



LEWIS & CLARK
DEMOCRATIC
CENTRAL COMMITTEE

LCCDCC JANUARY 11, 2022 VIA ZOOM

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Call to Order and Introductions: Tonia Bossell, Chair

- **Tonia** called the meeting to order at **7:00 PM** via Zoom, welcomed all, and asked for introductions. In attendance (by Zoom identification): **Sen. Jill Cohenour (also for HD84), Rep. Mary Ann Dunwell (also for SD42), Rep. Moffie Funk, Laura Smith (for HD79), Jake Troyer (for HD81), Benjamin Kuiper (for HD81), Nick Gevock (Ballard for Montana campaign), Treasurer Jacob Torgerson (also for HD 81), Sheena Wilson, John Ilgenfritz, Mark and Carole Mackin, Trent Bolger, Jan Clinard, Thai Nguyen, Joe Cohenour, Shani Henry, Kev Hamm, Leonard Bates, Sam Curry, Darien Scott, Ann Brodsky, Bob Schmitt, Debra Blossam.** Vice Chair **Shawn Whyte** was excused.

Brief Candidate Introductions:

- **[Laura Smith](#)** introduced herself as a Democratic candidate for HD79. The current incumbent, Rep. Rob Farris-Olsen (not running for re-election), encouraged Laura to run and has endorsed her. She served as a leader in Montana as the Deputy Director of the state health department, and as a federal prosecutor, bringing justice to victims of murder, sexual assault, violent crime, and fraud. Her husband is also an attorney, and they have two young daughters. Her campaign (for which former Lt. Governor Mike Cooney is Treasurer) is focused on housing, childcare, public lands, and government accountability.
- **Nick Gevock, campaign manager for [Jack Ballard](#)** (Democrat for Montana's 2nd Congressional District, including Lewis and Clark County) introduced himself. Jack was campaigning in Sidney, but will speak at our February meeting.
- **[Jake Troyer](#)** introduced himself as Democratic candidate for HD81, and will speak in March. He is canvassing his district and sent a mailer to voters.
- **Tonia** asked participants to consider working on a subcommittee.

Featured Speaker: Kev Hamm on PSC Redistricting

- **[Kev](#)** , introduced himself as a candidate for Public Service Commission District 5. The PSC hasn't re-drawn these district boundaries since 2003, and there are now serious population discrepancies between them. For example, District 5 has a population about 13,000 more than another district.
- There is now a lawsuit (brought by Republican Bob Brown and others) before a federal court noting violation of one person-one vote. The plaintiffs ask judges to intervene and re-draw the districts prior to this year's elections.
- The Montana Legislature has the constitutional responsibility to draw PSC districts, but has shirked it even prior to the 2020 census. Most legislators seem unwilling to call a special session. If the court does intervene, they would attempt to draw borders that don't impact candidates who have already filed. The deadline for redistricting would be March 14, the end of candidate filing.
- For more information, see <https://montanafreepress.org/2022/01/21/legislators-mull-limited-options-in-psc-redistricting-bind/>
- Tonia asked Kev to keep the us posted.

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. As chair, Tonia has been meeting with prospective local candidates.
- **Tonia** and **Mark** reported working on a manual for precinct representatives. They are adapting one from another state to include LCCDCC's mission and core values. They will try to meet in the interim before the next monthly meeting. Volunteers welcome.
- **Mary Ann Dunwell** (termed out in HD84) gave an update on her campaign for SD42. She will file for office with the Secretary of State on "[Opening Day](#)" January 15. Mary Ann encouraged local activists to volunteer with legislative campaigns (including hers).
- **Jill Cohenour** (termed out in SD42) is beginning her campaign for HD84. She apparently has a Democratic primary opponent (Noah Horan).
- **Sheena** alerted the group that a group of radical Republicans (led by Mathew Monforton) are gathering signatures to place Constitutional Initiative 121 on the November ballot. Decline to sign! Even the [Montana Chamber of Commerce](#) has joined a diverse coalition that opposes this effort to cap homeowner property taxes. Montana's property tax system is regressive, and needs reform. **BUT** CI-121 is an extremist attempt fool those who want lower taxes into starving funding for public education and other government services.

Minutes and Financial:

- Secretary **Linda Beischel** submitted December minutes to the chair, and shared them in Zoom chat for participants to access.
- Treasurer **Jacob Torgerson** reported a balance of \$1767.16 (and \$105 in savings).

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

FROM LCCDCC ENDORSEMENT POLICY: *"It is the policy of the LCDCC not to issue endorsements in partisan primaries--that is, races where one is running under a party label and seeking the party's nomination, such as the state legislature. The central committee will not officially elevate one democrat over another competing for the party nomination in the same race. That being said, an endorsement process is separate from recruiting candidates, encouraging candidates, and giving candidates candid advice. Individual committee members remain free to support partisan candidates of their preference, but the LCDCC will remain officially neutral."*