



LCCDCC January 12, 2021 VIA ZOOM

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Call to Order and Introductions: Quinlan O'Connor (Chair)

- **Quinlan** called the meeting to order at **7:03 PM** via Zoom. Quinlan welcomed all, and asked for introductions. In attendance (by Zoom identification): **Shawn Whyte, James Reavis, Mark Mackin, Sen. Jill Cohenour and Joe Cohenour, Trent Bolger, Shani Henry, Jan Clinard, Kyle Joyner, Sheena Wilson, Tonia Bossell (Vice Chair), Rep. Mary Ann Dunwell, Kev Hamm, Jackie Stoeckel, Catherine Scott, Karen DeHerman.**
- **Quinlan** announced that he is tendering his resignation as Chair. He will be assuming a new position in state government for which a less partisan profile is appropriate. Quinlan emphasized that he will remain involved in the work and activities of the Central Committee. **James** noted that according to the LCCDCC Bylaws I.1.2, "In the case of resignation, death, disability, or removal of the Chair, the Vice Chair automatically becomes the Chair until the next Executive Board election." Vice Chair **Tonia Bossell** graciously agreed to assume the office of Chair until the County Officers' Convention (held between April 15 and May 31 in 2021). Tonia took charge of the meeting.

Minutes and Financial: Group

- Secretary **Linda Beischel** submitted December minutes to the chair, who posted them in Zoom chat for participants to access. Kev moved, Quinlan seconded to accept.
- Treasurer **Shawn Whyte** reported a balance of \$1943.81 in checking. The required COPP report is in process. The treasurer's report was accepted without objection.

Legislative Update: Shani Henry (Moms Demand Action) on HB102

- Shani presented detailed background on this Republican bill on a fast track to passage. HB 102 would allow individuals without concealed carry permits, and therefore without any training, to carry concealed loaded handguns in Montana cities. Most concerning, it would allow guns on Montana college campuses.
- Thirty states, including Montana, currently give law enforcement the authority to deny a permit to people who pose a danger to the community. Permitless carry would strip law enforcement of this authority and force them to allow people with recent violent criminal histories to carry concealed guns throughout the state.
- Shani urged us to contact our legislators to oppose this dangerous bill. (Update: this bill passed both chambers on party line votes).

Business: Trent Bolger (on behalf of Sandi Luckey), Montana Democratic Party

- Trent reported that the state party is hosting weekly Zoom/ phone legislative updates on Monday nights at 6 PM during the session. He posted the link to request access to a MDP Slack channel coordinating talking points for letters to the editor (LTE).
- The Republicans in the legislature are proposing cuts of ONE BILLION dollars to the DPHHS budget (during a pandemic). Trent recommended the message "Republicans are taking away your healthcare" rather than "Dems support Medicaid expansion".
- In contrast, legislative Democrats are focused on increasing JOBS, especially in rural areas. We should testify (remotely) if we can, since otherwise only lobbyists get heard.

Emphasize local issues impacting jobs and the economy (in spite of our anger at the attempted coup in Washington last week).

- Trent noted that Dem Legislators are heroes in a legislative COVID trap. Thank them!

Legislator reports:

- **Rep. Moffie Funk** (HD82) sent her regards, but had other commitments this evening.
- **Rep. Mary Ann Dunwell** (HD84) explained remote testimony to legislative committees. Those who wish to testify must sign up before noon the previous day (Friday for Monday committees). Even though some chairs would like video of remote witnesses, only audio testimony is currently allowed (purportedly for security). For more information, see <https://leg.mt.gov/session/have-your-say/>. Tonia asked of the rules for participation can vary by committee (even though all chairs are Republicans). Rep. Dunwell said yes. For example, Rep. Geraldine Custer of Local Government is very fair.
- **Rep. Dunwell** advised all to avoid the Montana capitol from Feb. 17 to 20 (President Biden's Inauguration Day!).
- **Tonia** noted our legislative messaging subcommittee includes **Catherine Scott, Tonia, James, Kate,** and **Trent**. Tonia wanted a monthly report from them in order to coordinate legislative responses. She also **Sheena** if she would ask John Ilgenfritz to help with LTE.

Legislator reports: Senator Jill Cohenour (Minority Leader)

- Jill is thrilled to have 4 amazing staff. She reported the Governor yelled at her today. In spite of Trump's declaration in support of law enforcement and federal flags at half staff, Gov. Gianforte had not lowered flags at the Montana capitol. She dared to ask WHY?
- In response to a question from Rep. Dunwell, Jill indicated that legislative Democrats cannot seek judicial intervention for Republican opposition to COVID precautions until there is injury. For example, if there is community spread among legislators, committees in quarantine, etc. Jill did indicate that Dems are working with an attorney, and may need to act if in-person legislator attendance is required. Jill has been vaccinated as a public health lab employee, so she may attend in person. **Kev** noted that accessibility issues might support legal action. For example, lack of captions on meeting streams due to refusal to fund.

Business: James Reavis on precinct representative recruitment

- **James** posted a map of Helena area precincts, showing that many have no or only one representative. The by-laws allow for alternate representatives as well. Prospective candidates for open positions must attend at two monthly meetings in the last 6 months, and explain their interest in and commitment to the duties of the position.
- **Trent Bolger**, a former representative, volunteered to again represent precinct 8. He is a MDP senior advisor with high level organizing skills. James moved and was elected by acclamation.
- **Jan Clinard**, leader of the Democratic Action Club and former representative, volunteered to again represent precinct 13. She was also elected by acclamation.
- **Quinlan** indicated that he updated the website to reflect these representatives.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:59 PM. **Next meeting Tuesday February 9, 2021** at 7 PM via Zoom. Respectfully submitted, Linda S. Beischel, secretary