

Sierra Club of Pennsylvania, Southeastern PA Group Executive Committee Meeting
June 272016
Call-in Meeting

ExCom Members Attending: Pat Beaudet, Bill Brainerd, John Butler, Anne Lovett, Dave Moscatello, Prasad Ramnath, Dennis Winters, JimWylie

Attending by Phone:

ExCom Members Absent: Gerald Brown, Mathew Himmelein, Mike Hoppus

Other Members Attending: Karen Melton, Emily Davis

The Meeting was called to order at 6:20.

Secretary: June minutes will be reviewed in August

Treasurer: No report

Standing Committee Reports

Conservation Committee: (Jim)

Political Committee: Bill Brainerd and Karen Melton, Co-chairs

The following candidates are almost all are Democratic incumbents with environmental scores 80% and higher.

US Congress

1 Bob Brady

13 Brendan Boyle

PA House

70 Matt Bradford

140 John Galloway

141 Tina Davis

148 Mary Jo Daley

149 Tim Briggs

154 Steve McCarter

161 Leanne Krueger-Braneky

166 Greg Vitali

175 Mike O'Brien

185 Maria Donatucci

188 Jim Roebuck

194 Pam Delissio

195 Donna Bullock

198 Rosita Youngblood

Bill moved that the above candidate be endorsed. Dave seconded. The motion carried.

The following candidates for the PA House were endorsed for and won the April primary.

31 Perry Warren

150 Linda Weaver

158 Susan Rzucidlo

163 Barbarann Keffer

165 Elaine Schaefer

Bill moved that we endorse the above candidates for the general election. Karen seconded. The motion passed.

The following candidates for the PA House had not been endorsed previously.

146 Joe Ciresi Democrat.

We recommend endorsement. He challenges incumbent Republican Tom Quigley. He has at most average knowledge of global warming, but he knows it's happening and man is causing it. "How could we not have done it? PA should again become the renewable state." As a member of the Spring-Ford Area School Board he voted to install geothermal heating on five campuses. He worries that the Limerick Nuclear Power Plant has an inadequate evacuation plan in an emergency and stores cooling rods above ground. His campaign sounds good. He's raised at least \$8,000, possibly \$20,000. HDCC will pay for his campaign manager, a sign of confidence. He's knocked on 2,700 doors. District registration is 41.3% D, 41.8% R, 16.8% I, so he has a chance.

Bill moved and Prasad seconded that we endorse Joe Ciresi for the Pennsylvania House, district 146. The motion passed.

147 Rachel Hendricks, Democrat.

We recommend endorsement. She challenges Republican incumbent Marcy Toepel. Hendricks hasn't run before and seems motivated. She'd better be, because as of late May she had no money, no campaign manager, and no promise of help from HDCC. Toepel ran unopposed in 2014, won 67% to 33% in 2012 and 61% to 39% in 2010. District registration is 35.4% D, 48.4% R, 16.8% I. But Hendricks is a quality candidate. She has a degree and job experience in environmental science. She interned at DEP and now checks compliance with DEP surface mine permits for a private firm. Not many people as young as she, 28, are so committed to the public good. She needs our help and will be glad to get it. A district environmental problem is a quarry that may cause polluted groundwater to migrate under neighbors' properties. Toepel's LCV scores are 42% 2013-14 and 31% 2011-12.

Bill moved and Karen seconded that we endorse Rachel Hendricks for the Pennsylvania House, district 147. The motion passed.

156 Carolyn Comitta Democrat.

We recommend endorsement. She challenges incumbent Republican Dan Truitt, whose environmental score 2010-14 is 32%. She's been mayor of West Chester since 2010 and before that a Boro Councilmember. As mayor she and Council have installed solar panels on a public garage, powered city government on 100% renewable power, required tall buildings to be Energy Star, audited the Boro Hall for energy leaks, and passed a local version of PA's environmental rights amendment. She may recommend solar panels for a brownfield. Since 1988 she's been active in World Information Transfer, which warns the public of the health effects of environmental degradation. Fear of global warming is the main reason she's running for office; she wants to steer the state away from fossil fuels== She's raised \$65,000, while Truitt reported having just \$20,000 in May. HDCC will pay for her experienced campaign manager Lani Frank and possibly other staff. The district is 37.6% D, 46.1% R, 16.3% I, although West Chester Boro is solidly Democratic. This seat was held by Democrat Barbara MacIlvaine Smith 2006-2010.

Jim moved and Bill seconded that we endorse Carolyn Comitta for the Pennsylvania House, district 156. The motion passed.

162 Jim Butt Democrat.

We recommend endorsement. He challenges Republican incumbent Nick Miccarelli. We recommend endorsement. Butt is an aeronautical engineer at Boeing and was for years chief of R and D for the Osprey. Saving energy, being sustainable, and recycling are second nature to all engineers. They know energy is too expensive to waste. They can build things to last a lifetime. They share the Sierra Club view on such issues. Last week he knocked on 245 doors, work he enjoys. He has no campaign office

and no promises from HDCC but does have veteran Democratic Party office manager Jean Davidson as campaign manager, probably gratis. He had \$9,700 a few weeks ago, says he has \$16,000 now. His opponent had \$38,000 a few weeks ago but spent much more on the unopposed primary than did Butt. Miccarelli won 64% to 36% in 2010, had no opponent in 2012 or 2014. His LCV scores are 44% 2013-14 and 23% 2011-12. Currently the district is 39.7% D, 50.1% R, 10.2% I. Butt is almost a scientist, trying to raise money, assiduously going door to door. He has a tough race but deserves Sierra Club support.

Bill moved and Karen seconded that we endorse Jim Butt for the Pennsylvania House, district 1162. The motion passed.

Matt Darragh (Democrat) 170

He challenges Republican incumbent Martina White, who won the seat in a special election less than a year ago. We interviewed Darragh and his Democratic opponent Fran Nelms for the April primary but couldn't choose between them. Darragh won the primary and has requested our endorsement. The prominent district environmental problem is litter. Thanks to Benjamin Rush State Park there is enough open space. He raised the issue of global warming, calling it a catastrophic threat to human life. "We must rid people of Ronald Reagan's consumerism, the belief that progressives are over-reacting, that Americans are entitled to whatever lifestyle we want regardless of environmental impact. The environmental impact of factory farming is atrocious. Vast lagoons of pig feces. Look in the eyes of your children and picture a world of much less water, less food, and costlier natural disasters. This is a problem you may not have to deal with but it is certainly one your grandchildren will have to deal with." A problem is water, contaminated by fracking, lead, and aging infrastructure. Reclaim brownfields along the Delaware River, now inaccessible to the public. He wants a severance tax. Natural gas burns clean, but extraction is carbon intensive. He didn't know gas wells leak methane and thus cause global warming. His campaign issues are education and jobs. The district is 2:1 Democrat but elected Republican George Kenney for years. White was invited for an interview but declined.

Bill moved and Pat seconded that we endorse Matt Darragh for the Pennsylvania House, district 170. The motion passed.

177 Joe Hohenstein Democrat.

We recommend endorsement. He challenges 31-year incumbent Republican John Taylor. He's an immigration lawyer and clerk of Frankford Meeting, where earth stewardship is important, although the Meeting doesn't buy renewable power and isn't part of Interfaith Power and Light. He oversaw construction of the Meeting's green middle school and now manages a \$250,000 grant to build an outdoor STEM classroom on a vacant lot next door. He canvassed for Clean Water Action for 18 months. He called global warming a huge problem. He knew coal is the root of the climate change problem, natural gas burns cleaner than coal, and the way to reduce CO2 from cars is to raise CAFE and build houses close to mass transit stations. He's raised \$65,000, has a paid campaign manager and has been told by HDCC his race is a priority. He's gone door to door since January and most weeks knocks on 300. District registration is 61.6% D, 28.6% R, 9.7% I.

Bill move and Dave seconded that we endorse Joe Hohenstein for the Pennsylvania House, district 177. The motion passed.

Newsletter/Communications: (Pat Beudet)

Editorial deadline is July 5. I will send out a reminder again this week. Newsletter will be sent July 14.

Education Committee: (Bill Brainerd) No report

Nomination Committee: No report

Old Business

Cardinal Crossing: John moved that Sierra Club support a Delaware County \$100,000,000 Bond Issue to support open space in the county. These funds could be used to support the Cardinal Crossing area. The motion passed.

Outings: Pat

Pat, Bryan, and others to set up a least 3 out of the following 4 trips before it gets too cold for outings. This will require setting dates, recruiting leaders, trip planning and plan to include educational and social part. These include: Hike at John Heinz Nat'l Wildlife Refuge, Whale Watch trip in Cape May (\$30/person plus trip expenses), a bike ride or hike beginning in Manayunk along Schuylkill River Trail including new extension to Bartram's Garden and a hike in Wissahickon Park.

Chapter Meeting Support: Pat

Pat moved that SPG pick up expenses remaining for the Member Outing trip which both Charlie Isaacs and Pat Beudet attended. The motion was tabled.

Pat thought the Chapter would cover Charlie so I traveled with him. Turns out they will only cover part of it. Don't have exact figure yet but \$100 might do it. Both of us would appreciate the help. It was suggested that the motion be tabled until the exact figure is available. Dennis did not think \$100 would be a problem.

SEPTA gas plant (electric generation): Karen

Karen reported that 350.org has a campaign to stop the SEPTA plans to construct an electric generation plant (fueled by gas) at the Midvale bus depot /wayne junction. Power from the plant would be used to run regional rail trains from Temple Station North. 350 would like to see the plant run by renewable energy – solar. Karen would like Sierra club to sign on to this campaign. Jim suggested we contact Justin Wasserman (Gas organizer from Sierra Club). He also asked Karen to send materials to SPG members for their review. Once members had reviewed materials, an email vote would be held.

Member Engagement events: Anne, Emily

Membership events were held in King of Prussia and Philadelphia. Anne reported that 15 people attended the K of P event. Emily reported that 6 new people attended the Phila event along with 10 active club members. Dennis Winters, Sierra Club historian, spoke at the Phila event and Matthew Edmond, Montgomery County transportation planner, spoke in K of P. The K of P group plans to follow up with a hike at Mt Joy. Bob Drummey will lead the event. The groups indicated interest in a wide variety of topics.

Green Fest: Jim

Dennis has arranged for us to have a double booth at Green Fest on September 11 in Headhouse Square in Philadelphia. Justin Wasserman will provide funds to support our participation. Jim will talk to Mat about the event.

New Business

New Local Sierra Staff person. Jim

Jim reported that the Chapter is in the process of reviewing the applications of candidates for a Sierra Club position based in Philadelphia. The person would deal with issues related to environmental justice communities and unions

Announcements:

Meeting Call-in Number:

1-866-501-6174, PIN is 1004100#.

August meeting will be a call in meeting (Aug 3, 6:15)