

August 15, 2023 - DSA Steering Committee

Present: Sarah McClain, Robbie Liben, Arthur Endsley, Tony Davis, Jackie Reimers, Sandy Burch

Recorded by: Arthur Endsley

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

No agenda was set in advance

DSA National Convention

- Jackie: Are all the financials squared away?
- Sarah: Still working on paperwork but everything is good.
- Jackie: Mark is preparing a debrief for the members on Monday, August 21... Over Zoom because state-wide members will be present.
 - Robbie: What Zoom account will we be using?
- Jackie: Mark interviewed a couple of people from Twin Cities DSA about the Convention. And also some people from Red Labor who want a third-party run in Montana.

Electoral

- Arthur: Interview with Sam Kulla (Ward 3) is scheduled for August 24 at 12:00p noon on Zoom.
- Arthur: What is our plan for races where we have received completed questionnaires from only some candidates?
 - Arthur: We received a questionnaire from Sam Kulla, who's in a race against Gwen Jones in Ward 3. In Ward 2, we received a questionnaires from Sierra Farmer, Mirtha Becerra declined, and no response from the other two candidates. In Ward 6, we received a questionnaire from Sean Patrick McCoy but nothing from Sandra Vasecka. So, I think we have three other candidates to interview.
- Sarah: Mayoral debate at the Library was recorded and on YouTube... We could ask who wants endorsement? Probably no one wants it.
 - Arthur: Maybe I'll do a sanity check with Mark on this... See if it's worth pursuing a WMTDSA mayoral endorsement...
 - Jackie: We can discuss putting this on the agenda at our next Steering meeting, which would be before the primary
 - Date of the primary is September 12(?)
- Jackie: Re: Allowed political activities on behalf of Gwen Nicholson, who we endorsed...
- Jackie: I don't think WMTDSA is in the place to be the lead organization in a ballot initiative, but we can get a lot of great experience if we sign on with someone who's ahead of the game.

- Sandy: We could see if there are members who want to take on a working group for an electoral campaign... September is prime canvassing season because ballots get mailed out in mid-October.
 - Jackie: And that would be a relatively short-term campaign...
 - Sandy: Also, state-wide organizing and a ballot initiative are on the table...
 - Jackie: My thought is we should get some experience supporting a ballot initiative but not leading one...
- Sandy: I can send out an e-mail about the next campaign to WMTDSA folks who are interested/ informed about potential campaigns... To get the ball rolling on campaign proposals. This can be the big thing we vote on at the September business meeting.
 - Sarah: We were thinking of having Carla(?) from 350.org come and talk to us about what they're working on...
 - Robbie: I can reach out to her about that.

Leadership Cohort

- What do potential leaders want to see changed about how the chapter is run? Then, each of us would call these potential leaders and invite them to the cohort.
- Suggestions?
 - Stephen, Arthur, Wren, David Q., Max C., Brandon, Josh D.
- Sandy: When we contact these people do we want to have a script?
 - Arthur: I think we should be clear about what we're offering them as part of the Cohort and what would be expected of them.
 - Robbie: And are we asking them to take on specific roles?
 - Sandy: We're asking them to attend two trainings, 2-3 hours each, probably. What we provided is the basics for democratic leadership based on our bylaws. December or January.
- Robbie: I'm thinking December is still 4 months away... It's far enough past the election that we probably won't be burned out. I would say starting the first training in early December makes sense.
- Sandy: I think the next task would be to draft the survey for participants... I'm happy to work on that, would love to have some help.
- Jackie: We had been talking about 2-year terms for Steering... We need to talk about by-laws. Some of them would be very simple changes, e.g., the date of our elections is December.
 - Sandy: I think we need to add to our by-laws structure: how we democratically approve campaigns. This could help address engagement issues.

New Business

- Jackie: At the end of the last Business Meeting we talked about changing the time of the meeting from Saturdays at 10:00a.

- Robbie: It used to be Saturday afternoons, every other week, alternating between Business Meetings and Discussion group.

Motion to adjourn (Sarah, Robbie), approved