

Western Montana Democratic Socialists of America

General Membership Meeting

March 4, 2023, 10:00 – 12:00

Present: In person; Chester Seitz, Michael Dean, Jim Hofmann, Sandy Burch, Brendan Work, Tony Leyton, Jim Gillison, Jim Gillan, Arthur Endsley, Sarah McClain, Josh, Windsong Red Tail Hawk, Robbie Liben, Jackie Reimers, On zoom; Carol Wald, Bob Rosen, John Wolverton, Dave Ashworth, Rachel Calderon, Mark Anderlik.

Roles: Mark and Sandy; facilitate; Tony, timekeeper; Sarah, notetaker; Jackie, stack

Agenda: Sandy motions to approve the agenda for this meeting, Robbie seconds, agenda is approved.

Meeting Minutes: There being no corrections to the minutes of the last business meeting, Tony motions to approve the minutes of the last business meeting, Jackie seconds, the minutes are approved.

Treasurer's report: We have \$7167.91 in the bank, of which \$1117.91 are this chapter's funds and the rest is the funds for the Legislative Action working group.

Steering Committee Elections; Nominations: As it stands at the beginning of this meeting they are: **Sandy = chair, Sarah= treasurer, Jackie = secretary, Robbie = communications.** Windsong says that one co-chair spot could be shared by two or more people. Mark assures us that he will continue to help out as he is stepping down. Sarah says that all members are notified of every steering committee meeting, are welcome to attend, are listened to by all, and they can take-on lots of responsibilities. Rachel nominates Jackie as co-chair and Jackie accepts. Arthur nominates himself for secretary but asks what does a secretary do? Mainly just look after the membership lists and take and publish the minutes. The nominations are closed. There is a motion to elect the list by acclamation and the list is elected.

Campaign Plans: Labor: Mark gives the report for the **Western Montana Worker's Alliance** which is a platform to talk to workers and raise awareness of worker's rights and organizations; to provides a community resource with the goal of creating a state of crisis for employers so that they will be moved to negotiate with their workers; to create a crisis in the wider society in order to undermine the oligarchs so they will negotiate with us, the workers as a class, with the goal of ending classes and bringing about democratic socialism. The time-line for this effort contains on-going training workshops with Jane MacAlevy, and on April 6 another workshop will begin on Thursdays with trainings for workers of the larger community on collective bargaining. As their modus operandi this working group targets certain employers and aims to introduce the idea of socialism to workers in Missoula and get them to exercise their power. They have helped 6 workplaces over the past year; some of these are the workplaces of people in the working group, some are the workplaces of people in the larger committee of the Western Montana Worker's Alliance. For the more specific **Labor** working group, Mark wants the chapter to be strike ready when the teamsters go on strike, especially the teamsters who are working for UPS in Missoula. This may well happen this year around August 1 when the teamsters will probably have a nation-wide action. They have a membership of about 3004,000. Our helping as a chapter might include getting the City Council to sign a petition of support, walking the picket-line, fundraisers, organizing members as allies to get ready for the strike. Local 2 of the Teamsters Union is based in Butte. Arthur makes a motion to approve this campaign plan, Tony seconds and the plan is approved.

Eco-socialist: John gives the report for the eco-socialist working group's effort to get the City Council to use it's land use authority to stop further fossil fuel development by signing the **Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty**, which is an international campaign. We are waiting to see what happens with

SB228, for example, to see if the power of local control will be lost. If it is significantly lessened, we will work to have the City Council endorse the FFNPT without enumerated goals such as banning new gas stations and restricting new fossil fuel infrastructure in new city buildings, by electrification and with the help of funds from the Inflation Reduction Act. If local power remains unimpaired, such goals will be included in the City Council's endorsement, which will be carried forward to them by Daniel Carlino. Tony makes a motion to approve this plan, Mark seconds and the plan is approved.

John continues with the **Common Good Missoula** campaign plan, which is a code modernization for zoning code for the city. The city has hired \$700,000 worth of consultants, but has promised publicly to listen to the recommendations of CGM. Other climate change organizations in town are involved in this effort and most are interested in moving away from the present system which heavily favors single-family-zoned housing to a development which allows multi-family housing with shops, local businesses and walking-friendly neighborhoods. This is a three-year effort. John is meeting with Daniel Carlino, Mike Neugent, and Danny Tennenbaum to re-structure the parking mandates for the city so that, in the future, small stores do not need to fulfill parking mandates before they can open for business. There is an initiative before the City Council on April 5. CGM has two parts: the HJART, which is working on zoning for housing mainly; the CART part is concerned with safety and connectivity, in which regard Arthur is attending a city academy to tour housing problem areas of different types, review many charts on various uses and demographics: he's doing power-mapping. There is no specific ask as yet from CART. CGM brought Affordable Housing Trust Funds into its purview. In general, the real estate community is supporting multi-family-housing-friendly zoning. Mark makes a motion to approve these two plans and Tony seconds, the plans are approved.

Statewide Legislative Action Plan: Sandy presents the new statewide legislative plan which is an outgrowth of the anti-LR-131 effort. People have been testifying at the legislature, and establishing statewide relationships with a platform, which is widely popular, to rebuild the left by introducing movements such as taxing the rich, etc. that the Democrats don't do. This is a volunteer effort to increase people's power by organizing and training coalitions. Legislative work is a hard process to deal with. Seven to eight people have testified before the legislature on about 15 different bills. (The DSA was asked by the AFL-CIO not to testify on the Right to Work bill.) (Mark brings up the Statewide DSA meeting in Helena on Sunday, March 5 is organizing car-pooling.) Brendan makes a motion to approve this plan and Arthur seconds; the plan is approved

Editorial: Robbie says that Sarah had the most recent editorial published in the Missoulian and it was called, not "War is Bad," but "War is Not the Answer." It was against the U.S. policy in the war in Ukraine. There will be an editorial on housing soon. (?) He states that these editorials generate a lot of discussion in the community, and are sometimes published in places other than the Missoulian. These plans don't need to be approved.

Steering Committee: Sandy reports that the steering committee wants to have more events, a greater turn-out at meetings and events, and an on-going recruitment drive, with a system ID'ing tasks and resources, with people stepping up to take on responsibilities. Mark says that we propose to have a full communications team for the radio show, he reminds us that there is a state-wide DSA pod-cast out of Helena, and re-iterates that we need a working group for recruitment. Arthur makes a motion to approve this [In and Robbie seconds; the plan is approved.

Reproductive justice and Mutual Aid: Carol says that what she is reporting is more of a vision statement than a specific plan. It all depends on people stepping up and being involved in legislative action. She feels we need to get younger people on board. She laments the fact that most people don't know the difference between Plan B and Plan C forms of abortifacients and wants to arrange trainings and

information through house parties and volunteer buddy systems for people undergoing any sort of abortion, even phone-buddy support is better than no support, especially for young people and isolated or disadvantages or abused people undergoing self-managed abortions. We will see what happens to the constitution after the legislative session is over; no doubt there will be legal challenges. Sandy asks if anyone is interested in stepping up and becoming involved in working on this plan, especially as Carol is moving back to New York state in the summer. No one answers the request.

Budgets: Sarah reports on the budget highlights which are that we may take in about \$1600 in DSA dues shares but that is not guaranteed and may fall off somewhat, though it was \$399.02 for the 4th quarter in 2023. We pay about \$150 a year in administrative and communication costs. We send may \$100 a year to Schools for Chiapas and may send \$100 to a local indigenous effort. We have planned to give \$300 to the one or two persons going to the DSA National convention in Chicago this summer. Projected printing costs are \$120 for the chapter as a whole, Eco-soc's may be \$60, Labor's may be \$30, and others may be about \$40. As far as the working group's budgets are concerned, they are an additional \$145 for Labor and The CGM membership of \$250. Arthur makes a motion to call the question and the budget is approved.

Ukraine Poll: Mark says he is concerned that the DSA National has not taken a firm stand on Ukraine and the U.S.'s policy, and he wants to take a poll on Ukraine to see how people stand. He hopes to put pressure on the DSA National to oppose U.S. policy. He gives a hand-out, which the note-taker asks to be included in the minutes. The results of the poll end in the option number 2, "We demand that the US suspends sending arms to Ukraine and uses its influence on the government of Ukraine to negotiate a cease-fire agreement," having the most votes, but all options get some votes. There are a few people who are very interested in discussing these options, feeling that none of them express accurately where they stand but all discussion is terminated by Sandy who points out that the meeting has to end due to time constraints, but that we will discuss it someday. Robbie says that we should re-institute the education/discussion night and have the war in Ukraine as our first subject.

See below for the results of the Ukraine Poll

Announcements: Mark reiterates the meeting of March 5 (see above). The chapter retreat part 2, will be held on Monday, April 17, at Goodworks Ventures from 5:30 to 8:30 p.m. Newslette submissions are by Friday, March 24th. The regional leadership meeting will be by zoom on March 28. The voice of the People radio show will be Saturday, from 1:00 to 3:00 p.m. on KFGM 101.5 FM, 1015kfgm.org, or podcast on <https://anchor.fm/vop-montana>. Montana's DSA podcast is: <https://anchor.fm/montana-dsa>

The meeting is adjourned.

These are the minutes of the meeting of March 4, submitted in solidarity, Sarah McClain, acting secretary, treasurer.

Ukraine War Straw Poll

Western Montana DSA Annual Membership Meeting

March 4, 2023

Given the world historic importance of the War in Ukraine, and the deep involvement of the United States in it, it is important that our chapter make some sort of stand in relation to it. And because of the lack of clarity on the war by the National Political Committee, DSA's national decision making body outside of conventions, our chapter can add its voice to moving national DSA into taking a position.

To see if we have views in common in our chapter, the following straw poll will gauge support for specific demands we could make on our elected leaders in the White House and in Congress. The results will help inform what, if any, position we should take on this issue.

The demands will start at one end of views on the War in Ukraine, proceed through intermediate positions, until we reach the other end of views. You may vote more than once for a demand, but please only vote for a demand if you can live with the result if it is chosen. We will vote by a show of hands.

1. We demand that the US pull out of NATO, stop arming Ukraine, and use its influence on the Ukrainian government to negotiate a peace agreement.
2. We demand that the US stop arming Ukraine, and use its influence on the Ukrainian government to negotiate a peace agreement.
3. We demand that the US suspends sending arms to Ukraine and use its influence on the Ukrainian government to negotiate a cease fire agreement.
4. We demand that the US uses its influence on the Ukrainian government to negotiate a cease fire agreement.
5. We demand that the US continue its current policies.
6. We demand that more arms be sent to Ukraine so they are better able to defend themselves.
7. We demand that more arms and more US military advisors be sent to Ukraine so they are better able to defend themselves.
8. We demand that more arms, US military advisors, and NATO troops be sent to Ukraine to defend Ukrainian democracy.
9. We demand that more arms, US military advisors, and NATO and US troops be sent to Ukraine to defend Ukrainian democracy.
10. We demand that the US declare war on Russia.