

NHCDP CEC Meeting Minutes

July 19, 2021, 6:30pm by Zoom

In Attendance: Richard Poole, April Farr, Steph Fetzer, Susanne Werner, Madeleine Henley, Andre Brown, Victoria Velazco, Herb Harton, deAndre Corniffe, John McHarry, Russ Brune HDS, Elli Klein, Jeannie Lennon, Barbara Garrow, Amy DeLoach, Nick Rhodes, Joanne Durham, George Vlasits, Debbie Wisoff, Sally, Jill Hopman, Stephen Fortlouis, James, Candace Kelley, Darlene Parlett, Jeremy Wilson, Toni Barney, Rachel Hatfield, Ricardo Jensen, William Cottingham, Robert Carpenter, Brenda Fong, Pam, Linda Smith, Audrey, Carol Atwood, Dorian Cromartie, Cramer Vaughan, Diana Hill, Kathryn Bailey, James Morgan, Siara Divel, Lloyd Singleton, Ann Cherry, Nina, Theresa, Leslie Posey, Stephanie Walker, Lisa McDow, Amanda B., JD Wade, Steve Hamburger, Mark Deloach., Esther Murphy, Sonya Patrick, Nelson Beaulieu, Pam, iPhone, Jim Fleagle, Paul Lawler, Kathryn Bailey, Michaela Howells, Clayton Hamerski, Barbara Anderson, Allison O'Moore, Philip White, Leslie Garriss, Don Skinner, Josh Barber, Sally Messerole, Jeannie Lennon, Richard Gottlieb, Pam Kittredge, Sonya M, Audrey Penneys, Veronica McLaurin, Jennifer MacNeish, Candy Brunson, Allison O'Moore, Robert Carpenter

- I. Call to Order – no time recorded**
- II. Welcome (Chair Andre Brown)**
- III. Pledge of Allegiance (3rd Vice Chair, Dorian Cromartie)**
- IV. Approve minutes from May CEC Meeting**

The quorum was established at 28 attendees. A motion was made to approve the May CEC Minutes (person making motion was not recorded) and was seconded by Clayton Hamerski. The minutes were approved. Following the vote there was a discussion of an objection by deAndre Corniff that the minutes were not presented before the vote. The Chair clarified that the minutes are posted on the web site for everyone to reference prior to the meeting. Rachel Hatfield posted the minutes in chat. A revote was motioned by Richard Poole, seconded by George Vlasits. The motion carried.

April Farr, Secretary, moved that all NHCDP meetings be electronically recorded, seconded by Madeleine Henley. A discussion followed with concerns about where the recording would be housed, who would have access to it, and the fact that it would be available to the public if kept on the Party web site. Susanne Werner moved to table the motion, seconded by Sally Meserole. The motion passed with 43 yeas and 4 nays.

- V. Treasurer's Report (Brenda Fong)**

VI. Awards

Vicky Velazco, 1st Vice Chair, introduced Elli Klein to present acrylic table awards to Richard Poole, former Chair, and Delores Rhodes, former 1st Vice Chair. Elli thanked them for their 8 years of volunteer service to the Party, noting the extraordinary growth within the Party resulting from their leadership. Steve Hamburger presented a humorous list of “What We Won’t Miss About Richard Poole.” Madeleine Henley presented restaurant gift certificates to Richard and Deloris and also to Dennis Dixon and Donnell Giles for their service.

VII. 2021 Annual Precinct Meeting Report (Susanne)

Susanne Werner, 2nd Vice Chair, summarized the results of this year’s annual precinct meetings. The pandemic hit New Hanover County just after the 2020 precinct meetings, so 2021 is the first year we have had to do them all by Zoom. She thanked the many volunteers who made the meetings possible, including cluster meeting organizers, volunteers who organized meetings for unorganized precincts, precinct officers other than the Chair who stepped up to plan their meetings, new precinct chairs, zoom technical volunteers, media coordinator, and online sign-up manager. The top meeting attendance award went to Steve Hamburger, Chair of H13, and the top Sustaining Fund award also went to Steve Hamburger. The number of precincts organized is now 31 of 43, down from our usual 38 – 41 organized. The total meeting attendance was 336 and the total Sustaining Fund collection was \$9,132. All figures are down from last year, but we are still very proud of the results considering the pandemic.

This presentation was interrupted by Dorian Cromartie, 3rd Vice Chair, asking for a meeting time extension or dismissal. The motion was announced out of order by Chair, Andre Brown.

VIII. DOING (Joanne Durham, Chair NHCDP DOING Committee)

Joanne reported that the DOING Committee is committed to year-round organizing in order to effectively win elections. The first strategizing meeting was held in April in which they developed an election plan by analyzing data and formed six sub-committees. DOING feels the Wilmington municipal elections are important this year because of the strong challenge by Republicans and because conducting election work this year will help to strengthen precincts and the Party for the challenging 2022 midterm election. Another benefit is that turning out voters in the 2021 municipal election increases the likelihood of their voting in 2022. She announced upcoming meetings and invited those interested to attend.

IX. New Hanover County School System Statement (Diana Hill)

Diana Hill proposed that the following statement be delivered to the School Board:

The New Hanover County Democratic Party is concerned about the allegations of child abuse within the New Hanover County Public School system and requests that the New Hanover County School Board disclose the results of all investigations and acts of misconduct.

The public should also be informed of any “cover ups” of child abuse that are reported to have permeated the New Hanover County Public Schools. Anonymous reporting systems must be put in place and made accessible to our students, parents, and teachers to assure that all children are safe in our public schools.

Judy Justice, School Board member stated that the second paragraph proposed a policy that is already in place, making the statement irrelevant. Other opinions were expressed for and against. April Farr motioned to table the proposal, seconded by Stephanie Walker. The motion carried 35-4.

X. SEC vacancies

Nominations were taken for a male SEC seat, vacated by Herb Harton because he has been elected as President of the SE NC Central Labor Council and a female SEC seat, vacated by Sonja Bennetone as she was elected Chair of NCDP Congressional District 7. Tony Barney was nominated by George Vlasits and deAndre Corniff was nominated by Sonja Bennetone. Both candidates spoke about their qualifications and interest in being on the SEC. Tony Barney was elected by a vote of 34-8 by electronic form. Elli Klein was nominated for the female seat by Sonja Bennetone and was approved by acclamation.

XI. Announcements

Sonja Bennetone spoke about the need to revise School Board Policy 5120 regarding student’s rights to have a parent present during questioning by authorities. She also spoke about community concern for K-3rd grade suspensions.

Diana Hill spoke in opposition to Project Grace and announced the fundraiser on the Save Our Main Library Facebook page.

Marlene Barney announced a new coalition called SAVES by Cape Fear Riverwatch and a UNCW Geology Professor. The group’s purpose is to advocate for certain public parks. The Facebook page is call SAVE Snow’s Cut Park.

Dorian Cromartie moved that all Party officers read the PoO. He was ruled out of order by Chair Andre Brown.

XII. Adjourn

In response to a request for motion to adjourn by the Chair, Susanne Werner so moved, seconded by Nelson Beaulieu, and the meeting was adjourned at 8:42pm.

Respectfully submitted on Oct. 14, 2021, by Susanne Werner
Rewritten from Secretary April Farr's notes