



Official Minutes

Wednesday, April 8, 2009 7:00PM to 9:00PM

Democratic Club of the Santa Clarita Valley
26523 Huntswood Lane, Santa Clarita, CA 91387
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Meeting held at Caruso's Restaurant
18340 Sierra Highway, Canyon Country, CA 91351
Minutes: by Todd Hoover, Recording Secretary

Present: Bill Bailey, Mike Cruz, Rick Drew, Todd Hoover, Carole Lutness and Minerva Williams

Special Guests: Armando Jimenez, Patti Sulpizio, V. Jesse Smith and Sylvia Favaron

- **MEETING CALLED TO ORDER** and Quorum was established by Michael Cruz, President at 7:17 PM.
- **DPSFV Update for April 6 DP/SFV Meeting:** Bob Levine wasn't present, but he submitted his notes as follows:
 - **Political Action Committee resolutions approved:**
 - Impeachment of Judge Jay Bybee
 - Changing from 2/3 majority to simple majority
 - A Thank you from the DP/SFV President to Congressman Brad Sherman for being against the TARP Stimulus package
 - **Treasurer's Report:**
 - 187,000 in bank
 - Phone problem with AT&T overcharges resolved
 - Landlord refunded deposit money from old headquarters
 - **Communications Committee Report:**
 - P/SFV E-Board Roster now available for E-Board members only
 - **Events Committee Report:**
 - DP/SFV Annual picnic – May 31st – Sherman Oaks Park
 - Club President's Breakfast – Some time in June
 - Truman Awards Ceremony – Some time in November
 - **Introductions:**
 - DP/SFV E-Board Roster now available for E-Board members only
 - Russ Warner
 - **Credentials Committee Report:**
 - 51 Members Present
 - 4 Observers Present
 - **Endorsement Committee Report, DP/SFV Endorsed:**
 - Judy Chu endorsed for Special Congressional Elections Race
 - Robert Nakahiro for Community College Board Seat Number 6
 - Propositions 1A, 1B, 1C, 1D, 1E and 1F
 - **DP/SFV Voted to spend \$19,000 for mailers for the May Special Elections:**

- **Treasurer's Report:** Treasurer Jonathan Kraut was not present so Bill Bailey presented on his behalf: There is currently \$896.50 in the regular account and \$50 in the education account.
- **Mike Cruz** indicated that as part of **Obama's Call to Service Plan** we've been working with several local non-profits. Recently raised \$500 for the local homeless shelter and this month will be working with the SCV hiking club.
- **Bill Bailey** presented his work with the SCV Hiking Club. This club is run by Dianne Erskine-Hellrigel. There are several possible hikes that we could participate in. There is the Whitman Canyon hike which is about 2½ miles each way. This hike would begin in the area around San Fernando Road and the 14 Freeway. Another hike is the one up Rice Canyon. This hike is about 2 miles each way up to a nice plateau. Finally Dianne has volunteered to take us to her 'secret place' at Mount Pinos to watch condors. This is a nice campground, but it can only be arrived at by driving there, so this place really wouldn't lend itself to hiking. A \$5 per person donation is suggested. The club endeavors to sustain the wildlife environment by supporting the Omnibus Bill (McKeon & Boxer), maintaining trails and working with the SCV Boys and Girls Club to take children on hikes. We are tentatively planning on a hike some time around the 17th of May, possibly to the Pleasant View Ridge.
- **Minutes were passed out by Recording Secretary, Todd Hoover.** The February and March Meetings were approved as presented.
- **Armando Jimenez** started to discuss Proposition 1D. Armando is the Director of Research and Evaluation for **First 5 LA**. Jimenez is a passionate, well-informed speaker on Prop 1D. He indicated that Prop 1D would affect 900,000 children in the LA County. This does not even include the number of people employed by the impacted programs and the effect on their families. This proposition is supported by the Democratic Party, but it is destructive because it diverts money from children from 1 to 5 years old. Jimenez expressed, "From one to five are the most critical years for children since this is when a child's neurons are formed." He referred to an article in the **LA Times** stating that education hasn't filled the gap and that Obama has also identified that this is a problem. This bill was passed because a deal was made with the Republican State Senator Cox. This will affect many programs and will impact 3000 jobs. \$268 million will be diverted every year from tobacco tax revenue for healthcare, dental care, etc. This is not a solution that makes sense. Williams asked, "Why are finances always taken from the children's programs? How is it that the money is just sitting there? Why is this all being done to satisfy this one man (Cox)?" Carole Lutness answered, "they have instructions from Karen Bass to support these measures, because if they don't pass they will have to go back into session and that the Republicans will give absolutely no concessions. This is just plain extortion". Cruz asked, "is this money ever be paid back?" Jimenez answered "No", that. Commissions allocate their money for multiyear projects. Williams mentioned that, "DPSFV members gave the impression Monday night that 1D money is just sitting there". She asked for clarity in understanding "how can money be sitting somewhere, is it allocated or not?" Jimenez said that "The reality is that this is a multiyear project and that it is not meant to be spent in the first year and that many projects are funded in this manner". Williams asked the question again. Lutness responded that the Republicans want to dismantle Props 10 and 63 all along and that the Dems had to make this deal to prevent the Republicans from pushing forward with their "no tax increase" agenda. The tobacco lobby is behind the Republicans efforts to repeal Prop 10. There was also discussion over whether the new federal tax on tobacco products will decrease the amount of sales overall. Carole Lutness mentioned, "This is why Audra Strickland and Cameron Smyth and George Runner get so much money from the tobacco interests". More heated discussion ensued. One of the tactics used by the opposition is to claim that there are not enough children to enroll in some of the programs, but this is certainly not true.
- **Carole Lutness** discussed the Propositions 1A, 1B, 1C, 1E and elaborated on information provided by Jimenez. She indicated that ASCME is paying her salary to oppose Prop 1E. Prop 63, the Mental Health Services mentally ill. Since it passed in 2004 it has been extremely successful in Los Angeles getting people off the streets. It reduced the caseload size and allowed 24-hour access. It has had an

83% success rate. It has reduced the incarceration rate by 40% in LA County. It costs \$16,000 a year to provide these servers versus \$94,000 to house them in the LA County Jail. Republicans continue to pursue their goal of shrinking the budget so small they can drown it in a bathtub. Those helped by Props 10 and 63 don't have voices and constituencies and the rich don't want to pay. Prop 1E is completely diabolical. Grassroots efforts, both Republican and Democratic, are underway in both parties to oppose it. As an example, something like this has been done in Colorado and as a result there are no services available to autistic children. The only real solution to these problems is to overcome the 2/3 requirement to pass budgetary measures in California. That will take a proposition on the 2010 ballot. This is where all our efforts must go. Apparently DP/SFV unfortunately has gone along with these propositions in order to appease the Republicans. Prop 1C is an illusion based on junk bonds for California lottery futures. These cuts so far have resulted in salaries for in-home service workers being reduced from \$11.50/hr to \$9.50/hr and a \$50 cut in SSI disability benefits. 1B is a payoff to the CTA and 1F freezes salaries for elected officials during the times of crisis. ASCME is against all of these propositions. SEIU opposes props 1A, 1B and 1E. Schwarzenegger divides labor. The Dems are scared there would be no compromise. Prop 1A is pivotal. Sulpizio asked if there is anything we can do now? Cruz answered that the budget for the next 18 months has already been passed and there wasn't much we could do right now. Act, passed in 2004 so that millionaires would pay a 1% tax. In the 70's Reagan had de-institutionalized mental health, leading to 73,000 homeless. Prop 63 was passed to help the

Carole Lutness continued that there is \$30 million allocated to defeat the 2/3 requirement and that John Burton must commit to raise the \$30 million to oppose this. Cruz said the only reason the Republicans responded at all was because the Dems had threatened to use fees instead of taxes, which would not be bound by the 2/3 requirement. Williams asked about the auto tax. Carole Lutness responded that it had already been factored in. Jimenez pointed out that the money lost from these cuts is actually double since the matching federal funds will be lost in addition to the funds allocated from California. Carole Lutness added that the long range costs are always higher (emergency room visits, jail instead of treatment, etc). Williams asked if this affects the Headstart program. Jimenez answered that it does not since it is a federal program. It was generally agreed that we need to oppose these endorsements, write letters to the editor, columns, mass emails, etc. Carole Lutness said she'd be at the next DAA meeting to debate Jim Wisely on this. Bailey said these are common-sense issues. Williams pointed out that if 20% support these propositions that it must mean 80% don't! **Bailey moved and Rick Drews seconded that the club will vote "no" on all propositions except for 1F. After additional discussion**

- **We voted to oppose propositions 1a, 1b, 1c, 1d and 1e and support 1f. The motion passed unanimously**
- **Williams** moved to discuss the State Controller candidates incumbent Eric Bradley versus Hillary Crosby. She indicated that Bradley told us that he didn't have any accounting, booking, CPA or financial background and therefore shouldn't be Controller for the Democratic Party. She said that it didn't mean she didn't personally like Bradley but doesn't change include "not the good ole boys" but "change we can believe in", isn't this Obama's message and it should permeate throughout the party. Why have someone in the position who doesn't do ALL OF THE JOB because they were there when no one else was qualified or ran for it. That isn't the situation now. Haven't we had eight years of I'd enjoy having a beer with him thinking which got us to where we are today?" Hillary Crosby knows all of the aspects of the job and has had to fundraise in her club and her area candidates. Carole Lutness spoke in his defense, comparing John Anderson's being Controller for the DAA and DN38. Carole Lutness said John Anderson is not technically the treasurer since this is done by Kinde-Durkee. Williams responded, "but is John Anderson raising funds for the clubs?" Carole Lutness suggested that the title of Controller might not really be that important. Williams rebutted, "so it is OK to not have the skills and knowledge of the state job qualifications and only emphasize one portion?" Carole Lutness responded with the economy being what it is now we need a fundraiser. Williams responded, "Isn't that what Burton is excellent at?" We discussed Bradley working with Burton under an executive appointment

and delegating the “skills portion to someone who knows the entire job”. **Minerva moved that the club put full support behind Crosby, and Todd Hoover seconded.**

- **We voted** to endorse Hillary Crosby for the Controller for the California State Democratic Party and the resolution passed, with Carole Lutness opposing.
- **New Business:** Carole Lutness brought up that the Employee Free Choice Act still has a chance of passing and that we need to call Senator Feinstein. Also DN38 is going to be doing voter registration along the 210 Frwy Corridor. She wants people to volunteer for 2hr. shifts. She will be calling members also.
- **Media:** Carole Lutness and Williams will be working on getting educational messages out to Democrats in the area on the Propositions to assist voters for the May 19th election.
- **Mike Cruz adjourned the meeting at 9:10pm**