

August 29, 2023 - DSA Steering Committee

Present: Sarah McClain, Robbie Liben, Arthur Endsley, Tony Davis, Jackie Reimers, Sandy Burch, Hayley Banyai-Becker

Recorded by: Arthur Endsley (intermittent Zoom connection due to thunderstorm)

Motion to approve agenda (Robbie, Tony), *approved*

Motion to approve last meeting's minutes (Sarah, Jackie), *approved*

Leadership Cohort

- Could be an opportunity to connect with state-wide leaders; a state-wide structure test
- Should consider a hybrid meeting format
- Leadership intensive weekends... We do have a full set of leadership training materials ready.
- 2 days or 1 day?
- Need some help with...
 - Curriculum? *Sandy and Jackie*
 - Turnout? (Calling people.) *Sarah and Arthur*
 - Could be generating a list of members to call, assigning current Steering members
- Sarah: When/where is this happening?
 - Robbie: Last we talked about this it was supposed to be mid-December
 - Sandy: If not in December, then in January
 - Robbie: Saturday, December 2nd would be our General Meeting, we could do it right after
 - Sandy: Or instead of! Start at 10:00a, that is, in place of the General Meeting? *General agreement* Wrap-up at...4:00p?
 - Hayley: For regional organizing retreats, we do: Breakfast at 9:00, an hour lunch, then 1:30p to 5:00p in the afternoon
 - Sandy: And potluck in the evening?
- Sarah: We don't have any money budgeted for this... Or we could take donations.
 - Sandy: We may be able to use State-wide organizing funds if we make this a state-wide thing.
- Jackie: We may want to contact the Bozeman Co-chairs...
- Robbie: If it's going to be a state-wide thing, we might want to find housing for people coming from out of chapters.
 - Sandy: And raising some money for gas!
- Tony: This is a training... Is there need for a curriculum, text, slide presentations?
 - Jackie: Yes, we would be taking a lot of the text from the DSA Regional training back in June
 - Tony: Does that need to be winnowed down?

- Hayley: I can work with anyone who is interested in curriculum...

Electoral

- Jackie: UAW is planning on striking if they don't get what they want... There is a place to sign-up for solidarity but there are no local UAWs so we don't have any local organizing plans. There is a labor action on Starbucks, September 14, so we'll put that on our agenda.
 - Sandy: What was the subject line about the UAW pledge?
 - Arthur: I did get that e-mail, but it didn't have a link to a UAW pledge
- Sandy: Arthur, is there a plan for the September 23 Climate Expo?
 - Arthur: Dave Jones said he would register and plan to work the table.
 - Sandy: It would be nice if there was a way we could talk about the City Council elections... What we can say is: "I'm a member of Western Montana DSA, we're fighting to end the climate crisis, and that's why we're working so hard on City Council elections..."
 - Arthur: Maybe we could have a sign that says: "Ask us about our City Council endorsements!"
 - Sandy: This is totally uncharted territory for me...
- Sandy: Incidentally, the City of Honolulu just voted to sue Exxon Mobil, showing the power of what an empowered City Council can do. That example might get people excited about City Council elections.
 - Arthur: We should resolve the question of how we might talk about endorsements, though, because we spend a lot of time and energy on making these endorsements...
 - Sandy: At the very minimum, what the endorsement means for these candidates... It's having regular members, exposed to a candidate during the General Meeting, hearing about that candidate, getting excited, and talking about the candidate in their social circles. It also builds accountability, should these candidates get elected. I am going to contact Gwen Nicholson and see if she wants DSA National endorsement as well.
 - Robbie: Is it okay to put our endorsements on the website? Can we e-mail members about this? If I recall correctly, e-mailing non-members about endorsements wouldn't be allowed.
 - Sandy: Our endorsements are public information, so we can say to anyone that we endorsed them, but... I just realized I dropped the ball on figuring out what you, Robbie, can say in e-mails... I think we can tell our members to volunteer for, to vote for Gwen but we can't do that for non-members... Again, I really doubt that saying we endorsed a candidate is bad, but I need to double-check.
 - Robbie: Understood. I'll wait to hear back on this before inserting anything into our Newsletter.
 - Robbie: And what about our interview with Sam Kulla?

- Arthur: The interview with Sam went well; Jackie, Sandy, Mark, Sarah, and I were there. He very much shares our values and I will be making a motion to endorse Sam.
- Sandy: And other candidates?
 - Arthur: In Ward 6, Sean Patrick McCoy did not respond by e-mail but did fill out our calendar poll.
 - Sarah: I think that in Sean's survey he said he was not seeking the Western MT DSA endorsement...
 - Arthur: Thanks for catching that—I should make it clear that if he doesn't want the endorsement, there's no need to consider the endorsement.
 - Sandy: Sometimes there's a value to an interview even if they don't want our endorsement, so we can make a connection... Candidates are already natural leaders.
 - Sarah: It seems like the polite thing to do just to go through with it since he filled out the poll.
 - Arthur: Great, I'll copy Sarah and Sandy on the response to Sean, with a suggested interview date and time.

Note about E-mail

- Robbie: Just want to discourage people from using our Gmail address; use info@westernmtdsa.org address.

Motion to adjourn (Arthur, Robbie), approved