



LCCDCC January 17, 2023 in person and via ZOOM

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Call to Order and Introductions:

- **Chair Jacob Torgerson** called the meeting to order via Zoom at **6:30 PM** at the Lewis and Clark Library and via Zoom. In attendance (by sign-in sheet and Zoom identification): **Vice Chair Shani Henry, County Commissioner Candace Payne (and Sophia Jorgeson), Monica and Robert Abbott, Trent Bolger, Moffie Funk, Benjamin Kuiper, Mark Mackin, John Driscoll, Shena Wilson, John Ilgenfritz, Sen. Mary Ann Dunwell, Leonard Bates, Heather Waters, Ethan Maline.**

Speaker: County Commissioner Candace Payne

- **Commissioner Payne** was recently elected to this non-partisan office, and sworn in 17 days ago. She has heard from constituents that they are pleased she is truly non-partisan in her approach. She plans to focus on zoning and planning for future infrastructure. She also would like to ban loud fireworks in the county, especially to protect veterans with PTSD. (**Shani** noted this would protect pets as well).
- **Commissioner Payne** is impressed by the good work already being done in the county by libraries, fire departments, etc.
- **Jacob T** noted that Commissioner Hunthausen (who was elected as a Democrat prior to the non-partisan change) will be up for re-election in 2024.

Fundraising Update: Jacob T

- **Welcome brunch fundraiser: Saturday March 4** before the Mansfield-Metcalf dinner that evening. Jacob will work with the Creperie to possibly cater the event at their restaurant. He will also coordinate with the MDP promote and include the event on the M-M weekend schedule. Local legislators would be invited, as well as Democrats traveling to Helena for the dinner.
- **Spring Event:** Possibly at Brothers Tapworks Confluence.
- **Fall Banquet:** Jacob is working on a nationally known speaker
- **Shani, Jacob, Thai, and possibly Sandi** have expressed interest in fundraising. Per bylaws, the Fundraising Committee also includes the Treasurer.
- **Mark** suggested that the CC could encourage voluntary monthly dues, as has been done in the past. **Moffie** noted that this reliable income could cover basic expenses. **Monica** suggested “pass the hat” donations at monthly meetings, although that could complicate campaign finance reporting. **Heather** noted that younger activists rarely use cash. **Linda** noted that every CC email includes a link to the LCCDCC ActBlue page where monthly donations by credit card are easy to set up.

Reports:

- **Treasurer: Jakob Miles** was at another meeting and unable to attend.
- **Executive Board: Jacob T** said he is working with the County Chairs across the state to improve their monthly meetings and make their Association more effective.

Blue Bench is trying to use the local expertise of county chairs in candidate recruitment.

- **Legislative Action Team: Leonard Bates** is coordinating this effort to send action alerts as requested by local legislators. He asked for volunteers to let him know their issues of interest and areas of expertise. **Jacob T** noted that he has a Lewis and Clark county contact list from the MDP. Shani noted that central committees state-wide coordinate on legislative advocacy.

Legislator and Elected Official Updates:

- **Sen. Mary Ann Dunwell** thanked all who helped on her campaign and for other local Democrats. She noted the Republican supermajority promotes a legislative environment of silencing and oppression of dissent and expert input. She encouraged the central committee to assert our right to participate in the legislative process. She encouraged the central committee to disseminate legislative alerts from MDP and allied organizations on all issues to encourage individual advocacy where relevant. Sen. Dunwell is proposing legislation to require online posting of legal notes attached to legislation (which may indicate the bill is likely unconstitutional). There is a need to play defense and offense this session by trying to make bad bills better and proposing amendments.

New Business:

- **Moffie Funk** encouraged non-union members to support MFPE's well-resourced advocacy efforts and receive legislative updates by signing up at <https://www.mfpe.org/protectmontana/>
- **Vice Chair Shani Henry** recounted her experience testifying before the House Judiciary Committee in favor of HB202 (sponsored by Rep. Stafman). This bill provided for a judicial process to implement Extreme Risk Protection Orders ("Red Flag" laws) to temporarily remove firearms from those at risk to themselves or others. Rep. Stafman and several members of "Moms Demand Action" gave emotional testimony. They presented evidence that these laws have strong public approval and have reduced gun violence in other states. No opponents testified against the bill. Immediately after the hearing, while proponents were still composing themselves in the room, a motion was made to immediately table the bill and quickly passed by committee Republicans. **Shani** noted that publicizing Republican games and incivility via social media, letters to the editor, etc. is essential. **Sen. Dunwell** agreed.
- **Mark Mackin's** discussion of young voter outreach was postponed until the February meeting.
- There were no volunteers for precinct representative appointment.
- Secretary **Linda Beischel** submitted November minutes. No minutes were available from December 2022.

The meeting was adjourned with the Chair's thanks at approximately 7:45 PM. **Next meeting THIRD TUESDAY February 21, 2023 in person and via Zoom at 6:30 PM.** Respectfully submitted, Linda Beischel, Secretary.