

September 9, 2023 - DSA Business Meeting

Present: Sandy Burch, Tony Davis, Arthur Endsley, Sarah McClain, David Jones, Mark Anderlik, Catherine, David Q., Brian Myers, Steven Clark, Catherine Parke, Dave Ashworth, John Wolverton, Rachel Calderon, Chester

Native Land Acknowledgement

Introductions

Roles:

- **Facilitator:** Sandy
- **Time-keeper:** Tony
- **Progressive stack:** Mark
- **Note-taker:** Arthur

Motion to approve the agenda (Mark, Rachel), approved

Motion to approve last meeting's minutes (Dave, Rachel), approved

Treasurer's Report (Sarah McClain).

- We have \$6443.90, of which \$5,276.58 belongs to the Legislative Action Group
 - Dave A: How much comes in from National in dues?
 - Sarah: About \$400; would like to mention that Working Groups do have printing allocations (\$60 for Ecosocialist, \$30 for Labor, \$40 for others)
 - Mark: Everyone should take a careful look at the Solidarity-based dues; i.e., paying 1% of your income in dues instead of the standard dues
 - David Q: I think the Solidarity-based dues are consistent with supporting the real good work done by DSA Labor, Housing working groups nation-wide; there's a lot of good work that needs support

Unhoused Neighbors Union (Mark A. and David Q.)

- David Q: A handful of DSA members and community members have been working on an Unhoused Neighbors Union; Sunday, 6:00-8:00p alongside Food Not Bombs service at the Povarello Center. Daniel Carlino and Kristen Jordan have also been involved. Is there a way we can officially support this Union? Draw more resources and DSA members into this effort?
 - Need organizing training, needle disposal, other services
- Mark A: If you're interested, talk with us. We also need to come up with a strategic plan for this group. Kevin Hunt is working diligently on creating legislation at City Council to prevent the clearances.
 - David A: What kind of governance structure is there?

- Mark A: If you show up on Sunday at 6:00p, you're part of the group. It was a big step to take a formal vote on the name of the Union.
- Rachel: Maybe we could get involved with Food Not Bombs once a month; bringing a dish.
- John W: Mark, did you say Montana Glass? Are they involved?
 - Mark A: No idea.
- David Q: Kristen Jordan's proposal is to establish multiple sites across the City, with 35-person limits; proposal is to have no security on site, have the camps self-organized, but that's controversial.
 - John W: Franklin to the Fort neighborhood is bearing the brunt of unhoused problem; distinct issue of classism in how the City deals with it
 - Sandy: John, you're saying you don't think Jordan's proposal will go anywhere because of the current composition of City Council?
 - John W: Yes, but I think it's a great way to start a conversation about this. It's not about this one particular issue, it's about the slow march of pushing all lower-income people (housed or not) into a small area of the City.

City Council Endorsements

- If you want to canvass for Gwen Nicholson, go to her website.
- *Motion to endorse Sam Kulla for City Council representative, Ward 3 (Arthur, Mark), approved*
 - Arthur: Sarah, Mark, Sandy and I interviewed Sam.
 - Mark: My concern is whether or not he is serious, as he's up against Gwen Jones; it's a big effort. He seems to recognize that and is gearing up for the battle.
 - Rachel: And Sam Kulla is a tenant; he lives on my block.
 - Mark: And he's a member of the Tenants' Union.
 - Chester: He hasn't been showing up to meetings much but beyond that I don't know.
 - Mark: I will say that Gwen Nicholson has been coming to every City Council and Unhoused Neighbors Union.
 - Sarah: We did have a list of demands that we'd want candidates to agree with: Unionization...
 - Arthur: His survey response to "Do you identify as a democratic socialist?" was: "As much as practically possible, we need to take care of each other. I don't label myself as an adherent to any political party, religion, or ideology, but I respect and tend to agree with the majority of socialist ideology, despite the unfortunate social stigma and misunderstandings surrounding the term." He's also a member of a union.
 - John: As Mark noted, I think Sam Kulla has not been a very serious candidate, maybe that's changed in the past few weeks. We have been meeting with City Council members and Gwen Jones has been meeting with us. Even though she's not seeking our endorsement, she did meet with Arthur, Jackie, and I about

smoothing over some of the rough edges. My point is: Do we want to have the perfect be the enemy of the good? Gwen Jones is someone who has taken the time to meet with us and understand our concerns. What are his chances of his winning? If we endorse Kulla and that's on his website, does that make it harder to work with Gwen in the future?

- Mark: The objections that Gwen Jones and other liberal councilors have made in the past was about decorum, not about politics. I don't think an endorsement would alter our relationship with Gwen Jones. I do have personal experience with her throwing another group under the bus...
- Arthur: I think John's concern is valid, we do have a good working relationship with Gwen Jones. But when she said she didn't want our endorsement she also asked to meet with us. My hope is that we can continue to have a good working relationship with her. I think she understands the politics of Missoula; that we are going to have to endorse an apparently genuine socialist candidate.

Electoral Needs (Sandy and Mark)

- Sandy: Restructuring opportunity: A proposed Solidarity Committee
 - Steering Committee and Working Groups end up spending a lot of time talking with each other; result is that the majority of the membership is not engaged and voting on campaigns.
 - Proposed Solidarity Committee (5 members minimum) would research and write a campaign plan for approval by the Chapter; Chapter votes to approve or reject; campaign then directs activities of the Steering Committee and Working Groups
 - Mark: I think this restructures what the Working Groups do but it also allows, for example, work supporting the Unhoused Neighbors Union. It allows for people who are hot about an idea to get 4 other members involved in research and to write up a campaign proposal.
 - Dave J: I see the potential for Solidarity Committee members to have their efforts wasted if they don't get good feedback from the Chapter prior to a vote.
 - Sandy: Good point. I think the way to avoid that is to have good communication between Steering and Solidarity.
- Sandy: To test this out, I would like to propose an Electoral Committee...
 - This Fall, we need to turnout members to volunteer for candidates' canvassing. This will require 1-on-1 phone calls to be most impactful.
 - Also need to build relationships with candidates, sitting City Council members
 - Planning for future city and climate campaigns; need to prepare the City for future waves of climate refugees.
- Arthur: I'm a little confused as to the difference between the Solidarity Committee and the Electoral Committee.
 - Sandy: The Electoral Committee is a type of Solidarity Committee. The "Solidarity Committee" is a model for this type of work.
 - *Motion to extend the time on this topic (Arthur, Mark), approved*

- *Motion to form an Electoral Committee (Mark, Arthur), approved*
 - Sandy: Who would like to be on that committee? *Mark, Arthur, David Q., Steven, Sandy*
 - Sandy: Would really like to have someone from EcoSoc on this... I do think that a lot of the City-level work is very climate-related.

EcoSocialist Working Group Report (Dave J.)

- Tabling at upcoming Climate Expo; we'll have some flyers to hand out.
- Still working on the Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty.
- College Democrats' platform says they want to pursue municipalization of the electrical grid, so that seems like a potential collaboration.
- Chester: Have you reached out to the Green Party?
 - Dave J: Have not, is there still a Green Party in Missoula?
 - Chester: Don't know about Missoula but there is one in Montana.

Common Good Missoula Working Group

- David Q: There's a Mayor's Accountability Forum coming up on October 5, at 6:00p. There's also a Leadership Intensive training coming up next week.
- John W: On Tuesday, November 14 they are hosting a film related to the Neighborways group.

Pro-Housing Missoula (John W.)

- Working with Daniel Carlino on proposal for 4-plex and smaller developments. North Missoula Community Development Center has helped with this, getting a grant from Welcoming Neighbors Network. Overall, we're focused on the City's growth policy and code modernization. Also working on the parking mandate.

Editorial Working Group (Tony)

- We've had two editorials recently, one on the climate crisis by Robbie; got permission to include a climate-related editorial cartoon by Nick Anderson.
- Next meeting is Tuesday, September 19 at 6:00p.

Statewide Working Group (Mark)

- Last Statewide meeting was in June... We had committed to educating ourselves about ballot initiatives; getting no response from the group we had wanted to get training from.

Labor Working Group (Steven)

- We have suspended our Strike-Ready Campaign because the Teamsters approved their contract in August. Thanks to everyone involved!
- There are some upcoming solidarity opportunities... The upcoming UAW strike... The rail unions' contract is set to expire in November.
- We just had an educational meeting on Taft-Hartley...

- Next meeting will be the first Thursday of October, at Good Works Place.
- Rachel: There is a national day of action to support unionization efforts at Starbucks, this Thursday; looking for volunteers to stand outside of the Starbucks at Brooks, solicit signatures on a petition to ask Starbucks to negotiate in good faith with workers.
 - Mark: The location is going to be Grant Creek.
 - Rachel: Morning time slots are really important.
- Steven: Can we send out a Chapter-wide e-mail, since this is coming up soon?

Motion to extend meeting schedule by 10 minutes (Steven, Mark), approved

Leadership/ Organizer Training (Sandy)

- Hayley Banyai-Becker will be visiting Missoula again to help train next year's Steering Committee members
- Curriculum and turnout plan TBD
- Proposed date is for December 2nd: a full day with food provided and a social hour
- DSA National Leadership Intensive training is coming up, September 23 and 24, 11:00a - 4:00p

Regional and National DSA

- Regional leadership meeting on September 26 at 6:00p, on Zoom

Motion to adjourn (Mark, Tony), approved