point of controversy is that the Rhode Island Green Party decided not to pursue ballot access and will not support our candidate. The GPUS Accreditation Committee is reviewing the affiliation status of that state party in consequence. In response to some questions, Tom Yager noted that our state bylaws require us to seek ballot access and support the GPUS candidate. Sid noted that the procedure with respect to Rhode Island is for the Accreditation Committee to formulate a proposal for the National Committee.

OLD BUSINESS:

CONFIRMATION OF INTERIM DECISIONS

(23:50) Ryan spoke regarding the dues proposal, saying that will help us grow and strengthen our party. Charlie Jordan said that some of his members would have trouble with the requirement to update their membership info online. Sid responded that he will help any members who need to use an alternative means to update their information. The dues proposal was accepted by consensus with Blue Ridge standing aside. Ryan added that we will next work in the interim list on the question of what dues amount to set.

Ryan's election as co-chair was confirmed by consensus with Blue Ridge standing aside after several members spoke in praise of Ryan's performance and efforts as co-chair.

The GPVA endorsement of independent candidate Keisha Preston for Roanoke City Council was passed by consensus.

(34:10) Diane Blais reported that she had suspended her campaign efforts in view of the impossibility for her to meet the petitioning requirements imposed for ballot access. She suggested that we should be writing letters to the editor to let people know that they should have had alternatives. She also noted that Lisa Savage is running a great campaign for U.S. Senate in Maine, and that will be a Ranked Choice Voting election, and that we definitely need to be working towards that in Virginia. Diane and Tina discussed the issues of budgeting for it in Virginia. Charlie offered to phone bank for her as a write-in. Tom Yager said that if the pandemic situation improves he will be going to Roanoke to campaign for Keisha.

(43:00) Review of Ballot Access efforts. Ryan reported that we are working to get as many people as possible to gather at least signatures from friends, family, coworkers, and others they normally come into contact with, since it won't be possible for most petitioners to solicit signatures from the general public. He said that he would be collecting petitions from petitioners in time to turn them in on the 21st, and that he would appreciate help getting them to Richmond. The Hawkins campaign has called for paid petitioners, but it is not clear what will come out of that. Kirit pointed out that we have sometimes in the past paid petitioners, and asked if the Hawkins campaign is paying for petitioners this time. Sid said that they have qualified for federal matching funds, so perhaps they had the resources to spend. Sid also reported on the lawsuit, and sent a detailed report to the business list-serve. The outcome was a reduction of 50% in our signature requirement, to 2,500 valid signatures. In response to a question from Tina, Ryan promised to ensure that if we failed to qualify for ballot access that Hawkins would be able to run as a write-in in Virginia.

(1:00:00) (20 minute break)

NEW BUSINESS:

OFFICER ELECTIONS:

(1:15:00) Blaizen Bloom and Charlie Jordan were the only nominees for election to Press Secretary. Each made a statement regarding their candidacies and the office they aspire to. Several members spoke in favor of Blaizen's candidacy. The vote was held on OpaVote.com and Blaizen Bloom was elected.

PRESIDENTIAL NOMINATING CONVENTION DELEGATES' REPORTS

(1:36:50) Kirit remarked that it was interesting but also disappointing to be attacked on the Presidential Campaign Support Committee (PCSC) by both campaigns for things that the PCSC was not responsible for, and disappointing too to see several Greens refuse to support the nominee. Ryan agreed that the toxicity on display during the online PNC was distressing. He added that the actual voting for the nominee went well and was uncontested. Tina congratulated Tamar on her election to the GPUS Steering Committee. Tina said that she thought there were some troubling aspects to the way the Hawkins and Hunter campaigns were conducted. She said that the GPUS itself worked very hard and did a good job throughout. Tom agreed that the SC had made a reasonable conclusion about the complaints that were made against the Hawkins campaign, but that also some of the states had handled their primary process in ways that didn't provide for real proportionality in their results.

CODE OF CONDUCT SPONSORSHIP

(1:52:35) Sid noted that this proposal is essentially the same proposal that GPVA voted to make in the spring of 2019, and that was narrowly defeated. Ryan spoke in favor of the proposal, saying that we needed it to be a professional organization. Kirit asked if this proposal had been changed to address deficiencies identified previously. Sid replied that one of the primary criticisms was that there was a need for anti-oppression training in the proposal. He said that he had raised that point with Ann Link, who had sent us the proposal, to see if the Women's Caucus would include such language. Jonah said he believes that things like this inevitably become a means of controlling people, but that's a price we have to accept. Tom said there's always been a lot of toxicity on the national lists, but that in the last few years there's been behavior that he would not previously have imagined, and he thinks the party can't continue unless it is addressed. He said that no Code of Conduct is perfect, but we have to take a stand

on some of these behaviors. Tina asked if there would be a forthcoming Ethics Committee proposal such as the one GPVA made last year.

A roll call vote was conducted and the co-sponsorship of the Code of Conduct proposal was agreed to with a single NO vote from Blue Ridge Greens and an abstention from webmaster Jonah Thomas.

(2:16:45) Regarding our next business meeting, Ryan suggested that perhaps shortly before the election to talk about manning polling places and other such organizing. Tina asked if that is typical in an election year. Dianne noted that teleconference meetings are so easy we should not hesitate to hold a meeting. Charlie suggested our next meeting should be in the spring when the weather will be better, given that at our last January meeting there was bad weather and people weren't able to get to it. Ryan said that we need one in January for officer elections, and that we should have one in the fall in connection with the election, either before or after. Further since all meetings for the foreseeable future will be teleconference, the weather shouldn't be an issue. Dianne Blais emphasized how important she feels our meetings are. Tom Yager seconded this, and said that we need a plan for post-election outreach. He said that many Biden voters are voting for him reluctantly, and we should be reaching out to the after the election. Sid agrees that meetings are good for us, even just for mutual support. Jonah said we should also focus on meetings that are not business meetings. Sid noted that in the absence of the corona virus we would be organizing campaign events for Hawkins/Walker. At this point we are stuck with whatever we can do online. Ryan noted that there seems to be strong support for an October meeting, so he and Tina would work on a date.

\*\*\*\*\*END MEETING\*\*\*\*\*