

GPUS ANNUAL NATIONAL MEETING MINUTES- PLENARY 2006
FRIDAY AFTERNOON, 7/28
FACILITATORS: Rick Lass, NM; Lori Burton/OR

- I. Nominations for GPUS Steering and Coordinated Campaign Committees
- II. Steering Committee Reports from Co-chairs and Secretary
- III. Treasurer's, Accountant's and Finance Reports and Discussion
- IV. Schedule updates and Announcements

GPUS is comprised of 47 affiliate state parties and caucuses
Present were representatives from 33 states/caucuses, with 75 potential votes, 17 potential proxies. (Question of whether CT delegates eventually arrived, which would have given 77 potential votes.)

approx. 1:00 p.m.

Annual Meeting Committee co-chair Ruth Weill/WI opened the meeting with a welcome and introduction.

Claudia Ellquist/AZ made a few announcements, information and welcome

Roll Call

States/caucuses present, 34 (if CT is included); 33 needed for quorum.

AZ - 2 V
ARK - 2V
CA - 8V, 5P
CO - 2V
DE - 1V, 1P
DC - 2V
FLA - 4V
GA - 1V, 1P
ILL - 4V
IN - 2V
IA - 2V
LC - 1V
ME - 1V, 1P
MD - 2V
MA - 1V, 1P
MI - 4V
MN - 1V, 1P
MS - 2VV
NV - 2V
NJ - 2V
NM - 2V
NY - 3V, 3P
OH - 1V, 1P

OK - 2V
PA - 2V, 2P
RI - 1V, 1P
TN - 2V
TX - 6V, 1P
UT - 2V
VA - 2V
WA - 2V
WI - 2V
NWC - 1V

Agenda Approved, Consensus

I. NOMINATIONS for STEERING COMMITTEE Co-chair and GPUS Treasurer
Co-chair nominees: Sarah "Echo" Steiner/FL, Linda Manning-Myatt/MI, Elizabeth Arnone/NJ, Jim Coplen/IN, Tom King/UT

Nominated from the Floor: Roger Snyder/NY, nominated by GPCA

Announcement of results of online election to fill SC co-chair vacancy: Katey Culver/TN

Nominee for Treasurer: Jody Grage/WA

Coordinated Campaign Committee: Nan Garrett/GA; Greg Gerrit/RI; Sally Kim/NY
Greg Gerritt, co-chair, described work of the CCC. There are 10 seats open.
Candidates need written permission from their state/caucus. The CCC will probably be submitting a proposal to change membership process.

II. STEERING COMMITTEE INTRODUCTION AND REPORT

A. SC Report described the work SC does.

Steve Kramer/MD: we are working with forming state parties: Wyoming, West Virginia (Green & Mountain Parties will merge, and the Mt Party has a ballot line)

Gwen Wages/MS: SC work involves the madness of the mundane, grunt-work of the party. The SC has worked to become better organized and more professional - P&P's, job descriptions for secretary & treasurer; we're riding a bike as we're building it. SC developed a Recall Process and SC elections proposal. We have improved smooth office operations, with weekly updates from office Director Emily Citkowski and monthly reports from Political Director and Fundraiser, Brent McMillan.

Marc Sanson/ILL: thanks for staff, Brent & Emily, fundraisers (2 phone, online).
Future challenges: include work with caucuses, still unresolved; proposal process.

Committee reporting [and accountability]: committees are supposed to be reporting monthly. So far, there are reports from the SC (bi-weekly calls), Fundraising, Finance, Eco-Action - we need to refine way committees should report, what reports should involve; also retire committees that are defunct or not working at all.

Portfolio reporting was put in place 2 years ago. Expectations of SC members.

Compensation: recommended finding a way to compensate treasurer and secretary, at the very least; co-chairs, as well.. Also, expenses need to be covered. Fundraising is a need; there are lots of things we need to be doing, but lack funds.

B. Secretary's report: Holly Hart /IA(see Secretary Report included in the 2006 Annual Meeting Documents and Reports)

III. TREASURER'S ACCOUNTANT'S REPORTS

FinCom, FundCom

Jake Schneider/WI, Treasurer; Doug Malkan/CO, Accountant; Brent McMillan, Emily Citkowski, Marc Sanson/ILL

Jake Schneider and Doug Malkan reviewed GPUS financial situation. We are spending less than budgeted, but still in tough financial straits.

Emily Citkowski spoke about online fundraising, the need to expand lists; online presence reaches younger donors

Marc Sanson reported for the fundraising committee; we have staff and officers, need more members

JAKE'S RECOMMENDATIONS:

Cost-cutting (not necessarily a list of priorities):

- eliminate state sharing, including second quarter, approx. \$10,000 currently owed for 2nd quarter (will take NC proposal, to not pay now and in future)
- immediately cut staff salaries by 25% (have already spoken w/ staff)
- immediately cut independent contractor association (media coordinator, webmaster, etc) by 50%
- no reimbursements whatsoever for committees and caucuses, from this point forward
- consider canceling such services as DIA (aprox. \$600/mo)
- consider closing DC office at end of lease, October, 2007

Consider contracting with independent fundraising contractors who will be supervised by Fund and Fin committees. They would get a percentage of what they raise and they would pay expenses.

There will be further discussion during the Sunday plenary.

DISCUSSION

Yager/VA - question about cash on hand; how this came about. Jake - guessing we have competitors, particularly peace organizations. Marc - Katrina. Brent - counter-efforts top starve GPUS, have confronted these behind the scenes.

Schiller/DC - nat'l office is located in area with high retail value; is it possible to find a new place in DC area, possibly on "green line" metro, less costly? Brent - he and Emily did a lot of searching. Locked in current lease below market value for 2 years. If looking elsewhere, we won't find another place in DC, will talk about moving office out of DC to lower rent area. Marc - we're talking in hundreds of dollars, this alone won't solve problem.

Everett/CA - is a sustainer; this is a small number, more need to become sustainers. Doesn't support cutting state sharing, considers that in making donation half will go to state.

Woods/CA - keep in mind bigger picture; party was doing great through 2000, then got hit with negativity in 2004 and didn't come back strong, went into cringing mode. Money comes from excitement for party, need exciting, full-out campaigns.

??/AZ co-chair- Green Card program, how are renewals handled; concern for accurate information (state acronyms sometimes cause info to go to the wrong state; this will be corrected).

Clement/VA - elimination of extraneous programs; relocate office and sublet current space; reduce state share; does not recommend eliminating staff.

Nabewaniec/NY - breakdown of Green Card program; are purchasers coming from everywhere, or concentrated; can we boost areas?

Huckelberry, ILL - GPUS needs to understand existing budget is completely inadequate and insufficient for a major national political party. Believes situation is much worse than Schneider has described it. It's time to go a step further, how to get on track so when 2008 rolls around we're not operating like this.

- When we passed 2005 GPUS budget, one aspect explicitly states that only way it would work is that if NC got involved in fund raising. We ain't done it.

- We don't have much in the way of fundraising experience. Strongly recommended we train people to do this and go back to states and do basic fundraising;

- ILL state party fundraising has quintupled. No one is going to give you money unless you ask for it. Doesn't see GPUS consistently going out and asking for it. Main issue - one person can only ask so many people for money, more people must invest in process. Not as simple as increasing FundCom size, rather we need a personal commitment for more people to engage in fundraising work. Double budget, triple fundraising intake. Make FR #1 priority as a body, if we want to be a serious party to run in 2008.

Bob Leaviss/WI - agree with Phil, budget is an embarrassment. need help from nat'l and state for outreach, diversity, policy. WI could serve as a model.

Rebecca White/NY - staff is wonderful and dedicated; if we reduce salaries, we will never find people to fill these positions. Is writing first sustainer check. Important to maintain presence in DC. Need large donors.

Beal/AZ - lived in Germany for 10 years in '90's. [Secretary didn't hear the rest of his comments.]

Daryl Northrop/IA - currently, we have a sharing program with nat'l where they send half back. States should seriously think about flipping this around. Is suggesting donating 5-10 cents on every dollar IAGP collects to GPUS, recommends all states think about this. First contact with Green Party was through national. Is starting as a sustainer and \$20 donation now.

Jacqui Deveneau/ME - important to keep DC office.

Mato Ska/NMex - sees no category under budget for state contributions. Are state amounts contributed to GPUS?

Grage/WA - announces matching fund of \$2500, will match \$50- for every \$100 or more contribution from anyone on <votes> or <dx> listservs. Response has been "piss poor, and I'm not amused." New Paltz, NY, contributed \$100. \$1000 added. Need to think of time and money. "This is our party, what the hell else are we gonna do? Noone else is doing the stuff as must be done."

??/?? - ??

Michael Rubin/CA - problem is that most important and most dynamic work is not done at nat'l level; efforts go to local candidates and activities. We raise funds because voters can see what's done, contrast to nat'l level, notes recent local race. Brent - a big chunk of the donations for that race was facilitated by nat'l office.

Gillis/WA - fastest way to raise money is by doing stuff. Have to run and run hard. can't wait for money to drop into our hands, have to start. Sustainer sign-up again.

Schiller/DC - why \$36 amount? possibility of tiered donations, different colored cards for different amounts? Marc - based on Farmer Labor Party a century ago, collected \$1 from every farmer to join the party, a personal *and* financial stake in the party. \$1 then = today's \$36.

Everett/CA - when you send renewal notices to Green Card holders, do you encourage

them to become sustainers? Don't recommend any cuts be made, just raise the money.

Marc Sanson/SC, Finance - all 1000 Green Card holders should be called, same with those who purchase merchandise, sign up for something, need people to do that.

Emily Citkowski - (sees TV cameras in the room) explains to TV audience where to go on the web to sign up.

Abel/MI - MI can live without money coming back. Feels strongly we do need to nat'l office, buy building or vacant lot in DC where we can re-hab or build.

Woods/CA - noticed we have some divisions in this party? When Phil says we need to take personal responsibility for fundraising, if I was going to take an active interest in FR, GPUS is the last I would fundraise for. Don't believe SC should be tolerated, that they should not put proposals for votes, should be discrimination against Trans people, members in certain states should be under-represented (hissing) - would you let me finish please - should not run weak, puppet campaigns to win races for the Democrats.

Thorsen/CA - candidate for elected office. Feels we should not cut budget, need to move forward aggressively; I am a sustainer, will volunteer to join the phone bank.

Yager/VA - sometimes have disagreements on the way things go with the party, but overall, think that GPUs is best chance for progressive politics at this time. Phil talked about triple fundraising, what does that entail? Raising 1 cent per day on average per number of Greens.

Huckelberry/ILL - elaborate about people doing this. Many here are those who have given the most to party building. Doesn't mean NC spends 15 hours a week FR. Need to get more people involved in the process. If we want to get more invested in our process, then organizationally start treating people who do the most work with level of respect they deserve [good thing]. No more to the disrespect and crap for last couple years, with people getting treated like crap. More respect.

Rebecca Rotlizer - (passed the hat) raised \$2115, \$500 pledge, \$60 in monthly sustainer pledges. Thank you!

IV. SCHEDULE CHANGES and ANNOUNCEMENTS

Wages: "Water Planing in the Southwest" was so popular, Eco-Action will run it again.

McMillan: "Re-uniting America" starts Sat at 9 a.m. in the plenary room

"How candidates can ensure their votes are counted accurately" (Dopp) should have been included on the schedule. This will be Sat 9-10 a.m.

Claudia Ellquist gave directions to Women in Black vigil

Facilitators (Burton, Lass) - thanks to attendees.

Friday, July 28, 2006
Holly Hart
Secretary, GPUS