

October 7, 2023 - DSA Business Meeting

Present: Robbie Liben, Tony Davis, Arthur Endsley, Dave Jones, Mark Anderlik, Steven Clark, Taylor, Catherine Park, Kevin Hunt, Rachel Calderon-Navarro

Roles:

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

Introductions

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

Treasurer's Report (Sandy)

- The bank says we have \$6,438.30;
 - Of that, the Legislative Action group has \$5,202.40
 - The chapter has: \$1233.50

Interim Co-Chair Election

- Our Co-Chair Jackie Reimers has had to step back for health reasons, so we'll be electing an interim co-chair in November.
 - If you're interested in nominating someone (or yourself), let someone on Steering know!
- Also, our Treasurer Sarah McClain couldn't be at this meeting for personal reasons. She's looking for someone to take over at our regular elections in March.

Starbucks Solidarity Events in October (Mark and Steven)

- In the planning process; one idea was to have a sit-in at Starbucks, in solidarity with the workers, and to buy a cup of coffee!
 - If you want to be involved in planning, let Steven or Mark know.
 - If there's an action, the chapter will be alerted.
- Steven: Would it be at the Brooks Street or Grant Creek location?
 - Mark: We've kind of adopted the Grant Creek location.

- Tony: How well are they organized?
 - Mark: They have a recognized union, they're a union shop, but Starbucks is refusing to negotiate with any unions.
- Robbie: Are the Brooks and Grant Creek locations in communication?
 - Mark: Yes, one of our members, Kate, who's part of their union has been keeping the two organizing committees in communication.
- Mark: What Starbucks Workers United wants to do is to keep public pressure up to convince Starbucks to negotiate with them. We got about 84 signatures at our action at Grant Creek.
- Catherine: Everyone at Grant Creek was pretty willing to listen.
- Arthur: Action at Brooks Street, with Service Workers United, was also successful; got lots of visibility on Brooks Street.
- Robbie: For context, when we were supporting organization of Black Coffee, we'd bring a flower and give our name as "Union" so that the call would "latte for Union!"
- Sandy: So, we're planning on a coffee and roses solidarity event sometime in October?
 - Mark: Yes, or at least a sip-in without flowers... There's a whole lot of organizing that has to happen with the flowers.

Electoral Committee Report

- Sandy: Plenty of opportunities for door-knocking for our endorsed candidates! Saturdays and Sundays in October.
- Sandy: Steering Committee did meet with Sean McCoy; he is not seeking our endorsement but we had a good conversation. His farm is named after Frank Little, a famous labor organizer.
- Mark: What ward is he running in and who is he running against?
 - Arthur: He's running against Sandra Vasecka in Ward 6.
- Kevin: That's an important race but could be close. It'd be nice to get someone who's solidly in our camp on City Council.
- Sandy: *The Case for Local Politics*
 - Cities can hold oil companies responsible for environmental damage, e.g., the City of Honolulu suing oil companies over "deception" about the damages resulting from fossil fuel burning.
 - Cities will also inevitably absorb the costs of climate-related disasters.
 - Cities can also fight wage theft, e.g., after the book "Laboring for Justice;" wage theft is the number one form of theft in the U.S.
 - Cities can be a locus for progressive change, e.g., Fulton County abortion fund, Cop City in Atlanta
 - In Billings, there is a bond on the ballot to increase funding for parks; it's the first time in 24 years there has been a parks bond on the ballot.
 - Most local races are non-partisan and so are most voters. Races can be won by just a hundred votes.
- Tony: Thanks for putting that together! That was educational. Can you define "carceral" in the term "carceral police state."

- Sandy: What I mean by that is the tendency of the police to put poor people in prison, raise money for prison magnates and cities through fines, jail time, etc.
- Mark: The issue of the unhoused in Missoula... Kristen Jordan has a proposal on the table in City Council to help stabilize the sweep situation, put an end to it. She's not confident the City Council will take it up. She feels that if we can get Gwen Nicholson and Sam Kulla elected, if Andrea Davis prevails, there will be real change. Everyone should set aside a Saturday or Sunday before the elections and go canvassing.

Ecosocialist Working Group Report (Dave J.)

- Dave: We were at the Climate Expo a couple weeks ago, got more signatures for the Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty. If anyone would like to help, get in touch with me.
- Sandy: Do you think the Treaty has a chance of getting passed in City Council?
 - Dave: Yes, it doesn't require the City to do anything in particular, but can be a starting point.
- Arthur: In particular, we need help digitizing or transcribing the Treaty signatures we've collected so far.
 - Robbie: We could also add these e-mails to our database and potentially use them to reach out to people who have signed.
- Sandy: Have you thought about timing for introducing this at City Council?
 - Dave: I think after elections could make sense.

Common Good Missoula Report (Arthur)

- Arthur: We had a Delegates Assembly and Mayoral Accountability event at Free Cycles on Thursday. Two things happened:
 - Arthur: Delegates committed to sending a certain number of members to a 3-hour Core Team Training at the end of November; Sue Kirchner and myself committed WMTDSA to sending two people and I will be one of them.
 - Arthur: Also, mayoral candidates Mike Nugent and Andrea Davis both committed themselves to all four of the asks that Common Good Missoula made, including a commitment to support the Neighborways

Housing Report (John Wolverton)

- *John sent his report by e-mail*

“Meeting 2x month - communications via Signal. Pausing on new members while refining an on-boarding process. Short term policy action: Removing city minimum parking mandates. Expect related recommendation in consultant's mid-term deliverables - eta January(?). A PHM member is meeting with Andrea Davis tomorrow. Meetings with other city elected officials on pause until after election. PHM members anticipate re-engaging with city staffers late October, after they update zoning and subdivision codes to comply with state laws.”

Editorial Working Group Report

Labor Working Group (Mark and Steven)

- Steven: Thursday we had a workshop on How to be a Union Steward. We're building a catalog of workshops that we can offer to the public, to anyone who wants to organize.
 - Steven: UAW is asking for dealership canvassing; we are doing that TODAY at Lithia Ford (Highway 93, just before the big Wal-Mart, on the south side of town). There's no factories here in Western Montana, so, we'll be passing out flyers.
 - Mark: We chose Lithia Ford because they have a poor reputation for service.
- Steven: Next meeting is Thursday, October 19

Unhoused Neighbors Union Report (Mark)

- Mark: Many DSA members are working in multiple ways to try for a more humane City policy towards unhoused people; the Unhoused Neighbors Union has been formed. Kevin Hunt is working on legislative approaches. Paul Kim with ACLU has been very involved. Missoula's unhoused residents have also been organizing themselves.

Motion to endorse the Unhoused Neighbors Union and to provide what support we can to them, (Mark, Kevin), approved

- Tony: Would "support" be financial support as well?
 - Mark: Right now, there's no ask. Eventually we may want to start a working group.
- Robbie: This seems like it would be a third housing-related group we have going...
 - Mark: A similar resolution has been passed by the Tenants Union. This is specifically about *unhoused* individuals and they need to be a part of their own liberation.

Announcements!

- *Canvassing for our Endorsed Local Candidates*
 - Now is the time to be canvassing for our endorsed candidates! Ballots go out on October 18.
- *Save the Date: State-wide leadership training on December 2*
- Newsletter submissions to Robbie by October 25.

New Business

- Kevin Hunt: A lot of litigation going on related to unhoused individuals... What's being litigated is to what extent governments can criminalize houselessness.

Motion to adjourn, (Tony, Arthur), approved