



LCCDCC April 13, 2021 VIA ZOOM

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Call to Order and Introductions: Tonia Bossell, Chair

- **Tonia** called the meeting to order at **7:03 PM** via Zoom. Tonia welcomed all, and asked for introductions. In attendance (by Zoom identification): **Shawn Whyte, Kyle Joiner, Joe Cohenour, Rep. Mary Ann Dunwell, Kev Hamm, Mark Mackin, James Reavis, Shani Henry, Jacob Torgerson, Kate Dramstad, Thai Nguyen, Darien Scott, Barbara Bonifas, Kristine Mather, Guseppe DiMassa, Sandi Luckey.**

Minutes and Financial:

- Secretary **Linda Beischel** submitted March 2021 minutes to the chair, who posted them in Zoom chat for participants to access. After attendees had time to read the minutes, they were accepted without objection.
- Treasurer **Shawn Whyte** reported of a balance of \$1937.41.

Legislative Update:

- **Shani Henry** (Helena Moms Demand Action for Gun Sense) mentioned the latest discouraging Republican bill in the 2021 legislature. [HB367](#) (heard April 13 in the Senate Fish and Wildlife Committee) for a proposed Constitutional amendment (update, bill died in the Senate). Shani gave much testimony this session but was discouraged by the tight club of (R) legislators and lobbyists that wouldn't consider other voices.
- **Tonia** mentioned the "Spring Soiree" held in past legislative years to thank our legislators. She asked for thoughts on alternate ways to do so this year.
- **Rep. Mary Ann Dunwell (HD 84)** joined later in the meeting (Committee ran late), saying that she appreciated being "among friends" after the stress of legislative conflict. She thanked those who submitted written and oral bill testimony to legislative committees this session, since that record is admissible in court challenges. For example, [SB140](#) (PROVIDING A DIRECT APPOINTMENT PROCESS FOR THE GOVERNOR...REPEALING THE JUDICIAL NOMINATION COMMISSION) passed and was already contested in court, and there will likely be more litigation. Rep. Dunwell noted that this session railroaded "horrible legislation" against transgender individuals, reproductive rights, and local governance authority, among others. Democratic legislators were united as the "loyal opposition" and gave hope to their constituents.

Speaker: Sandi Luckey, Executive Director, Montana Democratic Party (MDP)

- **Sandi** (sandi@montanademocrats.org) introduced the new MDP deep canvass program. She opened by noting that our role as Dems ("like it or not") is to "deprogram" those captive to radical Republican disinformation. By 2022, Montana needs thousands of new Dem voters to rescue our state. That will require an aggressive rural program. Research has shown that deep in person conversations with voters can stay in their thoughts for months, and actually shift a voting population by 15%. This approach has been used successfully by other voter outreach groups around the country.
- Sandi shared part of her Deep Canvass presentation that will be used for a series of trainings, from April 24 to August 2021. Canvassers will knock doors where voters are (neighbors first) and spend 20 minutes listening deeply to them in order to connect on

shared values. This will build a stronger foundation for eventual campaigns. Follow up will include post cards, calls, digital ads, etc.

- Targeted voters (persuadable) are not strong R (or D), but independent, lean R, or unknown. All the turf has been cut, ready for precinct canvassers. Focus groups have strengthened the message. Pilot locations include Great Falls (where D's lost by smallest margins), Missoula (no increase in D votes despite 2020 work), and Billings.
- A "control" group in the database won't be contacted in person. The goal is to improve messaging as well as gather evidence that our message works.
- Per Sandi, on the doors "we're not selling what we believe, we're asking them what they believe". **Kate** asked what we need to do in Helena. Sandi said contact 30% of doors. **Mark** said he was open to the approach. **Tonia** strongly requested that LCCDCC activists (especially officers and precinct reps) get trained and canvass.
- Regarding candidate recruitment, Sandi noted that central committees have a primary role. The MDP has contracted with "[Contest Every Race](#)" for assistance, an organization working primarily in red states to get progressive candidates to file. MDP recruitment includes school board candidates and municipal races.

Speaker: Kate Dramstad, LCCDCC State Committee representative

- In conjunction with Tonia's request for precinct representatives to "deep canvass" voters, Kate outlined the "[Deep Listening](#)" training she received via her employer as part of management training. *"In general, deep listening is a process of listening to learn. It requires the temporary suspension of judgment, and a willingness to receive new information – whether pleasant, unpleasant, or neutral."*
- The goal is focus on the other person and ask open ended questions. Kate said she wants to have conversations with her neighbors in order to understand them better, as well as be open to shared values to promote connections.

Business: (Tonia and group)

- [All officer positions](#) will be up for election at the County Officers Convention held every odd numbered year. The 2021 election (including to fill the currently vacant vice-chair position) will be held Tuesday, May 11, at 7 PM via Zoom. Voters in the officer election must be precinct representatives or officers. Any Democrat who is a voter in Lewis and Clark County may run for central committee officer. **Sandi** said that (historically) the chair runs the election, but may delegate someone else to run the election for chair. **James** noted that the order of officer election is chair, vice chair (different gender identity), secretary, treasurer, two committee persons, committee alternates. **Tonia** asked attendees considering a run to contact her.
- The [2021 MDP Rules Convention](#) will be June 4 (by Zoom).
- **KeV** gave an update on upcoming municipal elections (Helena City Commission). He reported that two seats (incumbents are not likely to run) and the Mayor (running for re-election) will be on the ballot. Per the [Secretary of State's office](#), the candidate filing deadline is June 21, the primary is Sept. 14, the general election is Nov. 2, 2021.
- **Mark** enjoyed Daniel Pereira's online letter to the editor training for the MDP. To join the Slack (app) communication channel for letters to the editor, contact MDP digital coordinator Annie Horowitz annie@montanademocrats.org.

The meeting was adjourned with the Chair's thanks after 8 PM. **Next meeting Tuesday May 11, 2021** at 7 PM via Zoom. Respectfully submitted, Linda S. Beischel, secretary