

# **Green Party General Assembly San Diego, Dec 2000**

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# **Green Party General Assembly San Diego, Dec 2000**

## ***Saturday Session Notes for 12/2/00***

### **I Minutes of last general assembly**

Discussion: It is everybody's personal responsibility to review the URL of notes in preparation for statewide plenaries and come prepared.

Linda Howard was added as facilitator for one section

Notes CONSENSSED as amended.

### **II Consent Calendar**

A Clearinghouse budget- CONSENSSED

B Coordinating Committee at-large seat- CONSENSSED

C Energy resolution- One concern raised- NOT CONSENSSED- went back to working group

### **III Update on Restructuring Plan- Lucy Colvin**

The Plan was passed in Berkeley last April, and the current structure proposal was reviewed:

- Discussion:
- Coordinators of standing committees and working groups were introduced.
- Q. How do people get involved in standing committees?  
A. People can take part in all discussion as non-voting members of the committee.
- Q. re: adding more caucuses?  
A. There are no restrictions on establishing caucuses. Anyone can inform the body that they are forming a caucus and seek participation.
- By-laws do not yet reflect the restructuring. By-laws WG is working on this. Next general assembly will pass by-laws language.
- Medea wants to form a Diversity caucus, to help build diversity in the party.
- The youth caucus has no age limitations.

### **IV Treasurer's report**

Mike Wyman, Statewide Treasurer

415-461-6263 P.O. Box 938  
Fax: 461-7448 San Rafael, CA 94912  
Email: MSWyman@home.com

FPPC # 921-909  
FEC #: C 00 360263  
FEIN 94-3361748

Treasurer packets have been distributed to 21 county locals, giving info on the party budget, dues policy, statewide ads, contact lists and other info.

Separate state and federal accounts have been set up to make reporting easier.

Report: Party doing OK- \$20,000 in account is enough for rent, some staff and mailings.

August mailing brought in \$24,000 on a cost of \$6000.

Donor lists will be made available to the locals.

Next mailer will be to 16,000.

- Discussion:
- Q. re: insurance for GP events?  
A. State GP has an insurance policy that locals can pay \$50, 100 or 150 to join, depending on the size of the event.
- Q. Do FEC and FPPC have different questions to contend with?  
A. Questions mostly from us to them. Routine audits will be expanded in 2000-2001. The board is made up of Democrats and Republicans, who do not like the Greens. He feels ready for audits.

## V Report on Campaigns and Candidates- Mike Feinstein

GPCA grew 35% this election, making us clearly the third largest party in the state. We are also the fastest growing of all parties. Our candidates did better this cycle of any other alternative candidates, as well as doing better than in the '96 and '98 cycles.

[www.greens.org/elections](http://www.greens.org/elections) carries all the information.

### A National Races:

1. Medea Benjamin for Senate- The media blackout and exclusion from the debates were the major problems encountered. Sugg. Future work to open the debates commission. Locals were greatly energized. There needs to be a statewide strategy to identify locals that need help. This evolved during the campaign, but it needs more front loading.

- There was good diversity outreach to labor, Latinos, women and youth. A good follow-up plan is needed, and is being worked on.
- DiFi spent 50 times more money and got 17 times more votes.
- Good success at raising funds was greatly due to the focus from the beginning to raise \$1000 per day.
- There are not many rich people in this movement. Individual donors were given a picture of where their money was going. This helped build campaign strategies.
- Direct mail to Greens and other lists were successful.
- House parties were especially easy to set up and their future use is encouraged.
- Everyone interested in this should read Kim Kline's "Fundraising for Social Change"- a "must read" available at [Chardonpress.com](http://Chardonpress.com), and socially conscious bookstores.
- Follow-up thank you's are very important.
- House parties and donors were always encouraged to take some concrete actions.

### 2. Nader for President

a. So. Cal- Woody Hastings- Personal goal of 7% of the vote was not met, but it was still a good campaign. 3-4% in some So. Cal areas. The main goal was to set up new locals. Relative strengths were identified on a map, and "red dot" areas were targeted.

- More work is needed on voter registration.
- Also need better outreach to minority communities, including more literature in non-English.
- The volunteer base expanded dramatically, and the Super Rally was very positive.

b. No. Cal.- Susan King- Nader did very well in No. Cal- there is a very strong Green presence there. From San Luis Obispo northward there were 44 coordinators in 33 regions. Central valley was hardest to organize, and was largely on its own, but for the great work of Mark Stout in Fresno.

Bay area organizing was especially strong, with many locals setting up storefront operations- Sacramento's is still going. The existing infrastructure was used, and it was discovered that it was strong. Vast growth was achieved quickly.

- SF got 10% of the vote for Nader. Big growth of new Greens and bigger meetings.
- \$7.7 million was raised, largely in California. Nader and Medea campaigns worked well in tandem.
- \$90,000 was raised at the Oakland super rally. It was one of the smallest rallies, but raised one of the largest amounts.
- Many locals created great outreach materials- made necessary by lack of support from the State. Seemed to work out well, overall.

Why store fronts?

Better exposure- Many who just dropped by to inquire have stayed involved.

The state party did a good job on door hangers and voter guides.

## B Statewide races

1. Sara Amir, Assembly- Got 10% of the vote, largest of all alternate parties, despite lack of resources and increased job responsibilities due to a promotion at the EPA. Issues raised included chromium-6 pollution, campaign finance reform- opponent raised heavy money from developers, and spent over \$650,000 on his campaign. Good sign distribution, and Lynn Serpe's TV ad was great.

2. Gloria Purcell, Assembly- Her 9.7% vote was the highest alternative party total for any partisan office in San Mateo County. Observations:

- It is good to get your volunteer base in place early.
- Lawn signs is a coordination project all its own.
- She raised \$14,000.
- Vol. Turn-out was good, but not enough due to the physical size of the district.
- She plans to issue a timeline she is working on to act as a guide for anyone who is considering running.

3. Justin Moscoso- US House of Reps, Marin- Raised \$1100 and got 13,000 voted. Increased Green registration from 2800 to 4000. Goal was to build the party, which was successful. He is planning to run for other offices.

4. Chuck Reuter, State Assembly, Riverside- Huge district, one of most conservative. Still got avg. 4.4% of the vote. It is important to early on build good relationship with the press.

## C Local and municipal races-

- Some losses were unexpected because too many Greens and Progressives ran and divided the votes.
- Money early in the campaign is better than late.
- Bob Nanamaya is "being groomed". Says people like the open, inclusive style he advocates.
- Rebecca Kaplan- The state party needs to help local candidates. Cannot currently win with just Green voters- need to reach out for other constituencies. Need to identify ways to go up against the Dempubs and still get people to vote for us. The issues we espouse get cross-over voters. She is being approached, even in defeat, to write editorials and serve on local boards.
- Good groundwork was laid in these elections for next time.
- Mike Feinstein got the second-highest vote total ever received in Santa Monica for a City Council seat. His was a very professional campaign, and was listed on many slate cards. Ran on his record of accomplishment. Is strong in his values, but is known to be willing to listen and incorporate people's input. Will be appointed Mayor of Santa Monica on 12/12.
- Matt Gonzalez- Running for the board in SF. SF is an iron-clad Democratic city, and it will not be an easy race. He renounced his Democratic registration for Green in protest of the Greens being shut out of the debates, the death penalty and other reasons. Many hit pieces have already been

issued by Brown and others. (Update: In the course of the general assembly, several thousand dollars were raised for Matt's campaign, and organizers from around the state were planning to go to SF and help with his campaign. Matt won his district with almost 10,000 votes, twice the vote received by his opponent.)

## **VI Two-year Work Plan- Mike Feinstein**

It has been discovered through experience that our organization needs to be tightened up. There was a haphazard process of proposals and decision-making. It was decided to incorporate longer-term planning.

- Planning incorporated electoral deadlines.
- Organizing groups set up goals and timelines.
- CC spoke with group coordinators to try and incorporate their input.
- Each year, GP will update and discuss a two-year plan.
- Will help locals plan plenaries further in advance.

Questions and clarifications:

- Sacramento will host its general assembly on 4/28-29. Not as listed in the agenda packet.
- Goal is set of 2 plenaries and 2 skills sharing conferences each year.
- Locals have not shown interest in hosting these. Humboldt has made some friendly amendments.
- Flexibility is intact. We can always vote to suspend the by-laws, when it becomes necessary.
- Several locals are planning regional and local gatherings. They are free to do so. If they want these incorporated in to the two-year plan, they need to contact the CC.

Affirmations and Concerns:

- A friendly amendment was offered that plenaries should always incorporate a section involving direct actions, like voter registration, petition gathering, etc. – This was deferred to the Grassroots Organizing WG.
- Desire was expressed that an anti-racism workshop be incorporated in to the Sacramento general assembly in April.
- We should be able to incorporate skills sharing with plenaries.
- It is good, but does not go far enough. More specific goals and longer timeframe- 50-100 years. – This was deferred to the Coordinating Committee to consider under Goals and Strategy.
- It's a good start- better than no plan at all.
- We need to set out a better ideas of who we are- We should have a Mission Statement, to give us more unity of purpose. Sugg. We work on this at next 2 plenaries.
- We need to identify more time at plenaries for people to get outside together and do activities.
- GROW (Grassroots Organizing Working Group) might take up ways to incorporate more outside group activity.

Responses to concerns- Mike:

- The process of restructuring helped identify our priorities. Working groups were given wider leeway to make proposals. We can visit a mission statement at future plenaries. Flexibility exists for opening ceremonies. As for direct action ideas, these should come from Working Groups or Host committees. Decisions on this will vary depending on time constraints to make decisions.

CONSENSUS reached, with amendments as stated.

## **VII By-laws changes re: CC at-large seats- Decision item:**

Addressing diversity on the state coordinating council. Proposal summary:

Rationale- Attempt to tighten up regulations on how CC members are chosen- Has been too haphazard, and little threshold for advance election notice. Often, nominations were taken from the floor of the general assembly, which eliminated input from the locals. This aims to stop that, and give more advance information about candidates before elections.

Clarifying questions:

- There is no implementing language, yet. If the proposal is approved, it will go to By-laws for language.
- Statements are aimed at giving locals a chance to make informed decisions. If we need to, we can vote to suspend the by-laws and allow nominations from the floor, if the situation calls for it.
- If the elections are regular, more qualified people are likely to come forward in advance.
- Diversity is better served by not self-selecting at plenaries.
- Q. re: 2-year election cycles.
- Better to fit state election cycles

Concerns and affirmations:

- A qualified affirmation: What are options if diversity is not reflected in nominations?
- Offered a friendly amendment that the CC is dedicated to an ongoing commitment to diversity.

2 other friendly amendments:

- That elections be held the first general assembly of every year for staggered seats, and
- Filling vacancies, whether to keep vacated seats open for the entire term, or to fill them at each election?

Reply: The amendment for the elections to be held at the first general assembly was accepted. The amendment on vacancies will be revisited at the next general assembly.

No unresolved concerns expressed. CONSENSUS reached.

## **VIII Green Party section in the State Election code- Caleb Klepper**

Our by-laws control our elections, but the state overturned our NOTA provisions.

Our by-laws call for our local county councils to be elected using Instant Run-off Voting (IRV). State election code will not allow that, so we need to identify a state legislator willing to carry legislation which will allow this. Work has been done to identify provisions we want or do not want incorporated. (See packet for background)

Discussion and clarifying questions:

- GP originally adopted the P&F by-laws, which caused us problems.
- Q. re: PR of what?
- At-large and multi-member districts will use choice voting.
- Concern that allowing “Decline to State” voters to vote in out primaries could open us up to raiding.
- Disallowing decline to state voters to vote could open us up to the allegation that we are not really as open as we claim. We need to develop a PR message on this.
- Conventions reduce “raiding”, but might make us look too insular, with only a choice few able to make decision.
- Would like to see non-citizens be allowed to vote in our primaries- Argue for inclusion.
- Seems this could be done by initiative.
- Primaries are non-binding, so candidates are, de facto, by convention.

- We can choose how we want to choose (primary or convention).
- A more general bill could be sought, such that “by-laws of each party shall control each party’s elections”, and not differentiate ourselves from others and isolating ourselves.
- Clarification: Choice voting and IRV are sometimes used interchangeably.
- NOTA and IRV apply only to GP elections, not open primaries.
- This session is more for focussed discussion of these ideas by the body, and self-education, and not for adoption here.
- There is no clear process for how a presidential candidate is chosen, but provisions could be incorporated.
- We cannot generalize the danger of us being “taken over”. Our process should remain as open as possible. That level of democracy needs to be protected.
- We need to be sure there is no “money in lieu of signatures” provision.
- Requirements for running as a green would be general, i.e. length of registration, length of residency, etc.
- NOTA in primaries is very important.

#### Concerns:

- Q. Why not support for conventions?
- Primaries are more democratic and inclusive.
- We need to beware that conditions we place, such as only “registered Greens” would have precluded Nader from running.
- This issue needs to set up a timeframe for getting feedback and coming to closure on this.
- We need to stay aware that any way we implement this, through legislation or initiative, has problems.
- A straw poll was taken on people’s preference for signatures, primaries and conventions for choosing candidates.
- Concern that wider issues, i.e. IRV, need to be focused on.
- We are not here to select provisions we want just to consider our options.
- Caleb’s proposal is to adopt this proposal in spirit and send it back to the WG for more fleshing out.
- We need to write the code we want and give the state elections office power over it.

PROPOSAL: That the Green Party Election Code is important, and we instruct the Election Reform Working Group to take this input and come back to the next general assembly with specific provisions ion which we can test for consensus.

4 unresolved concerns noted. All stood aside. CONSENSUS reached.

## IX ASGP Continuing Affiliation

2 proposals:

- Reaffiliate with ASGP
- Delegate representation, if above passes.

### A Reaffiliate with ASGP

- This proposal is a product of our maturation. There are currently 31 state parties represented in ASGP. At 140,000, CA is the biggest of the state parties, and possibly the world. 2 years ago, we voted to affiliate with ASGP, and revisit the decision after the 11/00 elections.
- The Boston Agreement between ASGP and G/GPUSA has been incorporated in to the proposal.

Concerns and Affirmations:

- General concern that Green strength has been at the grassroots, while other third parties have tried to build from the top and fallen. We should be strong enough not to build from “Presidential PR” tactics.
- The Boston Agreement seems vague- What are we really saying?
- More communication will help locals all over the country not “reinvent the wheel”.
- It was suggested that CAGP should join both ASGP and G/GPUSA, and help merge them, and allow G/GPUSA to operate within the party as individual members.
- If we affiliate, how will we be able to assure locals that resources will not be taken away from local campaigns by national campaigns?
- Increased party membership relates to having parties sanctioned at the national level.
- This schism needs to be resolved before the next presidential election.

Replies to concerns:

- Conflicts between ASGP and G/GPUSA stem from a belief that there is no coordination between the two groups. There are, in fact, interlinking board members on both.
- We are being asked to accept the spirit of the Boston Agreement and be willing to work out the specifics of what the association means.
- We are called on to have this filing ready by 4/1/01.
- National body will vote on the merits between now and then, and how work on the details will continue.
- Local organizing need not be affected. Lots of locals need nurturing, but if they collapse, can’t lay the blame on too much top-down organizing.
- ASGP respects locals and is democratic in its process.
- As for presidential elections, it is not even clear we will have a presidential candidate in four years. Nader’s candidacy was the result of a lot of work by the Candidate Outreach Committee.
- National strategies will go on, and we should be involved.
- 
- Test for consensus on reaffiliation with ASGP. One unresolved concern of Lerner that we are not also reaffiliating with G/GPUSA. Stood aside. CONSENSUS.

### B Proposal re: ASGP Representation- Proposal to affirm two representatives and two alternates.

- ASGP is looking at various operating structures that incorporate Proportional Representation. This proposal would allow people to be chosen now, with the understanding that it might need to be revisited when changes occur.
- A questionnaire was distributed to get feedback. Contact John Strawn.
- Questions and Concerns:
- Concern expressed that the nomination process was not more widely noticed. We need to expand



how people can be involved.

- Affirmation: More candidates don't always mean better ones.
- Concern that many people cannot participate because of financial constraints. A friendly amendment proposed that a fund be set up to help with this.
- We need to work on how CC forwards information to locals and how delegates are selected to open it up more.
- Rebecca Kaplan is willing to convene discussion of this. Perhaps a newsletter?
- Local responsibility requires people to find those things out. The info was out there.
- We need to be sure that we, as delegates, carry word back to the locals.
- As regards funding, we used to have the Petra Kelley Fund to help offset costs of delegates. It has been depleted, and we need to find ways to keep it funded.

PROPOSAL to affirm Jo Chamberlain and John Strawn as ASGP Representatives, and Beth Moore Haines and Mike Wyman as alternates. It will be open to more representatives if ASGP decides to expand.

CONSENSUS with no unresolved concerns.

## ***Sunday Session Notes for 12/3/00***

### **X Campaigns and Candidates Strategy 2002**

- A Affirmation of Co-Chair- Susan King was nominated and confirmed as co-chair with Orvil Osborn of the C&C working group.
- B Susan reviewed the list of issues that are before the working group which might trigger initiative or other kinds of campaigns:
- Death Penalty Moratorium- Issues working Group
  - IRV- C&C WG
  - Ancient Forests Conservation Campaign- Dan Hamburg is looking for support
- C Other discussion:
- C&C WG coordinates information and offers resources to strategic campaigns, campaign handbook.
  - Larry Shoop- Secretary of State is a strategic office. Financing and structure are two issues we face that Sec of State has oversight. Political Reform Act of '74 on campaign spending, corporate charters, reinfranchisement of ex-cons, etc.
  - He proposed a grassroots campaign for Sec of State. Need to :
  - ID candidates
  - Create working groups in locals
  - ID other ways to impact the democratic process.
  - A suggestion was made for a youth bike trip in 2002 to raise the issues.
  - Peter Camejo- Winner-take-all elections force us on the attack, often against possible allies. We need to shift the issue of spoiler on the Demreps. We should run on our pure platform, not as an instrument to spoil. We should not run as spoilers, but if it happens, it happens. But it should not be our goal.
  - Mike Feinstein- We need to anticipate some unconnected Greens putting forth a slate we are not in agreement with.
  - Harvey Rosenfeld is considering running as a Green for Insurance Commissioner- He is now "Decline to State".
  - Effort will be made to spread our efforts far and wide, and invite potential candidates to contact us so we can assess them.
  - Lucy Colvin- Legislation-"Spoiler strategy" also known as Running for Success. New Mexico and Arizona are closer to political reforms like IRV due to their spoiler roles. The strategy is to target specific races to "spoil" by dividing the progressive vote, and get progressive dems and reps to support our reforms.
  - The Electoral Reform WG wants to put IRV on the ballot. A committee has been formed.
  - With new redistricting, it offers new opportunities for challenging seats.

### **XI Affirmation of Working Group Coordinators and co-coordinators:**

Platform- Pam Hitchcock, Mike Henley

Green Issues- Don Eichelberger, Michele Delehanty\*

Electoral Reform- Caleb Klepper, Jeanne Roseneger (sp?)\*

Campaigns and Candidates- Orville Osborn, Susan King\*

International Communications- Mike Feinstein, Pamela Meidell\*

GROW (Grassroots Organizing Working Group) - Beth Moore Haines\*, Faramarz Nabari\*

By-laws- Rick Newbury, co-chair being confirmed in the WG

\* Indicates newly affirmed

## **XII Evaluation:**

- Good attendance on Sunday- People stayed
- Need more break time
- Four major items of business were passed- Good job
- The ice breaker on Saturday night was good- Helped us get to know each other. More of that needed.
- This general assembly had the best energy of any in recent memory.
- Continuity from Working Groups to ongoing actions needs work.
- We should be able to add to the agenda.
- The panel on the campaigns was good. It would be good to incorporate such activities in to all plenaries.
- It was good that we raised so much money for Matt Gonzales' campaign.
- Need better wall writing materials- Black boards do not show up well.
- We should have a standardized form for evaluations.
- Better visual aids are needed- More overhead projections, etc.
- Separate rooms for breaking in to working groups is needed.
- More time is needed for discussion.
- More working group time needed.
- People seem to be trusting the process more.
- Need vegan food available
- Good that a working group retreat was planned.