

State Meeting

Harrisonburg, Virginia

May 9, 1998

Present: Eric Angel, Sherry Stanley (note taker), Dale Diaz, Linda Martin, Jonathan Bates, Muriel Grim, Jack Balkwill, Jim Lowenstern, Bruce Busching, Charlie Jordan, Steven Krichbaum, Michael Key, Michael Jurka, Watt Bradshaw, Eric Sheffield (facilitator), Mike Maraney, Jana Cutlip, and Alex Cutlip.

1. Minutes from winter meeting --- Sherry read highlights, and we approved the minutes with no corrections.
2. Treasurer's report --- Eric Sheffield reported a GOV balance of \$496.76. Our most recent large expense was the newspaper, about \$300 for printing 4000 copies and mailing costs.
3. Report from the interim committee --- The ic has made two decisions since the winter meeting. The ic approved an opposition statement regarding U.S. violence against Iraq, really an endorsement of an ASGP statement. Also, the ic approved running an ad in the Charlottesville newspaper stating that Brandon Smith is not a member of the GPVA to facilitate formation of a local in that area. The ad did not appear because the paper declined it.
4. Introductions and reports from the locals --- Each person present described individual involvement in the Greens and local activities.

Northern Virginia Greens (NOVA) have adopted a highway. Their next meeting will combine clean-up and socializing. They recently got together for Ron Kahlow's suit against Best Buy for wrongful persecution. Ron lost his case but defended himself well. NOVA Greens continue to stay in touch through their informal newsletter.

Tidewater Greens, represented by Jack Balkwill, have not been active for about two years. Jack requested a list of everyone in our data base who claims membership in the Tidewater Greens so he can begin to organize an active local.

Valley Greens were recovering from their campaign. Michael Key had run for Harrisonburg city council. The election, just five days before the state meeting, had 30 percent of the voters voting for Michael. Turnout had been extremely low, but response to the campaign had been positive. Valley Greens hosted the state meeting and provided lunch.

Blue Ridge Greens started with the bare minimum of three members and now have seven. They have been involved in local events, including an Earth Day celebration and Local Colors, a diversity festival in Roanoke. They are forming committees such as a direct action committee, which has already been involved in the protest of Philip Morris, and a committee to respond to the proposed Interstate 73 (see reports below).

Rockbridge Greens have met every month since 1991. They hope to run a full slate of candidates for the Rockbridge Board of Supervisors in 1999 and are conducting house meetings and one-on-one conversations to form a basis for adopting a platform for that campaign.

5. Central Virginia Greens request for affiliation --- This new local met for the first time only one week before the state meeting. Aaron Feldman and Jana Cutlip had used data base lists of Greens who claimed membership in the Blue Mountain Greens and the Charlottesville Greens. At their first meeting they resolved to dissolve the BMG, which had not met regularly for more than two years, and the CG, which had never held a public meeting, and form a local for Albemarle and surrounding counties. At their first meeting they decided to ask for affiliation with the GOV/GPVA. Charlie Jordan expressed concern that the name Central Virginia is inappropriate. Several minutes of discussion followed with Jana defending the autonomy of the local to choose its own name. There was general support of her defense. Charlie requested inclusion in the minutes of his statement as follows: "My local represents the largest city and the largest population concentration along the topographic feature known as the Blue Ridge. The Blue Ridge Parkway actually enters the city of Roanoke. The Blue Ridge Public TV studio is located in the same city. Blue Ridge is the name of a Botetourt County suburb. The Blue Ridge Magisterial District includes several Bedford County suburbs. Franklin County elects members to the Blue Ridge Soil & Water Conservation District. Does anyone believe the name could be more properly employed elsewhere? Where on earth?" (The note taker wishes to make the point that no one had challenged the name of the Blue Ridge Greens.) With Charlie standing aside, we reached consensus on accepting affiliation with the Central Virginia Greens with best wishes for a healthy, active local in the Charlottesville area.

6. ASGP Santa Fe meeting report --- Linda Martin and Jonathan Bates represented us at the late April Association of State Green Parties meeting in New Mexico. At that meeting a new steering committee was accepted. They also set standards for rules for accreditation because of the New York problems but accepted both parties with one delegate from each organization that claims to be the New York Green Party. Linda invited anyone who is willing to join one of the ASGP committees. They adopted a timeline for adoption of a platform and have provided a website that will allow all of us to participate in forming the platform. They adopted a quick response system that will allow any state to suggest a response to a national or international occurrence. They declined to join merger efforts with GPUSA (Green Party USA) but did cosponsor the biodiversity conference GPUSA has organized. They agreed to meet yearly instead of twice yearly with more emphasis on regional meetings. During the weekend the ASGP used consensus and preference voting when they had to vote.

7. Invitation to regional meeting in Pennsylvania in July --- Virginia has been invited to participate in the Eastern Green Gathering, sponsored by the Pennsylvania Green Party, on the last weekend in July at Wilson Collge in Chambersburg,

PA. Other states/areas attending are Ohio, D.C., New York, New Jersey, and the emerging Green Parties of West Virginia and Maryland. Each organized state party will send up to eight delegates and emerging state parties up to three, the limit determined by available accommodations. The cost for the weekend is \$75. Anyone wishing to attend must contact Sherry Stanley (540-248-7721) and pre-pay by June 10. The agenda centers around a "Rethinking Corporations, Rethinking Democracy" seminar hosted by Richard Grossman of the Program on Corporation, Law, and Democracy. There will be an emphasis on legal procedures and documents for state parties. Jonathan, Sherry, and Michael committed to this meeting with several others suggesting possibility.

8. Greens of Virginia web site --- Eric Sheffield reported that our web site has floundered recently and is not always up-to-date. We asked Eric Angel to take this over and suggested a committee of Ron Kahlow, Eric A, Sherry, Jonathan, and Charlie to look into the future of our web site and possible changes.

9. GOV e-mail list proposal --- Eric Sheffield proposed that the Greens of Virginia e-mail list (GOV- LIST) shall be open to use only by members of the GOV/GPVA. Eric Angel agreed to be owner of the list to replace Linda Martin, who is moving out-of-state soon. Discussion included concerns about communicating with people without e-mail, a concern we agreed to bring to a retreat some time in the future. We reached consensus on this proposal.

10. Newspapers --- We agreed to continue with Sherry as editor of the newspaper and asked her to begin working on a summer issue, which we hope to have ready in July.

11. Election of Eric Angel as co-clerk --- Sherry nominated Eric as co-clerk. We reached consensus on his election. Eric will begin serving in this position immediately.

12. Michael Key as rep to panel discussion at Virginians for Justice conference --- NOVA Greens have agreed to help finance Michael's trip to Richmond in late May to participate in the panel discussion of gays and lesbians in politics. Eric S said he would send a check drawn from the NOVA account to help him pay for gas.

13. I-73 --- Charlie is representing the Blue Ridge Greens in a coalition task force focused on the proposed Interstate 73, which would run from Michigan to South Carolina. They are asking questions: is it needed? what about railroads next to the route? environmental degradation? possible other solutions? an upgrade to Route 220 instead of a parallel road? taxpayer cost? destruction of family farms? They are now setting up an agenda and will participate in public hearings. Sherry asked for an article for the newspaper.

14. Philip Morris --- Eric Angel, representing Blue Ridge Greens, joined a protest against Philip Morris on April 30 sponsored by INFAC, which has called for a boycott of all Philip Morris products (including but not limited to Kraft, Post, and Maxwell House). The boycott responds to Philip Morris's marketing to young people but also stretches to the global exploitation issues as well as the public health issues. Eric asked that locals get signatures to send to Philip Morris. He will provide the necessary materials.

15. Workshop for candidates --- Michael Key volunteered to be part of future workshops for Green candidates. The workshops would be conducted by former candidates and would include information on targeting audiences, dealing with the dreaded financial reports, etc. Charlie and Sherry will begin this process by compiling a check-list of candidate requirements for various offices.

16. Congressional elections --- Blue Ridge Greens had proposed two possible candidates and other locals had thought about entering this race, but no one has actually agreed to run. Therefore, we decided that the petition deadline prohibits our participating in these fall congressional campaigns.

17. Affiliation with national organizations --- Sherry proposed that we eliminate bylaws section XV. OTHER GREEN ORGANIZATIONS completely or replace it with language that does not lock us into affiliation with any named national organizations. Charlie presented a resolution speaking to this issue, which was not discussed (Appendix A). Because this issue is complicated by individual loyalty to particular national organizations and other concerns, Charlie asked that we refer this item to committee. Muriel asked that we strike XV and friendly amendments moved us to retain part D which reads, "Decisions and rules of the G/GPUSA, other Green state parties, or any other Green organization will in no way be considered binding upon the Green Party of Virginia." We reached consensus on using this language until the committee offers us something else. Eric Angel asked that locals screen the wording of the committee before our next state meeting. The committee is still open to membership; Jana, Eric A, Sherry, and Charlie volunteered. Jana asked for assurance this did not mean disaffiliation with GPUSA. Sherry said we have no one to serve as a delegate now, but this could be approved through the interim committee.

18. Meetings --- Sherry proposed that on a one-year trial basis, the Greens of Virginia hold two regular business meetings (one in the spring and one in the fall --- after any election day) and two "other" meetings. The "others" can include hosting a regional meeting or a retreat/teach-in or just a day of discussing all the structure, philosophical ideas we never get around to discussing. At these "other" meetings we will not take action on concrete proposals. The interim committee will meet formally and informally on a more regular basis to deal with continuing business. At the end of the year, the spring meeting, we will review this schedule and decide whether or not to keep it. Charlie expressed concern about meetings held near elections days; Sherry agreed to amend her proposal so that it reads as above. Linda said this helps to put authority back on the locals. We reached consensus on this proposal.

19. Bylaws amendment re locals --- Charlie Jordan proposed this bylaws amendment: IV. LOCALS OF THE GREEN PARTY OF VIRGINIA (GREEN LOCALS) A. A local is a group of three or more Virginia residents who meet together on some regular basis to advance the Ten Key Values (Article II). Locals may be defined geographically or by common

interest. [begin added text] Locals may accept members as they wish, consistent with their own rules. For the purpose of representation in the Green Party of Virginia, [end added text] a person can only claim membership in one local at any given time.

Sherry reminded us that this bylaw existed because of a situation revolving around a conflict of two former members of the GPVA and cautioned against situation-driven bylaws amendments. Eric A expressed concern about the language of accepting members. We referred this to the bylaws committee.

20. Muriel Grim requested a discussion centered around "Where does the GOV stop and the GPVA begin? Or should they be separated completely or joined completely? While I might feel that I think I know the answers, my answers may be completely different from . . . someone else's. I guess I'm asking to think about defining all this stuff on paper." Sherry proposed that to protect the Green name and our officers, we should immediately seek incorporation as a political party with a goal of completing this process by our fall meeting. We agreed to a committee consisting of Dale, Sherry, Jim, and Muriel and open to others to see how to go about our options in protecting our name and our members. We reached consensus on beginning the process of registering our name. We agreed to protect the whole name now and chop off parts if we choose to do so in the future.

21. Eric Sheffield reported that Peter Robinson had called him the night before the meeting asking to reapply for membership after we had accepted his resignation at our winter meeting. There was a good deal of discussion around this issue. Sherry said she did not feel Peter's resignation had been made in good faith. She proposed that "the GOV/GPVA delay acceptance of any membership application from Peter Robinson until resolution of charges which I intend to make (as per section V.C of the bylaws) should he apply for membership (end proposal). Those charges would include the following: On July 13, 1997, Peter Robinson was not honest and forthright with those present for the meeting of the GOV/GPVA. At that time Peter Robinson was the elected Press Secretary of the GOV/GPVA. At that time he was also aware that there was a likelihood that he would be indicted for serious crimes which he did commit. Peter Robinson did not inform those present of his personal situation which could have resulted in very damaging consequences for the GOV/GPVA. In fact he resisted resigning as Press Secretary and would have continued in that position had he not been pressured to resign for not performing his duties. I am fully prepared to make other more serious charges and pursue them as far as necessary to protect the GOV/GPVA. With Charlie, Jana, and Muriel standing aside, we reached consensus on accepting this proposal and informing Peter of our intentions.

22. Steve Krichabaum announced a lawsuit to stop three timber sales in Jefferson National Forest.

23. Blue Ridge Greens will host a one-day retreat for neighboring locals and Greens not presently affiliated with a local.

24. Time and place of next meeting --- we agreed to meet probably in August for a summer retreat but did not decide on a place.

Appendix A:

Resolution drafted by Charlie Jordan (amended from resolution originally endorsed by Blue Ridge Greens)

A Resolution regarding freedom and responsibility of Green organizations: Whereas, the Green Parties of the United States of America (GPUSA) has filed for recognition as a national political party, despite a lack of consensus among Greens that they should take that role; and Whereas, the Association of State Green Parties (ASGP) has never adequately defined its responsibilities to individual Greens, to Green locals, or to the community; and Whereas, Greens active in ASGP have claimed that they only deal with state organizations, without posting that policy or any others on their home page; and Whereas, the Federation of Green Parties of the Americas (FPVA) has begun deliberating its structure and procedure, with the possibility that national parties will hold most of the power; and Whereas, the fact that one-third of the population of the Americas is in the USA creates the possibility of bloc-voting or efforts to counteract it, in either case distorting the participation of our representatives; Be it resolved that the Green Party of Virginia endorses the following principles for ourselves and for any Green affiliates:

1. The power of any Green organization, deriving from the members and the community, belongs to the members and the community.
2. Every Green organization should make sincere and sustained efforts to include the input of individual members in decision-making, whether presented in the form of petition or other means.
3. Every Green organization should be free to conduct its own communication and negotiation with any other Green organization, including the decision of whether to support higher-level Green organizations.
4. Every Green organization that seeks the participation of other Green organizations should make its goals clear.
5. We ask our Green affiliates to adopt and support these principles