

# 26<sup>th</sup> Legislative District Democrats General Meeting

May 4, 2023

## Minutes

1. **Call to order, pledge of allegiance, and land acknowledgement:** The Chair called the meeting to order at 6:40 and led the pledge of allegiance and read the land acknowledgement.
2. **Recognition of elected officials and first-time guests:** The Chair recognized Brenda Lykins and Mary Barber, Gig Harbor City Council members.
3. **County Chairs highlights:** Judith Smriga, Chair of Pierce County Democrats urged LD 26 members to join the County organization (dues are only \$10) and attend meetings, which are on Zoom. She also invited everyone to the County's October fundraiser, which will be a dinner.
4. **Candidates introductions:** Vice Chair Luellen Lucid introduced candidate/incumbent Mary Barber for Gig Harbor City Council and likely candidate Ben Coronado (running for Julie Martin's seat as she will not be running for election), current Chair of the Gig Harbor Parks Commission. Luellen urged volunteers to assist in these campaigns.
5. **Recap of Bills:** Emily Randall wasn't able to attend so this item was tabled for a future meeting. Luellen observed that many important bills were passed to protect a woman's right to choose in Washington State and to provide regulations related to gun use.
6. **Upcoming Events:** State Committee Person Madysen McClain presented upcoming important activities and events through the summer. Volunteers are needed for the events. Information will be posted on the 26<sup>th</sup> LD Democrats website. Luellen provided information on the LD 26 fundraiser July 21. It will be held at the Gig Harbor History Museum and feature Attorney General Bob Ferguson as the keynote speaker. Emily Randall and possibly Derek Kilmer will also speak. Timing is 6:00 – 9:00. There will be an auction or raffle featuring items like lunch with Derek and lunch with Emily, etc. Members were invited to join a planning committee for the event. Tickets will be sold, with price to be determined. Attendees were asked if \$50 was too much for tickets and everyone thought that amount was acceptable. Capacity at the venue is 90 people.
7. **Larry Seaquist – Issues based discussion on appealing to the Unaligned/Independent center:** Retired State Representative Larry Seaquist led a discussion on who the Party should appeal to in upcoming elections. Larry proposed we appeal to the unaligned, not just Democrats. Biden's

campaign has said that the only states to focus on are Wisconsin, Georgia, and Arizona as swing states – if Biden wins one of these, he will win the election. Larry took issue with this strategy. A lively discussion followed. Attendees thought that we need to analyze who our voters are and do some analysis of the data in our district. Many thought we need to reach across the aisle to Republicans who don't support Trump. Kara Aley stated it would be easy to identify these Republicans in our district through data analysis. We can identify Republicans who voted in last year's Democratic primary as a starting point and canvass these voters in addition to SDs.

Ray Shjerven, State Committee Person, reported that the State Party will be focused on holding onto what we already have, which means moving to the middle, with major issues abortion rights and gun legislation. With Governor Inslee not running for re-election, we need to pay attention to the governor's race. It was pointed out that it is no longer 40-40-20 but more like 30-30-40, with 40 being Independents so we need to appeal to those in the middle. However, we also need to engage Millennial and Gen-Z voters, who tend to be liberal on social issues. So far, Biden has done this. We need to do this in Washington State and in LD 26.

Larry said that the number one issue is having our freedom taken away – as in a right to abortion and voting rights. Biden's announcement for re-election focused on the issue of preserving freedom. Derek Kilmer's Political Director said we need to follow Derek Kilmer's strategy of reaching out to everyone, as this is how he gets 60% of the vote. We are the last swing district in Washington, as the last election showed in the results for Emily Randall and Adison Richards. We should welcome everyone, as long as they treat others with respect.

8. **Approval of Minutes (April):** approved.
9. **Treasurer's Report:** In April, we had member donations of \$547, total expenses of \$387, leaving a total bank balance of \$3,111.
10. **Good of the Order:** Carl Olson said we need to broadcast when and where school board meetings are so our members can attend; provide link to school board calendars on our website. We should also look for talking points related to attending school board meetings.
11. **Adjournment:** Chair adjourned the meeting around 8 p.m.