



LCCDCC December 14, 2021 VIA ZOOM

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### **Call to Order and Introductions: Tonia Bossell, Chair**

- **Tonia** called the meeting to order at **7:01 PM** via Zoom, welcomed all, and asked for introductions. In attendance (by Zoom identification): **Sheena Wilson, Rep. Mary Ann Dunwell, Vice Chair Shawn Whyte, Treasurer Jacob Torgerson, Mark and Carole Mackin, Trent Bolger, Thai Nguyen, Kyle Joiner, Shani Henry, Julia Shaida** (Chair, Gallatin County CC), **Leonard Bates** (activist with Cascade County CC newly moved to Wolf Creek), **Quinlan O'Connor, Rep. Mary Caferro** (MDP LTE coordinator), **Hadley Stack** (new MDP Communications Director), **Sam Curry** (recently moved to Helena).

### **Speaker: Julia Shaida (Chair, Gallatin County Central Committee)**

- **Tonia** introduced **Chair Shaida** to speak about Gallatin successes in recruiting precinct representatives, and training them in organizing and voter outreach.
- **Julia** noted that she is comparatively new as chair. Previous chair **Elizabeth Marum** championed central committees. **Julia** first became a precinct representative in 2017, and became enthusiastic about her role. The central committee provided her with a manual that included her precinct map, voter file information, etc.
- Julia was invited to run and elected chair. Her main goal was building precinct representative participation and structure. In the spring of 2021, the Gallatin Executive Committee participated in a massive Zoom training on “Organizing for Power” by union organizer **Jane McAlevey** (see <https://janemcalevey.com/> and an inspiring video at <https://vimeo.com/285209608/a17e9200a4> . Jane’s presentation described three options to achieve power for change. “Advocacy” is usually driven by professionals toward specific goals (for example the ACLU). “Mobilizing” usually involves elite staff and committed activists. “Organizing” is an inclusive, collective effort by ordinary people.
- **Julia** noted that precinct representatives should both organize and mobilize to bring more participants into the central committee. In June 2021, Gallatin CC members phone banked strong Democrats to invite them to trainings in July. Participants practiced one on one conversations with each other. In the fall, precinct representatives (some newly recruited) knocked 1200 doors (“knock every door”) to talk about the legislature, bills passed, and voter concerns. This brought in more participants for their Christmas party. **Julia** noted that she has 30 or more volunteers inspired and motivated in her precinct.
- Gallatin CC is currently transitioning as grass-roots organizers for Democrats, as well as emphasizing allyship with legislators, other central committees, and other progressive groups. In 2020 they raised funds to hire staff (Alyson Roberts), who did a superb job. Now that Alyson has resigned, **Julia** is distributing responsibilities (two part-time staff), and encouraging officers to increase involvement.
- Gallatin CC emphasizes monthly donors to stabilize finances, and separates their operating budget from candidate donations. The central committee still participates in visibility events (parade, fairs) but concentrates on direct voter organizing.
- **Rep. Dunwell** asked about sitting precinct representatives who need more motivation. **Julia** noted that social media is OK, but one on one conversations are more effective. **Julia** said she calls Gallatin representatives frequently to remind them of expectations. Some have cordially resigned in favor of those willing to be more active.

- **Julia** agreed to share their central committee training materials. They used the “Reach” app (<https://www.reach.vote/how-it-works/>) for person to person organizing.

### **New/ Old Business: Group**

- **Hadley Stark** ([Hadley@montanademocrats.org](mailto:Hadley@montanademocrats.org)) introduced herself as new MDP Communications Director. She is eager to work with central committees on local messaging. She noted that Montanans should hold the current Superintendent of Public Education accountable on issues of (in)competence, independent of politics. Rep. Caferro is coordinating letters to the editor. The Montana Human Rights Network is organizing letters of support to educators and OPI employees. One suggested action was attendance at school board meetings in support of public education.
- **Tonia** asked **Thai** for insights on how to involve more young people. Thai agreed that the CC needs to move from a power model to an organizing model. He emphasized allyship / partnership with students (high school/ college) to involve younger activists.
- **Leonard Bates** volunteered to fill the open Precinct 33 representative position, and was accepted by acclamation. Although this was his first LCCDCC meeting, he previously was active with the Cascade County CC.
- **Tonia** attended a MDP “Contest every race” webinar for central committee leaders. She contributed suggestions on possible candidates and/ or support of incumbents in local and non-partisan targeted races.
- Venues for monthly meetings were again discussed, with recap of previous options. All agreed that when in-person meetings are resumed, the virtual option should be maintained. (**Update:** COVID surge precludes meeting in-person).
- **Mark** has collected precinct representative handbooks from several states. He has worked on adapting one from Colorado, and would like assistance.

### **Minutes and Financial:**

- Secretary **Linda Beischel** submitted November minutes to the chair, and shared them in Zoom chat for participants to access.
- Treasurer **Jacob Torgerson** reported a balance of \$1732.80 (and \$105 in savings).

The meeting was adjourned with the Chair’s thanks at approximately 8:00 PM. **Next meeting Tuesday January 11, 2022 via Zoom at 7 PM.** Respectfully submitted, Linda Beischel, secretary