

Democratic Rural Conference

Minutes from a Meeting of the DRC Board of Directors

Held via ZOOM on February 16, 2022, at 10:00 AM

Meeting of the board called to order by Ms. Hunter at 10:03 AM

**Board members in attendance**

Judith Hunter	Bill Thickstun	Michael Plitt
Jeanne Crane	Ron McDougall	John Hurley
Dan Farfaglia	Darlene Baker	Max Della Pia
Margaret Bartley	Michael Monescalchi	Ted Young
Frank Puglisi	Tim Perfetti	Tom Schimmerling
Bill Hughes	Daniel Sniezek	Cindy Appleton

**Board members absent**

Keith Batman

**Approval of Minutes**

Mr. Hurley presented minutes from the December 18, 2021 Board of Directors Meeting.

Mr. McDougall moved approval of the minutes. Ms. Baker seconded the motion.

The motion passed unanimously.

**Treasurer Report**

Mr. Puglisi reported the following:

**STATE ACCOUNT-**

BALANCE AS OF DECEMBER 17, 2021 \$19,433.44

19,433.44

- 150.11 – NEON MONTHLY CHARGE (JANUARY)

19,283.33

- 5.67 – NEON CREDIT CARD RETURN FEE (STRAW POLL DUES)

19,277.66

+ 29.80 – DRC 2021 DUES

19,307.46

+ 906.40 – DRC 2022 DUES (This amount is not deposited it came in 20,213.86 the mail and Actblue 1/14/22)

- 6,000.00 – Check 1078 deposit for Ramada Liverpool conference 2023

14,213.86

13,307.46 (BANK BALANCE AS OF JANUARY 14, 2022)

+ 906.40 (TO BE DEPOSITED TUESDAY 1/18/2022)

14,213.86 (TOTAL AVAILABLE AS OF 1/18/2022)

- 9,393.89 (ENCUMBERED FROM 2020 CONFERENCE FEES)

\$4,819.97 (UNENCUMBERED BALANCE JANUARY 14, 2022)

FEDERAL PAC

\$956.00 (BALANCE AS OF JANUARY 14, 2022)

NO TRANSACTIONS

\$ 956.00 (BALANCE AS OF JANUARY 14, 2022)

Mr. Puglisi explained the dues notice process. \$90.00 per county / \$10 for associate

Mr. Young moved approval of the Treasurers report. Motion seconded by Ms. Baker

The motion passes Unanimously

### **Nominating Committee – Mr. Jones**

Filling 9 positions at conference

- 4 Regional Vice-Chair
- 5 Directors

Elections will be held at the DRC conference regardless of whether held in person or virtual.

Election will be held using Election Buddy - virtual

All voting members of DRC, having paid dues will be able to vote whether in attendance at conference or remotely.

Proxy voting will not be allowed as all members will be allowed to vote.

Mr. Jones emphasized that there will be test votes – we need to take them seriously

Ms. Hunter – asked board members to help identify folks to consider running for a board position

The DRC continues efforts to look for geographic diversity on the board.

## **Straw Poll Task Force**

At the December meeting we decided to cancel 02/05/2022 Straw Poll event.

We decided to move the poll to be part of the April conference

## **Task Force Report**

Ms. Dobbs asked for clarification as to why associate members have to be county committee members from a DRC County.

Ms. Hunter explained that because the straw poll will happen after the state convention the board wanted as many rural county Democrats as possible to participate.

The questionnaire will be sent out 01/10/2022. All candidates must respond. Only those in contested races will be asked for interview.

## **Report from the Chair**

Ms. Hunter reminded the board that NY State rules require alternating upstate / downstate

She noted that given where we are with covid the convention should not be held in person

Ms. Hunter wanted to know who is not attending in person so that she can report to Jay. Ms. Hunter will send an email to all county chairs so that she can report back "real" information.

Ms. Hunter reminded board member that members can only carry 5 proxies and they must be from state committee people in the judicial district.

## **By-laws Committee – Ms. Baker**

No report

## **Issues Committee – Mr. Batman**

Talking with folks at the state on renewable energy siting rules. Making sure that rural counties are not used and get no benefit

## **Communications Committee – Mr. Thickstun**

Mr. Thickstun is continuing to work on a newsletter in anticipation of the conference.

Ms. Hunter reported that the DRC Facebook page has 1,600 followers. She continues to post information and links we can use to inform our committee members.

## **Political Committee – Mr. Perfetti**

Ian – described the REACH Project

Relational Organizing – use existing relationships merged with voter file to text for contact.

Extensive discussion about the positive aspects of the REACH program as well as the challenges

Problem with smaller races – contacts don't necessarily line up with district lines.

Easy to integrate with VAN

Challenge is to get buy in from committee people

First Lobby day in 2020 just beat covid shut downs

The Lobby Day was virtual in 2021.

Lobby Day 2022 will be January 28, 2022 - 3 sessions.

Issues to raise

- Election Reform
- Social Justice / Equity piece of the Marijuana legislation
- Redistricting

Ms. Hunter noted that it is hard to come up with a DRC position that is fair to each county. DRC is in a tricky spot because what is good for one county may work to the detriment of another. We should lobby for competitive districts.

Several board members mentioned that they were having issues with getting appointments through the Gov office. Many chairs share that they are having the same trouble

Ms. Hunter suggested that we should write to the Governor's office as a group (47 counties) to have the most impact.

Mr. Perfetti moved that DRC send letter to Governor's office expressing concern and frustration about the delay in getting appointments approved. Mr Young seconded.

Discussion followed

Mr. Schell recommended that we approach "inside" first before sending the letter to the Governor.

Ms. Hunter offered a friendly amendment that a letter be sent if we don't get a satisfactory response through less formal channels – Mr. Perfetti agreed / Mr. Hughes seconded. Vote to approve was unanimous

### **Conference Report – Ms. Dodds**

The 2022 DCR Conference will be held April 29 – 30 at renovated Desmond in Albany

She reminded us that the dinner Friday is a good time to let elected officials and candidates become familiar with DRC.

Tentative programming starts early Friday afternoon. We will bring elected officials' staff and other government officials dealing with rural issues to respond to questions.

State Senate networking. Saturday – congressional networking / candidate forums.

We are working through the last of the details so that registration will open soon

Straw poll is currently scheduled for Saturday afternoon

Ms. Dobbs reminded board members that if they received a test ballot please open and vote so that we know that the system works and need the information provided.

### **Old Business**

\_Ms. Bartley reported on status of gender language change for small town elected officials

### **New Business:**

**Next Meeting:** Saturday , 2022 at 10:00 am via Zoom Judith ask for delay until after lines are set.

Motion to adjourn made by Mr. Young at 12:19 pm. Mr. Schimmerling seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Meeting adjourned 12:23 pm

Respectfully submitted,

John F. Hurley

DRC Secretary