



LCCDCC February 8, 2022 VIA ZOOM

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Call to Order and Introductions: Tonia Bossell, Chair

- **Tonia** called the meeting to order at **7:02 PM** via Zoom, welcomed all, and asked for introductions. In attendance (by Zoom identification): **Vice Chair Shawn Whyte, Sen. Jill Cohenour (also for HD84) and Joe Cohenour, Rep. Mary Ann Dunwell (also for SD42), Jack Ballard (for MT-2), Benjamin Kuiper (for HD81), Nick Gevock (Ballard for Montana campaign), Treasurer Jacob Torgerson (also for HD 81), Dan Guzynski (for Lewis and Clark County Attorney), Sheena Wilson, John Ilgenfritz, Mark and Carole Mackin, Jan Clinard, Thai Nguyen, Kev Hamm, Leonard Bates, Sam Curry, Darien Scott, James Reavis (for HD50), Ross Kendall, Jayson O'Neill, Jeff Balcken, Sam Curry, Ann Brodsky, Carmella DeMartino-Ryden.**

Featured Speaker: [JACK BALLARD](#) (Democrat for Montana's 2nd Congressional District, including Lewis and Clark County)

- **UPDATE:** Jack subsequently [withdrew from the race](#) on February 24
- **Nick Gevock** of Helena, Jack's campaign manager, introduced Jack
- **Jack** described reading Senator Tester's "Grounded", and agreed that Dems need to win in rural areas to keep seats in Congress. Jack emphasized that Dems need to show up, listen, and be credible.
- **Jack** focused on issues that resonate with working class voters in Montana and elsewhere: an unfair economy that favors corporate agriculture over producers, a federal minimum wage that hasn't increased since 2009, prosperity that doesn't reach them, threatened public lands, closing of schools in rural areas, and unaffordable healthcare access.
- **Jack** admitted Rosendale has a fundraising advantage, but believes money can't prop up a weak, over-confident candidate like Rosendale. **Jack** plans to attack the incumbent's record of proudly voting "no" on everything (280 times!). "Why is he there?"
- **Shawn** asked how **Jack** can get his message to those who vote "straight R". **Jack** said he doesn't have to win every R, but there are many moderate and persuadable R's who are fed up with Trump. He has the perfect background to win in this district.

New/ Old Business: Group

- **Tonia** reported on Contest Every Race Montana. The Montana Democratic Party is partnering with [Contest Every Race](#) to recruit and support progressive candidates for every elected office. Tonia has contributed suggestions on possible candidates and/ or support of incumbents in local and non-partisan targeted races. She said that so far, most races in the county have supportable candidates.
- **Tonia** and **Mark** reported working on a draft manual for precinct representatives. They are adapting one from another state to include LCCDCC's mission and core values. The draft was posted in the chat. **Jayson** and **Sam** expressed supported for the draft.
- **Tonia** would like to return meetings to in person on THIRD Tuesdays, with a possible social gathering afterward. The venue was not yet confirmed.

Brief Candidate Introductions (Tonia requested 2 minutes each):

- **Jill Cohenour** (termed out in SD42) is beginning her campaign for HD84, and has been honing her message. She emphasized that Democrats, especially Senator Tester, deliver for Montana. In contrast, Gianforte has not invested in workers or education. She apparently has a Democratic primary opponent.
- **Mary Ann Dunwell** (termed out in HD84) gave an update on her campaign for SD42. **Mary Ann** has been knocking doors since January (contacting strong Dems in precinct 7). So far she's raised \$14,000. Her R opponent is an amiable Chamber of Commerce Republican. **Mary Ann** encouraged local activists to volunteer with legislative campaigns (including hers).
- **James Reavis**, formerly a LCCDCC activist, announced his run for HD50 in Billings.
- **Jacob Torgerson** (for HD 81), has raised \$8000. He and his team have knocked the door of every Democrat in the district.
- **Ben Kuiper** (for HD81) emphasized his background on the Helena Citizen's Council and as a tax auditor. (UPDATE: Ben withdrew from the race).
- **Dan Guzynski** (for Lewis and Clark County Attorney) is in a non-partisan race. As a state prosecutor, he worked to protect children. There are other candidates in the race. Dan would welcome a candidate forum. **Rep. Dunwell** endorsed **Dan**.
- **Key Hamm**, candidate for Public Service Commission District 5, noted that new district boundaries (to equalize population) are not final. So far, his opponents are **Dooling** and **Skees**. **Key** is waiting to file until after the court decision (deadline March 14).
- Darien Scott, on behalf of the Helena League of Women Voters, noted the next talk on the 50th anniversary of the Montana Constitution is at the Library is on March 29. The speaker at a previous lecture was Supreme Court Justice Jim Nelson. The March 29 topic is "Your Right to Vote-- Save It or Lose It!". For more information see <https://lclibrary.libcal.com/event/8780546> .
- **Key** would like LCCDCC to sponsor an online candidate forum, as would **Rep. Dunwell**, and **Sen. Cohenour**. **Tonia** noted that **Jan Clinard** would be an experienced and excellent moderator. **Shawn** said she is very motivated to work with **Key** and **Tonia** on the technical aspects of a forum. Candidates will not be finalized until after the March 14 filing deadline.

Minutes and Financial:

- Secretary **Linda Beischel** submitted January minutes to the chair, and shared them in Zoom chat for participants to access.
- Treasurer **Jacob Torgerson** reported a balance of \$1784.77 (and \$105 in savings).

The meeting was adjourned with the Chair's thanks at approximately 8:20 PM. Later in March, the decision was finalized to return to meetings on the 3rd Tuesday, in person and via Zoom. **Next meeting THIRD Tuesday March 15, 2022 via Zoom AND IN PERSON at 7 PM.** Respectfully submitted, Linda Beischel, secretary.