

Meeting Minutes for Joint Meeting of
Staunton, Augusta County and Waynesboro Democratic Committees
October 9, 2018
Staunton City Council Chambers

CALL TO ORDER: The joint meeting was called to order by Beth Daisey, Staunton chair and Frank Nolen, Augusta County chair at 7:06 PM.

Present: From Staunton – Beth Daisey, chair; Josh Howard, vice chair; Ken Venable, treasurer. **From Augusta County** – Frank Nolan, chair; John Kowal, secretary; Diane Kowal, vice chair for communications; Barbara Brothers, vice chair for outreach. Also present was Lauren Thompson, Democratic candidate for the 25th State Delegate District and Samantha Litchford and Lynlee Wastie from the coordinated campaign. Joint meeting attendance estimated about 30 folks.

Introduction of Attending: All present were asked to introduce themselves and their affiliation.

NEW BUSINESS

Financial report: Paint the Valley Blue Event – Beth Daisey began by thanking selected volunteers for their contribution towards the success of the event and then expanded to include thanks to all the volunteers that contributed their time and efforts. It was estimated that 150 people attended the event which made for a very successful fund raiser. Net proceeds will be divided equally among the SAW Democratic Committees. Beth expressed the understanding that each committee will decide on how to allocate their portion of the proceeds between supporting the Lewis campaign and committee operating expenses. Also noted was the fact that approximately 80% of registration fees were collected through ActBlue and coupled with the PayPal credit card readers helped registration and collections go much smoother. Beth admitted that the live auction needs to be worked as the crowd quickly disbursed following the Kaine/Lewis addresses leaving three of the most attractive items unsold.

Question from the floor: How can we get more members of the minority communities to attend our functions? **Answer:** Reach out and attend events sponsored by these minority communities and develop relationships.

Election Night Party: Beth indicated that the Jennifer Lewis campaign is already planning an election night party at Mill Street. The combined SAW committees will reach out and offer assistance to the campaign for the party. (Note: Subsequent to this meeting, per the Jennifer Lewis campaign, the election night party has been moved to Seven Arrows Brewing in Waynesboro)

Sample Ballots for Election Day: Through discussion it was confirmed that across the three jurisdictions (Staunton, Augusta County and Waynesboro), the ballots will be identical (except Craigsville will be electing three town council seats). Therefore, it was decided that printing of the sample ballots to be handed out at the polls by volunteers will be done jointly. A committee was formed consisting of Julie Scofield-Staunton, Barbara Brothers-Augusta County, and a representative from Waynesboro to be named later. Marney Gibbs and Diane Kowal said they would assist in organizing volunteers. Frank Nolen indicated that the Lewis campaign wants a union label on everything printed. Cliff Garstang advised that by regulation sample ballots cannot be printed on white or yellow paper.

Amendment Pamphlet Available: There will be two proposed amendments to the Virginia State Constitution on the ballot this November. Pamphlets providing full text of the proposed amendments along with a short explanation was made available to all in attendance. It was noted that these pamphlets are available at the Staunton/Augusta and Waynesboro HQs and also at the registrars' offices.

OLD BUSINESS

NAACP Banquet: As indicated in the answer to an earlier question (see above), the importance of engaging the minority communities was recognized and that the NAACP banquet provides the perfect opportunity. In support of the banquet, the Staunton committee purchased a full page ad while Augusta County and Waynesboro committees shared a half page ad in the banquet brochure. Diane Kowal was to send out a broadcast providing contact information for purchasing tickets. (Note: After the meeting it was discovered that unfortunately the event was sold out).

Voter Registration Report: Diane stated that our voter registration drives have resulted in 165 registrations since April. Efforts continue with Gretchen Bishop at Mary Baldwin Tues & Wed, October 9th & 10th and Crystal Johns, Diane Kowal and John Kowal at Stuarts Draft HS Tues October 9th. On the topic of area High Schools, Diane expressed disappointment that Riverheads High School responded negatively to our request to conduct voter registration at that public school. Hitting a few high lights, Diane reported that we registered 42 at Blue Ridge Community, 22 at The Frontier Culture Museum during the new citizen swearing in ceremony and 25 at the Staunton Pride festival. Diane specifically recognized Gretchen for the great job initiating voter registration in new venues we have not been before (Mary Baldwin, Blue Ridge and Frontier Culture Museum specifically). As an aside concerning Staunton Pride, Diane indicated that the Dem Booth (separate from the voter registration booth) was very busy all day necessitating a restock of Jennifer Lewis signs mid-day to keep up with demand.

Canvassing and Phone Banking: Diane was emphatic – we need more volunteers to show up!!! Out of a list of about 90 people that said they would canvass, only about 15-20 are showing up on a consistent basis. Diane stated she is currently doing an update to the volunteer list and schedule and another email. The fixed canvassing schedule at both the Staunton/Augusta and Waynesboro HQ locations are: Tuesday and Thursday, 4:30-7:30; and Saturday and Sunday, 9:00-Noon, 1:00-4:00, 5:00-7:00. It was suggested that phone calls be made to those on the volunteer list to increase participation and immediately Marney Gibbs volunteered to take the first ten on the list and Sarah Paiste stepped up to call all volunteers on the Waynesboro list.

Question from the floor: Do we have the high school students we had last year canvassing during the Michelle Edwards campaign? **Answer:** Last year's organizers Cassidy and Liam are off at college and no one has stepped in to fill that void so unfortunately, we do not have the young people helping.

Statement from the floor: Lynlee Waiste of the coordinated campaign advised that November 3-6 there will be a big final push with all day phone banking and canvassing planned.

OPEN DISCUSSION

Phone Banking – **Question:** Nothing was mentioned specifically about phone banking, are we doing this?
Answer: Yes, will begin the week of October 15th. It is a major part of the GOTV (Get Out the Vote) push leading up to election day.

Julia Davis has had several sets of signs stolen and defaced. She has an open case with the Augusta County Sheriff's Department and is determined to press charges if the perpetrators are caught. Julia was adamant that if this happens to you, call the police.

Rides to the Poles – Marney Gibbs immediately volunteered to coordinate Staunton. Frank Nolen said the Augusta County committee will work on providing rides. Diane Kowal suggested we contact assisted living facilities to offer rides. It was determined that this needs to be coordinated further.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:15.

Respectfully submitted,

John Kowal, ACDC secretary