

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

7:01 PM Call to order, Flag salute is led by Rep. Sharon Nelson.

Adoption of the agenda and minutes of April meeting: moved, seconded, passed unanimously.

Chair's Report

- White Center Spring Clean – Saturday, May 16 from 8:30am to 2:00pm starting at 1615 SW Cambridge Street
- Town Hall Meeting with Joe McDermott, Eileen Cody and Sharon Nelson – Saturday, May 16 at 10:00am at the Jim Wiley Community Center, 9800 8th Avenue SW
- Candidates Questions panel for the June Candidates Forum at the June Membership Meeting – Tuesday, May 19 at 7:00pm, location to be determined, check web site for details (www.34dems.org)
- Healthcare Panel – Tuesday, May 26 at 7:00pm at the Renton Carpenter's Hall, 231 Burnett Avenue North, Renton, WA 98057
- Mother's March for Healthcare for All – Saturday, May 30th at 12:30pm, 20th Avenue S and Yesler Street.
- Inspire Candidates Forum for the King County Executive Race – Monday, June 1 from 7:00 – 9:00 pm, Fauntleroy Community Church of Christ, 9140 California Ave SW, West Seattle

First Vice Chair – no report

7:11 **Brian Bennet – Burien City Council**

Bennet is looking for an endorsement from the 34th district, and has already garnered early support from several prominent 34th district members. He is a lawyer and environmentalist. He believes that the council should represent everyone equally regardless of wealth. He would like to work to see continued business development that has been done to transform 152nd and 153rd, turning Burien into the “cool” place to live.

7:20 **Legislative Review – Eileen Cody, Sharon Nelson, and Joe McDermott**

Important bills that passed this session:

- Civil rights extended to transgender persons
- Extension of Domestic Partnership Rights Equaling Married Couples Rights: a referendum has been filed against this
- Washington State Compact Voting: a referendum has been filed against this.
- The restoration of a felon's right to vote in Washington state elections
- Pay Day Lending bill to reform pay day lending practices
- Extension of unemployment benefits

Important bills that did not pass:

- Internet Voting for Overseas Military Personnel
- Election Day voting registration

Important Action taken this Session:

- SR 2661, the redefinition of “basic” K-12 education and its funding structure, is still in progress with deadline in 2018.
- Unfunded mandates for K-12 education were addressed in three bills. Only one bill made it through, but includes pieces of all three bills.
- General Assistance Unemployed was saved.
- Health and Human Services needs to cut around \$1.4 billion, resulting in 40,000 people being cut from state funded healthcare by January.
- Children’s state funded healthcare was saved.
- The ferry caucus worked to get more boats for the ferry system.

The legislators explained their votes for SR 5321, which provides sales tax revenue up to \$50 million to the city of Seattle if, and only if, the city annexes surrounding unincorporated King County areas. They explained that the legislation addressed a number of issues and was wholly supported by the city of Burien.

Sen. McDermott responded to a question regarding a retrospective rating fund for the BIA, stating that there had been legislation to regulate these types of funds, requesting that they report to the public how much money they spent and where it was spent, but the Republicans stopped the legislation, stating that was too burdensome a request.

Rep. Sharon Nelson answered a question regarding funding for life boat projects stating that unfortunately very few of these projects would be given funding, but named a number of alternative sources of revenue still being vetted to fund the other projects.

Rep. Eileen Cody was specifically asked to explain her support and the nature of a bill regarding nursing student applications. She explained that the idea was to form a waiting list for qualified applicants to nursing programs to reduce the burden and expense of reapplying to the program multiple times. The bill would neither have cost any money nor provided any advantage to the wait listed applicants. It didn’t pass.

8:05 **New Business** – candidates, 3 minutes max.

Robert Rosencrantz, candidate for Seattle City Council, Position 8

The 34th district endorsed him four years ago. He is endorsed by Eileen Cody and Joe McDermott. He is running to rebuild the job the market and economy.

David Bloom, candidate for Seattle City Council, Position 4

He has 30 years of experience as a minister and community organizer. For 20 years, he has worked for low income housing. He believes that investment in huge capital projects and building a jail, while closing schools, is backwards.

Jack Block, Jr, candidate for Burien City Council, Position 7

He is running against Sally Nelson. He believes the city is being divided based on income and is concerned about the proposed cuts to law enforcement. He would like to address issues with the third runway and rehabilitating Burien’s older housing stock.

Marty Kaplan, candidate for Seattle City Council, Position 6

He wants to rebuild Seattle’s economy, by keeping jobs in Seattle instead of seeing them go to Snohomish and Kent. He wants to strengthen neighborhoods and transportation. He believes we need leaders like him that aren’t afraid to look to the future.

Sally Bagshaw, candidate for Seattle City Council, Position 4

She is a Democrat from the 43rd district. She was the chief civil deputy at the Public Attorney's Office. She wants to make this a community where there are jobs, a transportation system that works, public safety, and align our goals with the public education system.

Peter Holmes, candidate for Seattle City Attorney

His has been a lawyer for 25 years, and a member of the Board for the Office of Professional Accountability for seven years. He believes we are wasting resources we cannot afford on a "nanny state." He pledged to seek lasting solutions, quoting President Obama, "...we must make sure that our leaders are conducting their work in the light of day."

Senator Fred Jarrett, candidate for King County Executive – scheduled, but not present

8:29 **PCO Appointment**

Tara Jo Heinecke (Marian) - She was the chair of the 33rd district, and has worked in labor and politics for roughly 30 years. She is approved unanimously.

8:30 **Resolution Opposing the Closure of the Evergreen Pool** – moved and seconded.

Cherisse Luxa speaks for the resolution. There was no speaker against. The Evergreen Pool is too important to the community to close. The resolution passes unanimously.

8:35 Chair recognized the many, many candidates and elected officials in the room.

Proposed Bylaws Recommendation

Earl presents the new proposed changes to the bylaws. The district will give a list of PCOs to other PCOs, because it is public record. The membership lists will only be given to endorsed candidates or campaigns. The Executive Board may release the list to elected officials by a two thirds vote. A list of eligible voters will be given to candidates for open positions in the district.

[Point of Information: As a PCO, can I get a list of all the members in my precinct? Answer: Work with the membership committee to generate that list for you.]

A motion to approve the rules is moved and seconded.

[Point of Information: Can a member get a full contact list of the membership? Answer: No. Anyone can become a member, and the idea is to secure the entire membership list so that it could not be used for the wrong reasons.]

Luxa offers an amendment quoted from the bylaws of the 36th district to provide the membership list to interested members for the purpose of organizing. Ivan Weiss speaks against this amendment stating that the 36th district had already tightened up that rule, because they ran into the same issues that the 34th has. Michael Taylor-Judd speaks for the amendment. He asks to amend Luxa's amendment to include a stipulation that a member would have to be a member for a year. Chair calls for a vote on the amendment to the amendment: 35 for, less than 10 against. The amendment to the amendment passes.

Chair asks for someone to speak against the new amended amendment. Stone speaks against the amendment pointing out that the Executive Board has vetted these bylaws and that once the membership list is released there is no way to control what happens to it. Chair calls for a vote on the amended amendment: 26 for, 29 against, amendment fails.

Luxa offers a new amendment: "To foster community and enhance grassroots political organizing, all members are entitled to and will have access to the membership list for non-commercial use

upon a two-thirds vote by the Executive Board.” She speaks for the amendment stating that this would give the Executive Board the ability to screen persons trying to get the list.

[Point of Information: Does the list include phone numbers or is it just a mailing list? Answer: The list includes all contact information phone, email and addresses.]

Chair calls the vote: 23 for and 18 against. Amendment passes. Chair calls the question on the amended proposed bylaws: 47 for and 0 against. The proposed bylaws pass.

9:05

Proposed Endorsement Rules

Sive presents the proposed endorsement rules stating that the rules allow the membership to make a more informed vote and a private vote. Sive goes through the rules and talks about how this process improves on the past, including detailing the changes to multiple endorsements, emphasizing sole endorsements over multiple.

Chair asks if there are questions about the process. There is debate regarding the July membership meeting being the endorsement meeting because there is concern that it will not give PCOs and members time to mobilize. Chair explains that our July meeting is on July 8, this year, and that there is already a plan in place to get materials quickly to the PCOs for distribution to the district. Earl adds that the filing date is after our June 5 meeting. Chair further explains that there was just not enough time due to the packed schedule for the May meeting. Chair adds that the time frame can be adjusted every year. Taylor-Judd asks that it be noted in the minutes.

NOTE: The endorsement meeting does not have to be in July every year and will be reconsidered for next year.

Chair recognizes Weiss, who moves his “Striker Amendment.” The “Striker Amendment,” written copy provided at meeting, takes the proposed endorsement rules by the Executive Board and rewrites them as a whole into a new set of rules. Chair rules the “Striker Amendment” out of order and explains that the 34th district bylaws state that membership must see changes to the bylaws in writing ahead of any meeting.

Taylor-Judd wants to know why the last membership meeting fell on a religious holiday and if all of the Executive Board members were present at the last meeting and if they all voted for the proposed rules. Chair states that all members were not present at the last board meeting, but that they were given ample opportunity to comment and review these proposed changes. He then apologizes for the last meeting falling on a holiday and expresses intent to avoid major religious conflicts in the future. Miki Meahan states that all Executive Board members work very hard on behalf of the membership and that every decision is weighed as to whether it would impact the membership positively or negatively.

Chair takes executive privilege to discuss why these changes are so important, reiterating that this process will save time and increase the value of the district’s endorsement in the long run and that it is really not a big change from the current process. Weiss asks the body to vote the endorsement changes down. Chair hands the gavel to First Vice Chair Kim Becklund, then speaks for the motion.

Liz Giba proposes an amendment to delete paragraph 3, “Special Endorsement Meeting – The Executive Board, by two-thirds vote, may schedule endorsements for specific races or ballot measures at any regular meeting of the 34th District.” Chair asks if 10-days written notice would make a difference. Giba say no. Lamspear speaks for the amendment stating paragraph 3 changes the process by removing the two thirds vote in favor of a simple majority. Chair calls the question, 19 for and 17 against. Paragraph 3 is stricken from the proposed rules.

Weiss proposes to add paragraph “7.3 Voting” from the “Striker Amendment” as written. Weiss speaks for the amendment. He thinks the new rules would put an over reliance on process and that every candidate that comes before this body would not get an up or down vote when they should.

[Point of information: Are we saying that every candidate must have a two thirds vote in order to get an endorsement in these new rules? Answer: Yes.]

Lamphear speaks against the amendment stating that process is what democracy is all about, protecting the minority opinion and providing accountability. He states that the proposed rules are no different than the process used to appoint Joe McDermott. Chair asks if there is another speaker for the amendment, seeing none, he calls the question: 12 for and 28 against. The amendment does not pass.

Chair calls on Kathy Minsch who calls to question to end debate: 38 for, 0 against. moves to vote on the proposed endorsement rules as amended, 33 for, 8 against. Proposed endorsement rules pass.

9:36 **Good of the Order**

Jordan Royer, running for position 8 Seattle City Council. www.jordanroyer.com

David Miller, running for position 8 Seattle City Council. www.millerforseattle.org

Bobby Forch running for position 8 Seattle City Council. (no website found)

Nick Licata, running for position 6 Seattle City Council. www.nicklicata2009.com

James Donaldson, running for Mayor of Seattle. www.teamdonaldsonc.om

Kelly Drake talks about Young Democrats of America. They are holding a straw poll on June 18 to support Dow Constantine. www.ydwa.org

Craig Salins asks that you come out to an the Washington Public Campaigns awards dinner on Saturday, June 13 to discuss fair elections in the US Congress hear Congressman Jim McDermott on Fair Elections Now Act in Congress.

Les Treall, Outreach Committee Chair, asks if anyone could donate a microwave oven to the Burien Home for Homeless Women.

Dow Constantine kick off is on June 4th 5:30 – 7:00 PM, free. www.dowconstantine.org

Stephen Dzielak asks everyone to come for the Mothers’ March for Healthcare for All, there will be a rally at Westlake Park right after the march.

David Ginsberg campaign kick-off on Wednesday, May 28 at Youngstown. www.davidginsberg.org

9:54 Adjourned