

Perry County Democrats Meeting

November 19, 2020

Location: Zoom meeting

Attendees:

Jacob Zentichko	Melanie Wertz	Evelyn D'Elia
Mary Colledge	Alan Balchanus	Susan Washinger
Jim Hahn	Karen Anderson	Barb Hench
Ann Miller	Emily Burt-Hedrick	

Meeting was called to order about 6:35 PM.

The meeting was moved online, instead of at the Extension Office, due to the high rate of COVID cases occurring in the county and state.

Minutes:

Karen moved, and Melanie seconded that minutes of 10/15/20 meeting be approved. Motion passed.

Jerry Philpott was not able to make it to the meeting and to give the Treasurer's report.

Discussion about what the committee owes for the Biden signs. Jacob indicated that he had paid for the signs up front himself.

Discussion ensued about stealing of political signs during the run-up to the November 3 election. Apparently at least one Republican County Commissioner did not think it was a problem, but that it was a normal, long-standing practice in the county.

New Business:

1. Election Recap. Jacob asked that we all keep a close eye on any legal maneuvers that may occur, should the PA Republican-controlled legislature try to appoint Trump electors, against the expressed will of the electorate in PA. If that happens, we need to mobilize.
2. Turnout was very high in Perry County. About 80% of registered voters voted. About 25% of ballots were done by mail.
3. We had a good turnout of volunteers, including those who helped with the opening and processing of mail-in ballots. Melanie expressed her thanks to all volunteers.
4. Karen Anderson introduced Jim Hahn from Juniata County, who assisted Karen as a “canvassing/observer” of the processing of mail-in ballots on Election Day and the day after. Many thanks to Jim!!
5. Karen explained that she and Jim had both attended the PA Democratic Voter Protection Program training. This training taught them what to observe, what to question, what they are legally allowed to do and what they cannot legally do.
6. Karen explained that the County officials worked very well with the canvasser/observers. They included them in each decision to discard to accept questionable ballots. Karen and Jim were treated with respect by the Republicans as they worked. They were permitted to look over the shoulders of the ballot workers.
7. Jim agreed that everyone was very friendly and there were not issues.

8. How many ballots were questioned? Jacob gave some stats:
 - a. 47 were incomplete
 - b. 159 were rejected due to incorrect declaration, or failure to seal in secrecy (inner) envelope, or signature on the secrecy envelope.
 - c. Jim indicated that very few were rejected in Juniata County, also.
9. Jacob indicated that the sign distribution went well. The committee took in over \$1000 in voluntary donations. We will try that same approach again in future elections.

Other Discussions

Jacob asked that we start looking ahead into 2021 and 2022.

- a. There are appointed positions in some local governing councils, such as water/sewer authority. Those are good starting positions for someone to serve.
- b. Newport council has a vacancy that will be appointed in December. If any Newport resident is interested, please contact Jacob.
- c. We need to get people on School boards and we need people to run in local elections.
- d. Jacob will put out more information about such opportunities for office in the future.
- e. In 2022 we will have an open gubernatorial election, and an open Senatorial election (Toomey is retiring). Also we would like to have Democrats to run for State Representative.
- f. Redistricting will occur in 2021-22 from the 2020 Census. We need to insure that redistricting is fair.

Jacob expressed hope that perhaps we will be able to do events, such as fund-raisers, come summer 2021, if the pandemic is under control. However, we must find a new venue for events, since the River Bend Brewery is closing. They have been unable to survive under pandemic health and safety rules.

When do elections occur for the Perry County Democratic Committee Board?

- a. Jacob was appointed as President to take over from Mark Whitmoyer. Emily was appointed as Secretary to take over from Helen Michener.
- b. An initial review of the Bylaws by Melanie indicates that the Board “reorganizing” is to take place after the state Primary election, during a gubernatorial election year. That means that the Board elections are to occur in May/June time in 2022. Terms are for 4 years.
- c. Melanie and Jacob will double check the bylaws and will email all if that interpretation is determined to require correction.

Melanie said that all political signs can be returned to her.

Karen said that she is the VP for the Tri-County Democratic Women (Dauphin, Perry, and Cumberland). The group is getting more active, and they want to support getting Democratic women into office. If anyone wants to run, please contact Karen.

There will be no December 2020 meeting; next meeting will be January 2021. Meetings will likely be held via Zoom for the foreseeable future, due to the pandemic.

Adjournment:

Emily moved, and Melanie seconded, that we adjourn.

Motion passed.

Meeting adjourned at 7:11 PM.

Respectfully submitted:

Emily Burt-Hedrick