

Minutes of the Saunders County Democratic Party, February 25, 2017, Wahoo Public Library

The meeting was called to order at 11:00 a.m. Present were Chair Mikel-Jon Divis, Secretary Maria M. Cadwallader, Treasurer Ed Zeleny, PR/Media Specialist Emily Koehler, Vern Barrett, Jack Eager, Scott Else, Renae Feilmeier, Steve Grieser, Desiree Hunt, Jason Hunt, Coleen Koehler, PJ Koehler, Lowell Krueger, Janece Mollhoff, Jennifer Norris, Shawn Otte, Elaine Pike and guest speaker Nate Gadzinski, NDP Grassroots Director.

Chair Divis welcomed everyone.

Minutes

Maria Cadwallader read the Minutes of the 10/23/16 County Meeting at the home of Alan and Nancy Meyer in Cedar Bluffs; and passed out copies of them and of the minutes from the 10/23/16 Executive Committee at the same place, and the Minutes of the 10/30/2016 County Meeting at the Ceresco Community Center. Lowell Kruger moved to approve the general meeting minutes, Coleen Koehler seconded the motion, and the motion carried without objection.

Treasurer's Report

Treasurer Ed Zeleny reported that the Balance on 9/18/2016 was \$1,072.91. Income through 10/22/2016 totaled \$4,107. Expenses were \$1325.82. Non-cash contributions totaled \$201.88. The cash balance on 10/23/2016 was \$3,854.09.

Income after 10/23/2016 totalled \$450 and Expenses totalled \$862.77. Non-cash contributions totalled \$100. The Balance on 2/25/17 is \$3,441.32.

Public Relations Report

Emily Koehler reported that she has revamped the website and that an article about the Party appeared in the 2/23/2017 Wahoo newspaper. She said she will post notices of Party events in the Wahoo and Ashland newspapers' Community Events sections and plans to begin publishing an e-newsletter about local and state events and issues. She said she needs many more email addresses of Saunders County Democrats to make the newsletter effective.

Vern Barrett suggested looking at the e-newsletter that Lancaster County Democrats publish as a sample.

A discussion ensued about reaching the Democrats who do not have email or use Facebook or other online media. Comments included: In Saunders County, many people of various ages, including young people but especially lots of older people who vote regularly, don't have online access and/or don't text. Online media is certainly faster and more convenient to use, but we can't reach the majority of Saunders County Democrats that way because we have so few emails or text number contacts for them. We need to get organized and canvass every precinct. Renae Feilmeier said we need to participate in events with progressive activists who are already organized and doing things that we support, and she and Janece Mollhoff and Jennifer Norris mentioned The Resistance, SUN (Suit Up Nebraska), Indivisible, and Knock on Every Door. They made the point that we can get individuals from these groups to help with our events and issues if they come to know us as caring and helping with theirs. It was mentioned that we can't link from our Party website to any of these groups because they will have to ask us to take the

link down to protect their non-profit status, but we can help publicize their events without linking to them or naming them.

Elaine Pike said we have to talk to everyone we can, both to get more Democrats involved and to find out what Republicans are thinking and planning. She said she hopes to listen to the Sasse and Fortenberry Town Halls, which are by phone, and to record them.

Young Democrats

Emily said she would like to find a way to get a Youth Council going. Jennifer Norris said there are Young Democrats at State level that are ready and able to help establish Young Democrats groups in high schools, and recommended that Emily contact the State group.

PR Standing Committee

Janece asked if a PR Committee would help. Emily said it would help a lot. Jennifer Norris moved that we establish a standing Public Relations Committee. Shawn Otte seconded the motion and it carried unanimously. Persons volunteered to be members and they include Janece Mollhoff, Renae Feilmeier, Shawn Otte, and Maria Cadwallader.

Free Website Host

M-J Divis said that Charlene Ligon, Sarpy County Democrats Chair, has volunteered to host the Saunders County website for free as one of the Wordpress sites she manages. Jennifer Norris moved that we make the changes necessary to transfer the site to Ligon in sufficient time before the current subscription runs out. Coleen Koehler seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

Banquet Report

Maria Cadwallader read the final Banquet Committee Report, which included details about ticket sales and auction income, including the need for better documentation for future banquets and a request that M-J send the damaged checks from Patty Zieg for \$35, Nancy Meyer for \$35, and Mary Harding for \$105 to Nancy Meyer, for her to return to the payees. Emily Koehler said that she still owed \$35 for tickets and immediately gave the Treasurer Ed Zeleny \$35 cash to pay for the tickets.

Janece Mollhoff moved that the report be accepted, Shawn Otte seconded the motion, and it carried without objection.

10+10=2020

M-J Divis described the State Democratic Party's proposed 10-10-2020 program as intended to incentivize local party growth with the support of the NDP. It sets fundraising and voter registration goals for counties, either individually or, if they choose join together to do so, for county alliances. Maria Cadwallader mentioned that the plan is still under discussion.

LD 23 Report

LD 23 Representative Jennifer Norris reported on recent State NDP meetings. She said that Chair Jane Kleeb is putting a lot of energy into finding ways to rebuild the Party. For example, future meetings of the Central Committee will be broadcast live on Facebook, to let people who cannot attend know what's going on.

She said changes in procedures are in the works. They didn't pass at the last meeting because their sponsoring committees need to work on them some more to make them fit the rules. There also are going to be some new Caucuses, but these also need to have better rules before they can be official. These include a Rural/Agriculture Caucus, a Climate Caucus, and a Progressive Caucus (the problem is that 2 conflicting groups both want to be "the" Progressive Caucus).

The male LD 23 Representative, who is from Colfax County, has not attended any Central Committee meetings, so M-J Divis, who is Alternate, has been attending as the seated delegate. We are seeking another Alternate and have asked the CD Chair and Party Secretary to Seat M-J permanently.

Jennifer encouraged contacting the State NDP office with questions or calling her. She also encouraged everyone to attend the next NDP meeting. This will be on Saturday March 18, but there also are activities Friday the 17th.

LD 23 Action Group

Nate Gadzinski, NDP Grassroots Director, spoke to us about the new LD 23 Action Group. This is a group set up to get people from other counties involved with each other – for LD 23, Saunders, Butler, and Colfax Counties. All of us can join in.

Suggestions for the Action Group include:

- Hold coffees and other social events to get to know each other
- Hold Rallies to support issues and candidates
- Create a Recruitment Committee to recruit local candidates
 - Make sure no Republican runs unopposed
 - Key is door knocking and calling – in Belleview a 19-year-old knocked on every door and beat the incumbent for City Council

Nate said that our goals are to increase Party registration by 5% every year and to have enough discussion and debate to be able to develop a county platform on county issues. We can't afford to wait till 2018 to be talking about issues and finding candidates. Ricketts contributed so much money to 2016 campaigns that he has a "Gang of 27" Legislators who are voting lockstep with him. Tom Tilden, our State 2nd Associate Chair, is working with Knock on Every Door to take deep surveys and find out what local issues really are. He wants precinct volunteers.

Maria Cadwallader handed out copies of information she has gathered so far about the 2018 Elections. It includes a cover page about filing dates, which also asks for help gathering information about all the City, Village, and Township elected officials, and a 3-page spreadsheet listing information about Congressional, State, and County elections. (Handout attached.) Renae Feilmeier asked how the State Party plans to heal the rift between Democrats? Nate said that apologies are needed but it may be that working on common goals is what will actually heal things.

Nominations for Vice Chair

M-J Divis opened the floor for nominations for Vice Chair and said that nominations will stay open until the election of the Vice Chair at the next meeting, after the nominees state what they will do as Vice Chair and why we should choose them.

Nominations included Desiree Hunt, Jennifer Norris, and Renee Feilmeier.

Committee on Events

M-J Divis said that he wants to create a standing Committee on Events. Its purpose will be to organize parades, fundraising such as the banquet, and so on, and its Chair will be the Executive Committee's Vice Chair.

Maria Cadwallader moved to establish this committee, Shawn Otte seconded the motion, and it carried without objection.

Next Meeting

There was some discussion about the best time for the next meeting.

The next meeting of Saunders County Democrats will be Saturday March 11, 2017, at 10 a.m. at the Wahoo Public Library.*

The meeting adjourned at 12:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Maria M. Cadwallader, Secretary
Saunders County Democrats

*Note: The meeting was postponed to March 25, 2017, at 10:00 a.m.