

43rd District Democrats Monthly Meeting
University Baptist Church, Seattle
April 17, 2007

Hillary Madsen, Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:33pm.

Vice Chair for Programs Julian Saucedo Wheeler introduced the program speakers on environmental awareness:

- Richard Conlin (Seattle City Council, <http://www.seattle.gov/council/conlin/>)
- Meaghan Dixon (field associate for Climate Solutions, <http://www.climatesolutions.org/>)
- Richard Feldman (regional organizer for the Apollo Alliance, http://www.apolloalliance.org/state_and_local/washington/index.cfm)
- Nigel Herbig (field organizer for Washington Conservation Voters, <http://www.wcvoters.org/>)
- Steve Nicholas (director of the City of Seattle Office of Sustainability and Environment, <http://www.sustainableseattle.org/>).

Feldman focused on jobs and energy independence. His office has been active in Olympia, and he showed a bill signing for one of the Apollo Alliance's initiatives. He stated that 40% of CO₂ emissions in Washington are from transportation, implying that concentrating on clean power plants is insufficient. The state and its people are vulnerable in both the supply and demand sides of energy.

Conlin reported that the city has been fulfilling the "green building" commitments of the Kyoto agreement. As we know, the Mayor is extremely interested in the Kyoto framework, and is building a national organization of cities implementing its protocols. On water conservation, Seattle is now at 1970 total consumption levels while serving 30% more people. Conlin is working on a "zero waste" strategy; while the city is currently at 44% recycling, its next goal is 72%, eventually reaching 100%. He sees sustainability as an *opportunity* for business in the city. He noted the value of compact fluorescent lighting, hybrid cars, and local sustainability organizations.

Steve Nicholas is in the city's government. He reiterated the Mayor's commitment to environment and sustainability. Noting our environmental vulnerability – glaciers melting, etc. – Mayor Nickels wants Seattle to be a national laboratory for urban response to environmental efforts. The city has developed a climate action plan, which includes assessing your carbon footprint and how to reduce it. Seattle is actively promoting a neighborhood climate protection fund.

Dixon's organization is looking for affordable solutions that can reduce emissions and improve environment. Climate Solutions strongly supported I-937. She pointed out that the legislature has passed two new environmental laws in this session, with bipartisan support. The need still exists to increase environmental awareness in the city and the state ... the time is now to act on real commitments and policy change. Scientists agree on the need to reduce emissions by 80% by 2050. The organization acts through public outreach, seeking out volunteers and workers.

Herbig sees WCV as the political arm of the environmental movement. They endorse candidates, trying to elect environment-positive legislators. In addition, they lobby the legislature and government on such topics as a clean fuels bill. He is concerned with the Port

Commissioner races, as well as City Council elections, specifically in outlying King County from Bellevue to Duvall to Carnation. WCV is strongly pushing climate change response, and related political activities.

The panel continued with a Q&A session:

What can Seattle do to help residents to dispose of used fluorescents? It's difficult to find acceptable recycling locations.

Nicholas agreed that the city hasn't yet found a good system, while Conlin suggested that it's a very high priority.

Metro remains less-than-usable, and Transit Now won't be enough of an upgrade.

Conlin noted that the transit plan has been designed, but King County hasn't been as responsive as the city of Seattle would like. Metro is run by the County, not the city. He suggested pressuring County Councilmember Julia Patterson, and also working to replace Republican County Councilmember Jane Hague.

*What about an integrated, connected *system* of transit, including a direct link between light rail and Metro buses at Montlake?*

Conlin replied that resources are very tight, but Seattle is trying to work out a more integrated transit solution. He urged 43rd District Democrats to continue to pressure the state DOT, Sound Transit, and other agencies to create real integration. Feldman was insistent that Seattle's transit system **must** connect directly to a new 520 bridge and other transportation construction. Dixon reiterated the importance of pressuring public officials.

How much fuel is consumed by farm equipment which is largely unregulated?

Feldman indicated that farm implements constitute a tiny portion of fuel usage, which pales by comparison to auto and highway usage. Farm vehicles are generally exempt from many environmental controls, and there is little reason to change that.

What is the "design weight" on transportation facilities? Aren't large numbers of trucks on the road actually too heavy for the design of the highways?

Feldman, not really addressing the question, pointed out that trucks on highways are becoming more efficient. None of the panelists could offer knowledgeable responses to the question.

How do we convince the Eastside and residents of rural areas of the value of transit integration?

Herbig suggested that eastern King County is becoming more aware of such issues, even if their legislators aren't keeping up. Thus, there is great need for working to elect more environment-aware people into office. According to Feldman, the situation is improving, especially in terms of public understanding. He pointed specifically to Kevin Van De Wege's ouster of Jim Buck in the 24th LD. It's important to find solutions that help the whole state; for instance, supplying populous King County with locally-grown food profits east-of-the-mountains counties.

In conclusion, the panel noted that climate change is accelerating. Floods, insect pests, decreasing snow pack ... all those and more demonstrate the problem. It can be said that poverty is also a climate change issue, because it is undoubtedly the poor who will be most affected by the ramifications of climate change. Sustainability isn't just environmental, it's an economic issue as well. The field is broad, with many avenues for improvement and for

addressing this essential challenge. We must all work with organizations and interest groups that we might not have interacted with previously, finding common ground. New policies will require putting the right elected officials into office. Finally, we must all come to understand that the challenge of climate change is also an opportunity for business, for innovation, for entrepreneurship.

The Chair noted that a number of candidates for elective office were in attendance at the meeting. She introduced Sherry Carr (challenger, Seattle School Board District 2) and Venus Velazquez (Seattle City Council Position 3) .

Other candidates took the opportunity to give short talks:

Tim Burgess (challenger, Seattle City Council Position 7) pointed out that he grew up in the 43rd District, when Seattle was a working-class city. His primary theme is that every family -- rich or poor -- matters. He has been a policeman, has done antipoverty work in Africa and Asia, has served a chair of the Seattle Ethics and Elections Commission, and is now a successful businessman. One reason for his run is that only one Councilmember has run a business and none have done hands-on public safety work. He's running because neighborhoods matter, and because Council needs strength of leadership and decision-making.

Alec Fiskien (incumbent, Port of Seattle Commission Position 5) reported that a major need at the Port, particularly evident from recent news reports, is integrity. If he is reelected, he will focus on solving the Port's emissions and environmental problems. The Port should be advocating for jobs, not real estate deals. The Port's levy must be phased out, something he's been trying to achieve throughout his term in office. The Commission had long been subservient to the businesses running the waterfront, and to the executive staff. He feels the new Executive Director will contribute to undoing the old ways. His opponent is a trade consultant, backed by the old-line interests, who wants to return to the old days of "hood ornament" Commissioners.

The Chair offered her report to the members:

- The resolutions taskforce met yesterday, and will propose ways to streamline the process of submitting and accounting for resolutions. The taskforce also intends to construct an online archive of our resolutions
- She introduced Craig Sanders (craigs11@mindspring.com), the organization's new newsletter editor.
- The executive board is considering the possibility of moving our monthly meetings to a new location, with better ADA compliance and other attributes. The e-board expects to make its decision on this next month.
- At next month's meeting, expect to hear from our legislators about the completed session in Olympia. A program on the Second Amendment is also planned.

Kirk Shirley, Vice Chair for Events:

- The 43rd District Democrats' spring event is planned for May 19 at Pioneer Hall in Madison Park. He is currently soliciting auction items, and would appreciate any that can be contributed. Along with the 43rd District legislators, he believes it's possible that other politicians, e.g. Governor Gregoire, may join the festivities. Tickets for the May 19 event are available now, through Brownpapertickets.com.
- He seeks 43rd District Democrats members who would like to participate on the events committee.

Stephanie Pure, Vice Chair for Membership:

- Our organization's number of PCOs is appreciably lower than our fellow Seattle districts, a situation that she is working hard to rectify.
- To that end, at this evening's meeting she has already signed up about half a dozen members who wish to be appointed as PCOs.
- As a means of supporting new PCOs, and helping *all* PCOs as well as the party, she mentioned developing a "buddy" system, where neighboring PCOs walk their districts together.
- Stephanie described the difference between *appointed* and *acting* PCOs. If there is no elected or previously-appointed PCO in your precinct, you can be *appointed* as your precinct's PCO. If your own precinct is already represented by a resident PCO, you can become the *acting* PCO of another precinct. If a precinct resident comes forth who wishes to become PCO, the acting PCO must step aside (and become acting PCO of a different precinct, if desired).

Linda Clifton, King County Democratic Central Committeewoman:

- The King County Democrats website (<http://www.kcdems.net>) has resources available for PCOs and potential PCOs, such as a drilldown displaying precinct boundaries and the names of PCOs. There is also a downloadable PCO handbook available.

Julian Saucedo Wheeler, 1st Vice Chair and Vice Chair for Programs:

- Reported that the 43rd District Democrats' resolution supporting Senator Eric Oemig's impeachment bill was sent to KCDCC for their action. Thanks to KCDCCman Will Affleck-Asch for making sure they considered the resolution.

An election process was carried out to fill the vacant position of Secretary. David Kunselman nominated Neal Traven. No other candidates came forth, and Traven was elected Secretary by acclamation.

Good of the Order:

- Karelina Resnick announced that she is developing a Union Caucus in the organization, with approximately 10 members so far. She will make herself available after the meeting if others wish to join.
- Rob Dolin gave more details about the functionality of the [King County Democrats precinct tool](#), which he developed for KC Dems. It displays precinct boundaries as well as historical voting results.
- Hillary Madsen informed the membership that Vice Chair for Communications Misty Shock is leaving soon on a lengthy round-the-world trip, and is therefore resigning her position with the 43rd District Democrats. Rob Dolin will temporarily take over most of the communications roles (website, blast emails, and such). If someone in the organization is interested in the position, they should contact the Chair.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:15pm.

Respectfully submitted, April 17, 2007,

Neal Traven
Secretary