

November 4, 2023 - DSA Business Meeting

Present: Robbie Liben, Tony Davis, Arthur Endsley, Dave Jones, John Wolverton, Mark Anderlik, Daniel Carlino, Sarah McClain, Sandy Burch, Liam, David Q.

Roles:

- **Facilitator:** Sandy
- **Time-keeper:** Robbie
- **Progressive stack:** Tony
- **Note-taker:** Arthur
- *Native Land Acknowledgement*

Introductions

- *Guidelines for Respectful Discussion*
- *Motion to approve the agenda (Mark, Arthur), approved*
- *Motion to approve last meeting's minutes (Mark, Robbie), approved*

Treasurer's Report (Sarah)

- \$6,752.90 in the bank account
 - \$5,204.40 for the Legislative Action group
 - \$100 was donated to the Schools for Chiapas Fund, which is in the budget approved by the chapter. There's also an article about in the Newsletter this past month.

Electoral Committee Report (Sandy)

- Door-knocking, how is it going?
 - Mark: Went door-knocking for Sam Kulla. Wasn't expecting much but, after door-knocking, I think he has a real good chance. Talked to a woman in a very nice house in the University District; she used to be a Republican but now is "an Independent" so you never know who you're going to meet.
 - John: I was one of the people who voted against our endorsement because of our working relationship with Gwen Jones. If you haven't seen it, you should review the Tenants' Union candidate questionnaire.
 - Liam: It's on the Tenants' Union website. What kind of issues are you hearing when you're door-knocking?
 - Arthur: I was canvassing along Stephens, where there is a lot of rental housing, a lot of young renters. Housing affordability and cost of living were the major issues.

- Liam: The City budget also gets attention.
- Mark: This weekend is the last opportunity to get out there for these candidates. Sam Kulla is canvassing tomorrow (Sunday), meet him at 11:00a at Bernice's Bakery.
 - Daniel: Gwen is meeting canvassers at 10:00a and 1:30p at Break Espresso on Sunday.

Montana DSA Organizer Training (Sandy)

- On December 2nd (Business Meeting moved to December 9), we will have an Organizer Training.
 - *The sign-up link is in our November Newsletter*
 - Fish-bowl: 3 volunteers, one pretends to be an organizer, one pretends to be the organized (voter, potential union member, etc.). Role-play volunteers needed! *Mark, Arthur volunteered*
- Robbie: Do we want to put this in the Newsletter, i.e., open it up to people who didn't RSVP?
 - Sandy: I don't know.
 - Mark: Where is it?
 - Sandy: It's at Good Works Place, from 10:00a to 5:00p, lunch provided and then a potluck.
 - Sarah: We've reserved the place from 10:00a to 8:00p.
- Sandy: Daniel and Liam, are you considering attending this training?
 - Daniel: Need to check my schedule.
 - Liam: Considering it!
- Sandy: It is a state-wide meeting, we're hoping to have DSA members from across Montana attend. If travel costs or housing are a barrier, let us know.

Palestine Solidarity Actions Report

- Today: International Day of Solidarity March for Palestine; November 4 at 12:00p in front of the Missoula County Courthouse.
- Tony: I found the teach-in materials were really good. They could be adapted from a socialist perspective.
- Robbie: I also liked the teach-in. Happy to add resources on Palestine to the website.
- Mark: Casey Murphy (sp?) on Voice of the People... Highly recommend listening to her interview. She had a lot of accurate and authoritative information. If anyone wants to be a peace-keeper or marshal at the march today, talk to me or Robbie.
 - Also Wednesday this coming week, Robbie and I are hosting a workshop on de-escalation.
- Tony: Ryan Zinke has written an editorial calling for a ban of Palestinians from entering the U.S., expulsion of those who have received visas since October 1.
 - Robbie: Not just an editorial, he's actually introduced a bill to expel Palestinians from the U.S.

- Sandy: On December 3, from 10:00a to 12:00p, there's a State-wide hybrid meeting to consider a pressure campaign with an achievable demand.
 - Tony: What are some examples of achievable demands?
 - Sandy: We would need to do some research to figure that out.
 - John: I think this is a good-time reiterate something I said at our last discernment. Sometimes it feels like we're always responding to each new crisis instead of keeping our eyes on the big things that are affecting people, humanity, civilization, the earth...
 - Sandy: I agree we shouldn't be running from one shiny thing to another... From an ecosocialist perspective, war is a big polluter. The abortion solidarity work that we've done was a great opportunity to recruit people. But I think that conversation about capacity is an important one.
 - John: Certainly. And I think this is a conversation for a retreat. If we think this is a way to recruit people... Where is the balance on addressing these long-term issues?
 - Robbie: I agree with you, John; at the same time, I think the utility in participating in these processes is that we get time at the microphone and we can put a socialist perspective on it. Getting the crowd involved, informing them of the even-bigger picture.
- Mark: Nobody is writing the road-map to revolution in this country, we're creating it as we go. I would say that the December 3 meeting is for those already involved in DSA state-wide. It really helps people like Dylan in Deer Lodge, who's trying to take things further. It's a way of supporting them. I wonder if we could add to the agenda a discussion about the pros and cons of running someone against Tester in the Democratic Primary. And not necessarily with the aim of winning but to elevate the debate about democratic socialism, rather than just having a debate between liberals and ultra-conservatives.
- David: Do we have a banner or a flag, so people can see who is in solidarity with them?
 - Mark: I have it with me today.

Ecosocialist Working Group Report (Dave J.)

- We have not had a meeting recently, but been talking about the proposed hydrogen hubs for the Northwest. St. Regis has been identified as a site. Green hydrogen can be a false solution but the Biden Administration is throwing a lot of money around.
- David: There was a job listing for Families for a Liveable Climate, a part-time organizer position, paying I think \$20/hour.

Common Good Missoula Report (Arthur)

- We met with city planning staff recently, following their engineering team report. Jeremy Keene made it clear that there is no interest in creating Neighborways in neighborhoods that already have sidewalks. We expressed to them that we want the pilot project to be continuous, along both Central and Kent Avenues, not just along Central Avenue. David might have something to add since he and John Wolverton were also there...

- David: There's an assumption that the project is going to negatively impact parking and that makes it a non-starter.
- Daniel: I know that city staff, mayoral candidates have made a commitment to this project, so we need to remind them that.
- Sandy: I think this is a role that DSA can fill; we can be the radicals in the room.

Pro-Housing Missoula Report (John)

- We're very focused on the code modernization process. We found out that the staff/ Mayor Hess is leaning away from any interim changes not mandated by the State. We've been pushing for a year to eliminate minimum parking mandates... Our meeting this Thursday will be to discuss how we can push the City on this. They use the phrase "unintended consequences" a lot when discussing interim changes.
- Tony: I had a chat with Andrea about Martin v. Boise...
- John: That has to do with removing people from public spaces but it's not related to zoning... There are some parts of zoning, e.g., you can't live in a tent in your yard. But it mostly has to do with public spaces.
- Tony: And it also has to do with how much the City spends on affordable housing...
- John: Code modernization has the potential to create affordable housing...
- Sandy: It occurs to me that we as a chapter have not voted on our involvement in Pro-Housing Missoula. Do you think we could do that in December?
 - John: Pro-Housing Missoula came out of Common Good Missoula, so I took our marching orders from our Chapter's vote to join Common Good.
 - Sandy: I understand that the zoning work is really important and we can understand it from a socialist perspective. I would like to bring it back to the table for a vote, since it has branched off from Common Good Missoula.
 - John: We can definitely bring the mission/ vision/ values statement back for review...
 - Liam: I would agree with Sandy, it's probably something the whole chapter should vote on. It might also be a good pitch for other Chapter members to join Pro-Housing Missoula.
 - Mark: I think we should move it to the January meeting so we're not discussing it during the December training.
- *Motion to review Pro-Housing Missoula at the January Business Meeting, (Sandy, Arthur), approved*

Editorial Working Group Report (Tony)

- Can respond to Ryan Zinke's editorial...
- Robbie: We've been a little slow this month...

Statewide Working Group Report (Mark)

- We can skip it this month.

Labor Working Group Report (Mark)

- We've been quite busy canvassing at Lithia Ford in support of the UAW Strike.
- This could be a real transformative moment for the U.S. Labor movement. They've been tough and smart in their use of the strike. It's an inspirational moment.
- Earlier this week there was a 3-day walkout by pharmacists at CVS and Walgreen's. A couple of us went to all the pharmacies here in Missoula, none of which were on strike, but we gave them information/ resources on organizing.
- On November 16, it is Starbucks's Red Cup Day. Management has been yet to meet with any of the organized locations... There will be a one-day walk-out on November 16. You will hear from us.
- Sandy: Shawn Fain pointed out that their contract is set to expire on May Day in 2028, in case they want to threaten a general strike.
- Liam: Are you all working with the Graduate Students Union?
- Mark: Kind of... We've talked to one of their organizers at our meeting but they seem to be doing alright.

Unhoused Neighbors Union (David)

- Want to shout-out about a map that our comrade Arthur made... It shows where unhoused Missoulians are excluded under the proposed City ordinance.
- We had been meeting at Food Not Bombs on Sunday nights, at the Povorello Center, but have been encountered resistance from the City. We're looking for a new place to meet.
- Our focus right now is pushing back on this ordinance. There will be a teach-in on November 30 at Free Cycles around 6:00p or 7:00p about the new ordinance.
- Robbie: Please send me any information that you want shared with the membership.
- Mark: Want to emphasize that the Unhoused Neighbors Union is made up of unhoused people themselves. We were going to have a rally today but it has been postponed... We're supporting them to identify and develop new leaders.
- Liam: Have we been working to boost this map, boost attention on this ordinance?
 - David: I was thinking of working with Robbie and others on an editorial...
 - Robbie: Please come to the Editorial Working Group meeting on November 7.

Missoula Tenants Union (Liam)

- At our meeting last week, we voted to put people back in internal offices, on a new co-chair model, all to address burn-out.
- We had a rally at the beginning of the month. Reached out to people about tenants' right to counsel.
- Having conversations with local funders... We're definitely waiting to hear back on that.
- Our City Council/ Mayoral race candidate questionnaires, filled out, are on the Tenants Union website, MissoulaTenantsUnion.com
- Next meeting, the Social and Committee Meeting, is November 15, 6:00 - 7:30p in Cooper Room B at the Missoula Public Library. We hope to see you there!

Motion to adjourn, (Tony, Mark), approved