

Minutes – May 13, 2009
34th Legislative District Democrats
Executive Board Meeting

7:01 PM Chair calls the meeting to order.

Remarks from the Chair:

1. Committee Chairs need to remember to send notices of meeting and events to Jackie, Bill and Christi for membership notification.
2. After the last membership meeting the board needs to review its role as the executive board. Chair describes some areas that need improvement, including understanding that it is the membership's role to make the big decisions and the Board's role to follow to rules and bylaws and avoid personal confrontation.

Board takes a moment to discuss the events of the last membership meeting. Les Treall is encouraged, as Sergeant at Arms, to ask those in the back talking too much to move their discussion to the hall. Chair explains why the "Striker Amendment" was out of order.

3. Attendance by Board members at Outreach events has been low. Chair asks that all board members make an effort to go to these events and emphasizes their importance for membership recruitment and community involvement.
4. Chair is going on vacation on Friday. In his absence, Chris Porter will keep the Candidates Forum process moving.
5. The Seattle city mayor is attending tonight's meeting. Chair will moderate. The mayor will have five minutes for opening remarks, before questions. There will be no personal attacks or accusations. The board will not take position on the race tonight. Any position taken by the Executive Board could take power away from the membership, and the Chair strongly wants the membership to make the decision about this endorsement.

There is some confusion regarding a question from Ann Martin. Martin states that King County would like a couple of people to work at the rummage sale. Bill Schrier asks about changes to the bylaws and endorsement rules. He is told that changes are in the minutes from the membership meeting.

Lisa Plymate wants to know if other mayoral candidates can come to speak before the Executive Board. Chair states that if they ask they can come, but Mayor Nickels is the current mayor of Seattle, the Chair feels this is an opportunity for the Executive Board to hear directly from the Mayor about issues facing Seattle.

7:10 **Finance Committee Report – Walter Sive**

Sive's discussion centers on e-mail traffic regarding allocating \$500 to Fuse for their "Decline to Sign" campaign against Referendum 71. Because of this discussion, he would like Executive Board to take a renewed look at the state of finances for the district. Revenue as of last week leaves the district with a total of (1,435.79), and a balance of \$14,063.88. Chair asks if this includes the \$5,000 bequeathed to the district. It is included. Chair states that money needs to be removed from all totals. *[For the purpose of these minutes Nel's money is included in the totals.]* The net projected revenue was to be (\$4,434), resulting in a balance of \$11,065. In order to achieve \$11,065, the approved budget assumes \$13,000 in additional revenue and \$8,000 from the auction. The district spent aggressively to support Dow Constantine, Sherrill Huff and King County. Sive wants the Executive Board to address whether the current projected budget is realistic and whether it should be readdressed and presented to the membership. Chair allots five minutes for discussion.

There is much discussion. Discussion wraps with the following conclusions. The Finance Committee will take a formal look at the district's finances and put together a reasonable approach to the budget for the rest of the year, including projected campaign contributions. Upthegrove will be brought onto the Finance Committee to keep the committee in the loop regarding the progress of the membership drive. Beth Grieser and Christi Stapleton will put together a committee to address a decision regarding Nel's endowment. Kim Becklund volunteers to be a part of this. The two groups will present their results at the next Executive Board meeting in June.

7:30 **Fundraising Committee Report – Chris Porter**

Chris debriefs the Executive Board regarding his committee's first meeting. The donor lists have been distributed to previous donors. Requests have been sent for music for the party. The MAC has not been chosen yet, but there are good candidates. Location will most likely be at the West Seattle Nursery. Committee will outline a budget and submit this to Sive for the Finance Committee. The tentative date for the auction is Friday, August 21st, with an alternate date of Friday, August 14th. The 2009 donation form has been posted to the website. Jackie Dupras will put together the buttons. Schrier will post the logo once complete, and is working with Chris to put together a web site piece for the event. Porter then requests Executive Board commitments. Chair and First Vice Chair commit to finding five additional items. Stone commits to finding 3 items. The next committee meeting is June 2nd.

Leslie Harris, member of the 34th District, wants to know if a save the date post card has been budgeted once the date is nailed down. Porter says yes. Miki Meahan offers to do the save the date postcard. Porter needs phone numbers and e-mail addresses for the donor list. Doss says he will get the files with that contact information and give it to Porter and Upthegrove.

7:40 **Newsletter – Jackie Dupras**

She discusses the collation, which will cost \$150 more a month for printing the newsletter. The Executive Board voted to try this out last month but because of the insert, this was not possible. Chair wants to do it this month, because we did not get to test it this month. Jackie states the deadline is Sunday, May 24.

7:45 **Candidates Forum**

Chair debriefs the board regarding the planning meeting the previous night. Due to the volume of candidates and races, the group decided that since there is already a candidates forum for the King County Executive race and the district has already formally supported Dow Constantine, the our candidates' forum will not include this race. Time was allocated to all positions: 45 for the Seattle Mayor's race, 60 minutes for the Seattle City Council race, 25 minutes for the Burien City Council race, 10 minutes on the Port Commissioners race and 10 minutes on the City Attorney's race. The forum will be held from 7 – 10 pm during the June membership meeting. It will be the only business of the meeting, except the appointment of PCOs if needed. Chair states the following positions that need to be filled for the event: a moderator, timer, sergeant at arms, question committee and greeters for candidates, setup and publicity. Chris Porter will take lead on this event from this point going forward. Harris offers the Chair for the moderator position. Chair states he is willing if necessary. Weiss and Harris believe he is the only choice. Chair states the panel vetting questions is Ivan Weiss, Steve Karbowski, Kim, Cherssie, Marcee Stone, Justin Anderson, Leslie Harris and Jeff Upthegrove.

Weiss reminds the board that KCDCC will be hosting their own candidates' forum all day on Saturday, June 6th.

8:00 **Seattle City Mayor, Greg Nickels**

Chair describes the process for the evening then introduces the Mayor.

Mayor Nickels

He thanks the board for having allowed him the opportunity to speak. He has been proud of his service, eight years as mayor and four years on the King County Council. He has been really proud of things that have been accomplished. He believes that because of the recession in 2002 due to 9-11, which resulted in the loss of \$120 million from budget and 500 jobs, Seattle is better prepared this time. The city has added to human services and is taking care of families, because of established rainy day funds. The mayor had four priorities when he became mayor: create jobs and economic opportunity, save neighborhoods, youth violence and transportation. Nickels chairs the Sound Transit board and put light rail on the ballot. We will have a mass transit system that will connect 70% of population. He believes Seattle needs to create strong families and happy communities, take care of those without resources

and create housing for working families. He would be very honored to have the 34th district support.

Chair opens the floor for questions.

Richard Bartlett asks why he wants to replace the Viaduct with a tunnel.

Nickels – Eight years of debate and discussion. There is a point at which you have to decide. Whenever we have the next earthquake, it won't be good. Three years ago we had an explosion. After that Gov and Mayor sat down to solve the issues of moving goods and services and opening city to the waterfront. The tunnel will have four lanes, two in each direction, and may be able to manage it with tolls later, moving people on to mass transit. It is not exactly what he would like or the governor would like, but it is reasonable. Boston's "Big Dig" was a lot bigger than this, and they kept changing their mind as they did it. This is a straight line, and DOT will learn from Boston's mistakes.

Robin Hess asks about a study done years ago on the cable bridge option for the viaduct. He wants to know why the study was buried and the option was so quickly disregarded.

Nickels – All of the different options were looked at. That one was eliminated fairly early in the process, because there were a number of fatal flaws. It would not allow people being able to get off at the north and south ends of downtown, which is important.

Leslie Harris asks how come we have not figured out a link between Seattle Mayor's office, the schools and John Stanford Center. She adds that she wants to know why he does not use his bully pulpit to fix the schools. She would also like him to use the word "gangs."

Nickels It is not all "gangs." The school district is not his jurisdiction. He does not want to people to get confused between him and the Seattle School Board. The city invests \$15 million a year around the schools. The city is investing in quality preschools, Head Start programs, and eventually universal preschool for all kids. City invests in providing family support workers in all schools in case of family crisis and funding all the afterschool programs in middle schools and high school. We put our emphasis on academic achievement. The school district is just now embracing this idea. He has two roles with the schools; one is the bully pulpit for the levy program and to prod privately and publically. Maria L. Goodloe-Johnson is the first Seattle School Superintendent to recognize problems and wants to fix them. The State Legislature made some cuts that will hurt. The tax system does not generate revenue. Our state is 44th in the nation for spending per kids. There are a lot of issues that need to be addressed.

Kim Becklund wants to know about the Brooking Institution on metropolitan policy.

Nickels – The Brookings Institution has been looking at the nation's economy through metropolitan areas. These areas generate 75% of the country's gross domestic product (GDP). The federal government has no policy regarding metropolitan areas. The Brookings Institute thinks that the country needs to recognize economic power and invest in these areas so that our country can compete globally. For Seattle, its industry generators are technology and aerospace. If we invest smartly as a country, then we can do lots of solutions.

Kim wants to know if Congress is moving in this direction.

Nickels – He states that the President has spoken directly from this perspective regarding cities. Congress does not seem to get this concept as of yet. There is a political disconnect. If they invest in cities they do not make the news. They invest in the suburban areas and they make the news. Metro Seattle is 13% of land mass and 75% of state's GDP.

Jeff Upthegrove wants the mayor to explain his reluctance to speak with the Nickelsville encampment.

Nickels – He states that he led the effort in 2002 to get housing for low-income housing. 90% of shelter beds are in Seattle. He put \$40 million into housing. Tent City is there and has an agreement in place regarding settling and health code. When the folks wanted to build a new encampment and make it into a shantytown that was not helpful for the homelessness. Prior to his administration, the government would go out and clean out the homeless populations and throw out belongings. Nickels put in place protections to change this, and Nickelsville was created to protest against this.

Upthegrove adds that the homeless shelter on 3rd and Virginia just moved their entrance this morning. It serves 600 or 700 hundred people per day. They did this renovation under pressure from the Mayor's offer using resources that could have gone to help the people.

Nickels – Who operates the shelter?

Upthegrove states "The Adult and Family Services Center," and wants to know if the Mayor knew anything about this.

Nickels – Objects to the thought that his office would have anything to do with this. He promises to look into it.

Marcee Stone wants to know if Nickels wins the primary, will he come and speak at one of our general meetings.

Nickels – Yes.

Marcee Stone states that she is also with Washington Campaigns and that the City Council has come up with a plan that would allow for city elections to be able to run using city funds. She wants to know if he would you advocate for this.

Nickels – He helped set up this committee, when he was on the City Council. He supports the concept, but would need to see the details of plan because he wants to see if the matching funds element is still there. He would be very supportive of this if that were the case.

Ann Martin states that she saw him at the Climate Solutions Breakfast, and wants to know why he has taken such a high profile on the issue of climate change and what this means to the city of Seattle.

Nickels –When he ran in 2001, he thought it was an issue that was important and that the government was doing something about it. It was the first campaign promise broken by the Bush Administration. Puget Sound had a drought and had to urge people to shower together due to lack of snowmelt. The trend for snow pack is down. If we lose that snow pack we lose water and energy. He felt it was time for someone to stand up and say, “Seattle will find a way to reduce emissions.” Now we have a President that knows this is an issue. The cities around the country are offering support. 75% of fossil fuels burned are burned in cities. He also lobbied for block grant program, which brings \$6 million to Seattle.

Ivan Weiss asks the Mayor to talk about saving the industrial areas and pier 41 from development.

Nickels – The industrial areas are in SODO and Ballard/Interbay. The North Pacific fleet is in Ballard. We have great manufacturers to support. We want to preserve that job base, which is threatened by land value. Industry cannot compete with retail/commercial sectors. He teamed up with labor and took a look at this issue. Seattle historically had allowed 50,000 sqft for commercial in industrial areas. We reduced it to roughly 10,000 sqft. We have more work to do because industry is changing. We need to ask ourselves what is an industrial job in the 21st century and what its needs are. We could not do that if it has been converted to retail.

Chris Porter wants to know why it is bike to work month but the number of cyclists has not grown. He wants to know what the Mayor’s plan is to fix this.

Nickels – There is funding in place for new side walks and bicycle lanes. The Bicycle Master Plan passed for 50 miles of additional bike lanes. In the next year, there will be 20 -30 additional miles. He names various trails. He adds that there is an increase and showers and lockers available at all new businesses.

Miki Meahan would like him to address the issue of providing affordable day care and providing sustainable salaries for day care workers to limit turnover. She does not see how there can be “quality” and “affordable” day care if this issue is not addressed.

Nickels – He has been a supporter of providing a decent salary for many years. We have tried to work with providers. Trying to work with providers regarding education as well. The city does not have as direct a role as the state, but we are trying to support these efforts.

Les Treall would like to know if he would publically endorse restructuring the tax system in the County.

Nickels – He does not think that the Mayor of Seattle coming out against the current tax structure is news worthy. He would be happy to do it, though. We have got to get a system based on ability to pay. This is the crisis when we need to get it done.

Stu Yarfitz would like to know how the streetcars in Lake Union fit into the larger transportation picture.

Nickels – The second streetcar line is now funded. It will replace the light rail station on First Hill. The risk for light rail on First Hill would have been a disaster. We are going to connect First Hill, Capital Hill and the International District. The third street car line is replacing the water front streetcar with the modern streetcars. This will begin to build a network of street cars. The system will then interconnect and allow people to use the system to get to a lot of different places. There are other plans to connect Ballard and Fremont. We have looked at WS, but challenge is with the bridge. This is not mass transit; this is larger than a bus but a local system. Operating cost is also lower than the buses.

Christi Stapleton wants to know what the Mayor's plan in to fix transparency issues regarding high rates of arrest without underlying causes in minority communities.

Nickels – He brought a commission together about the accountability system. If someone feels they were badly treated they now have a way of addressing their grievances. The commission came up with 29 issues; the city has implemented all 29. If the police chief overturns OPA, he has to put it in writing. There is an auditor, Michael Spearman, in place to oversee the OPA whether they are seeing patterns that are disturbing. When Nickels became mayor he rebuilt training and that changes annually due to need. Training is mandatory. He thinks we have a good police department.

Stapleton wants to know if this means that OPA and police reports will become publically aired that are being held now.

Nickels –There are rules that govern what we can and cannot release. He cannot comment on any case specifics. He wants to see how well the 29 implemented issues work; it was just put in place after bargaining with the Police Union.

Chair states that is all the time available. Mayor Nickels thanks the board, asks for an endorsement and leaves.

8:53

New Business

Membership List Request - Tom Carr.

There is a motion to release the list Seattle City Attorney Tom Carr. Motion is seconded. Walter speaks for the motion. He has been a big supporter and done a great job. Ivan speaks for the motion. He thinks this is the perfect time to raise the bar to release this list to candidates. Stephen describes the new bylaws by stating that there are only two criteria for voting on this motion. Chair states that the board is obligated to decide. There is debate regarding the interpretation of the bylaw. Parliamentarian, Stephen Lamphear, states that board members cannot disagree with his decision and that there are only two criteria for voting on this motion: 1) that the person in question is a member and 2) that the list will not be used for commercial purposes. Chair disagrees. The question called by multiple people. Motion to vote, all in favor, unanimous. All in favor of Carr having the list, unanimously approved.

Washington Public Campaigns will host a dinner regarding public elections with Congressman Jim McDermott. Tickets are \$50 per seat, 10 seats for a table. Chair states this is historically supported individually, but not as a district. If there is a commitment before June 13, the cost is \$45. Chair, Treall, Martin, Plymate, David Ginsberg, and Dupras will all commit to going.

The Young Democrats have new leadership that has changed it around. They have asked that we support their candidate's forum and straw poll with \$250 dollars. We would get some votes and people that go would be able to buy additional votes. The money raised goes to sending them to a conference; they will cover the rest personally. Harris would rather that money sponsored a young candidate in this district Weiss agrees. Becklund wants to know if they are asking all the districts to do this, then moves to opt out for this year. Call the question. Board votes unanimously to opt out of contributing this year.

9:07

Good of the Order

Treall needs someone to staff the booth at the Burien Strawberry Fest for June 20 and 21. It is our booth. Chair will be there and there will be reaching out to others. Lamphear volunteers to take care of the banner.

Harris reports that Bruce Stotler has been injured. He has a leg infection and cannot drink for another week. He will be home in three weeks.

Chris Porter is coordinating Gay Pride KCDCC on June 28th past, present, future leaders that have supporter (Harvey Milk – Got Milk, Got Gregoire, Got Pork?) He is looking for volunteers to march. Harris thinks high schools would be a good place to recruit volunteers. Meahan volunteers to march.

Upthegrove announces on May 30th from 3 – 5 pm there will be a fundraiser for Dow Constantine and others at Mick Kelley's.

David Ginsberg invites everyone to his kick off on Thursday, May 28th at Youngstown.

9:13 Adjourned