

April 1, 2023 - DSA Business Meeting

Present: Jackie Reimers, Robbie Liben, Tony Davis, Arthur Endsley, Catherine Park, Katie George, Steven Clark, Max Cumming, Carol Wald, Bob Rosen, David Jones, Chester Seitz, Windsong Redtail Hawk, John Wolverton, Sarah McClain, Christian Zal-Herwitz, Frank Kromkowski

Roles:

- **Facilitator:** Jackie
- **Time-keeper:** Tony
- **Progressive stack:** Brendan
- **Note-taker:** Arthur

Introductions

- *Motion to approve the agenda* (Brendan, Tony), *approved*
- *Motion to approve last meeting's minutes* (Brendan, Arthur), *approved*

Treasurer's Report (Sarah McClain)

- We have \$6,886.01 (in our bank account), but part of that belongs to the Legislative Action Committee
 - Gave Jackie a bunch of checks for the Legislative Action Committee
- Sarah attended a training, requesting a reimbursement

Ecosocialist Working Group Report (Sarah McClain)

- “Plugging away” at the Fossil Fuel Non-proliferation Treaty

Common Good Missoula, Report (John Wolverton)

- Two teams: Community Action Research Team (CART) and Housing Justice Action Research Team (HJART)
- Encouraging fellow members to be active on housing bills in Helena
- City Council vote this Monday on removing parking mandates for developments within 1/2 mile of a transit stop
 - Parking requirements and the space occupied by parking lots are major barriers to building affordable housing
- Asking working-group leaders to contact John soon about the Retreat
- Monday, April 17 at 5:30p: Retreat is about discernment, figuring out our priorities, and socializing

Editorial Working Group Report (Robbie Liben)

- Two editorials published in the last couple of weeks
 - On rail safety, by Tony Davis
 - On rent control, by Robbie Liben
- Meetings are listed in the newsletter, usually Tuesday evenings twice monthly, on Zoom
 - Next meeting is April 4, following meeting is April 18

Statewide Working Group Report (Jackie Reimers)

- Arranging people to testify against bills in state legislature
- Bad bills generally end up getting passed; what can be done?
- Proposing a Montana People's Veto Campaign
 - Would allow us to collect a number of signatures from people who are upset with the way the legislature is working
 - Could also help to build membership in DSA
- Tony: Which bills would you describe as “batshit crazy”?
 - Jackie: All of them? Senate Bill 93 revises ballot issues, requiring a \$3700 fee for filing a ballot initiative; SB 99, which bans Trans youth health care; SB 121, which reduces the top marginal income tax rate; SB 154, which would redefine the right to privacy to clarify it does not cover the right to abortion; SB 268, which would restrict local governments' ability to regulate short-term rentals; HB 303, which would allow for denial of medical care based on moral values. . .
- Robbie: Is there an editorial in here?
- Catherine: on SB 154, when a woman is pregnant there are two individuals, so this bill abrogates a woman's individuality
- Arthur: This says “draft,” you'll be sending out a final version of the petition that we can take to our friends and neighbors?
- Brendan: Since there are even crazier bills coming. . . Should we delay this until we see the full slate of bills?
- Chester: Protests are another option
- **Motion to approve the Montana People's Veto Campaign and to use Voter Access Network to reach out to people** (Steven, Carol), *approved, with 3 abstentions*
 - John: Statewide Working Group is a collaboration between multiple Montana chapters. . . Is it necessary to do a power analysis for every bill? General critique about electoral activism. . . How effective is it really?
 - Jackie: We know that he's not going to veto anything we ask him to. . . It's about building a state-wide group of people that can work on ballot initiatives.
 - John: If there's no victory here. . .
 - Jackie: The victory for me is like when we hold a rally. If people see there are more like-minded people, they might be more willing to step up.
 - Catherine: Also to not let your adversary own your vocabulary. It's not just Gianforte who should have a veto. It creates a ground for believing in something.
 - Brendan: When you refer to a power analysis. . . Are you thinking that some of the bills might be more or less winnable and deserve individual attention?
 - John: Regarding rallies. . . I see people with shoulders slumped putting their signs in their cars and going home.

- Jackie: If we sit back and do nothing, then nothing happens.
- Sarah: The ACLU is going to take some of these to court.
- Chester: If we give up now...
- Catherine: Here's where coalition work comes in. It's a larger mapping of coalitions and collaborations.
- Windsong: To build on what Catherine was just saying, we have to diversify our organizing... Instead of just letting people go home dejected, that's the time for creativity; time to give them something to look forward to.

Labor Working Group Report (Steven)

- Third-wave Workers is currently in contract negotiation, owners being "obstinate"
- Morgenroth Music, the owner is looking to sell; Steven and co-workers have come together to put an offer on the business, looking to turn it into a worker-owned co-op
- Also working on Strike-Ready Teamsters Plan
- Next meeting is April 13 at Good Works; talking about workers' rights on the job

Labor Strike-Ready Resolution

- Fund-raising event is our May Day (May 1) event
 - We have a band to play but we don't yet have a location
 - Will be taking donations for the Labor Solidarity Fund
 - We've spoken to the local Teamsters (state-wide) and they don't need money but they will need our support
 - Labor Solidarity Fund would raise money for organizing other labor groups, smaller labor groups, which could apply for grant money; money here would go to the DSA National Labor Solidarity Fund
- Chester: Mark Anderlik is involved with the Teamsters?
- Jackie: Yes, Mark has talked to the state-wide President
- Windsong: Jackie, can we start a local strike fund?
- Jackie: Best way to raise money for unions is to have the money go straight to the union. If Western MT DSA has the money, as a 501c4 non-profit, we have to spend our money on social welfare for everyone; we can only spend up to 40% of our total expenditures on something like a union.
- Requirements for adopting the Resolution:
 - By April 15: Publicly commit to the National Strike Ready Campaign; listen to rank-and-file UPS Teamsters; ask elected socialist officials to support the campaign
 - By May 1: Run a fund-raiser, engaging all chapter members
 - By May 6: Elect two Solidarity Captains to liaise with NLC; review the Strike Ready 2023 Chapter Kit
 - By June 1: Systematically ask chapter members to sign the Strike Ready Pledge

- Throughout June and July: Canvass chapter membership, local contacts, community to build support for UPS Teamsters
- August 1: Chapter will turn out members
- **Motion to approve the Resolution** (Arthur, Brendan), *approved, 1 abstention*

Native Land Acknowledgement Vote

- *Tony reads the ballot's contents*
- Sarah: What do you mean “capitalism was built on indigenous stolen land”?
- Chester: Is there an option to vote “No”?
- Arthur: The current ballot does not directly address the Land Back Movement; it has been sent out to the Membership for them to look at it in advance
- Jackie: Was the wording developed in a Committee?
- Tony: It has been developed in an ad-hoc Committee with input from multiple members
- Arthur: The Steering Committee has seen this language multiple times
- **Motion to Call to Question** (John, Brendan), *2 votes aye, motion fails*
- Windsong: There’s “kind of like a big jump” between what the land acknowledgement could be... and the socialist version. There are things in the third version that could be in the second version.
- John: This item has been discussed in the last three Business meetings and has been worked on in ad hoc committee. I think everyone’s been notified that this is taking place. I think we just need to vote on it and move ahead.
- Tony: The second item is what the Salish.. Cultural Committee created for the University of Montana; it comes from local indigenous people themselves.
- Chester: I would disagree that we’ve had the last three meetings to talk about this.
- Robbie: We’ve talked about this at the November, December, and February meetings and multiple Steering Committee Meetings
- Windsong: I don’t feel like I’ve been given the opportunity to talk about this. As far I’m aware, I’m the only enrolled member here... The statement created for UM isn’t the statement created for the DSA. It was created for a different situation than the one we are in.
- Brendan, Tony: We could propose to delay voting on this...
- Robbie: We could decide right now whether or not to do a Land Acknowledgement and then revisit the exact language later... We’ve spent so much time and so much energy on this. I agree with Windsong that a version that combines the second and third options would be good..
- Chester: I think we should vote on the first part... Do we have an option for a “long-form thing”?
- **Motion to vote on the first section of the Ballot that reads “Should we have a land acknowledgement before each meeting”?**

(Arthur, Brendan), 2 nays, 1 abstention, motion passes

- **Vote: “Should we have a land acknowledgement before each meeting”**
 - Yes: 10 votes
 - No: 2 votes
 - Abstain: 4 votes
- *We have agreed to post-pone the vote on the exact text of the Land Acknowledgement*
- *Robbie will connect Windsong and any others who are interested with Tony Davis*
- Chester: We should have an online ballot
- *Arthur will look into online voting options*
- Arthur: Should we set a deadline for this ad-hoc committee? For instance, should we ask them to have a ballot ready by our next Business Meeting?
- John: Suggestions about how to make this more technical just layer on the work required by volunteers. . . Turning it into an electronic vote removed this forum and all the explanations. . . That’s a burden on people.
- Tony: I’m open to more input on this but we should vote on it pretty soon.
- Windsong: I would suggest that it comes back “when we’re ready.”

Regional and National DSA Leadership Meeting

Chapter Instagram Account; help us to become more visible!

- Voice of the People radio show, Saturdays 1-3 PM
- Montana DSA has a podcast! <https://anchor.fm/montana-dsa>

Upcoming Meetings and Dates:

- *See Agenda*
- Tony: Thanks to Robbie for all the great communications work
- Frank: Bonnie Lambert from Helena DSA and others have indicated that we’d like to do a Montana DSA podcast on the Strike-Ready Resolution

Motion to Adjourn (Arthur, Brendan)