Green Party of California
Notes of the General Assembly
Los Angeles, Jan. 2002

Saturday, Jan. 19th

Treasurer's Report

Michael Wyman from San Francisco gave the Treasurer's report. He announced that every county should have a treasurer's packet, but if not, he had some available with him. He then proceeded to give a report for 2001. He noted that the cash flow report only came to mid-December, but that the final report will be available online. He then gave a report of the fundraising methods used. It was noted that direct mail solicitations did not return a profit. But profits were produced through a sustainer program.

Then questions were asked. Coby Skye and David Tate asked questions and Nancy Pearlman asked what the average contribution was. The response indicated that they did not have that information. Chuck (do not recall county or last name) asked what the county provided, and was told that the counties do not defray.

After the treasurer's report, awards were given in the form of green candles. San Mateo was awarded for being the only county for being in the top 10 in all 3 sections: contributions, green registration, and (something else). On receiving the award, Joe from San Mateo County gave some suggestions to other counties to improve their fundraising. The main ideas that were expressed were that counties should have a concrete fundraising plan, and that they should cooperate and donate to the state and not just focus on local issues with the funds procured.

San Francisco County was thanked for helping with office expenses and San Diego was given a candle for having a record amount of dues. Marin county was commended for coming up with a novel program of suggesting that greens donate their $300 tax rebates. $18000 was raised from this method.

The coda to the award ceremony was a whimsical tribute to the endeavors of our current president in the form of a brass candle snuffer.

There was then some discussion of dues paying structure and how to fill out forms and calculate dues. There were also sustainer packets handed out for counties to take and give to future sustainers. It was then asked if anyone present would like to commit to being a sustainer and current sustainers were asked to raise their hands.

It was acknowledged that the National Green Party was ready to begin mailing and needed the cooperation of the States and counties.

Announcement

Donna Warren, Green candidate for Lt. Governor, came in and talked about her FACTS workshop and told everybody that more people should come than already had.

Platform Proposal – Session #1: Transportation

Peggy Lewis discussed the four platform planks that would be deliberated over the plenary which were Education, Energy, Transportation, and Economics. She announced that working groups about the planks would be held in Haines Hall.

The Transportation plank was then up for ratification. There were 39 in favor, no blocks, and 6 stand-asides. A Proposal was made for ratification of the transportation plank

Concerns:

Ken Adams from Sacramento opposes HOV mandatory statement in Autos section 2.

Rick Newberry from San Diego had two friendly amendments: that the terms human-scale and community bicycle be defined, and that the document is too long and should be condensed. Rick stood aside.

Susan Jane from San Francisco stood aside, as she felt that the statement in the plank about public transportation to airports would encourage resources to be diverted to richer neighborhoods away from poorer regions where they are needed.

Jodie Bebe from San Diego had the concern that neither tail pipe emissions nor car pooling were mentioned and that the oil statistics had no references.

Derek Iverson (stand aside concern): in mass transit section 1 the term human-scale should be replaced and in autos section 7 the term marketing should be replaced with promoting.

Tom from North LA had the concern that the plank should not promote increasing the tax on gasoline, as this would be punishing the victim.

There was a stand aside concern from someone from San Francisco (don't remember name) about HOV statement.

David Tate from LA: plank did not address zero-emission cars.

Reconciliations by the presenters:

HOV statement would be rephrased to emphasize more people carpooling and less more highways. Plank will reflect that government should provide public transportation to the poor and to airports; They will work this issue into a new section titled Transportation Justice. Only one amendment: definition of terms human-scale and bicycle fleet. They will pull two of the auto bullets because of blocking concern from Ken Adams of Sacramento. Rick Newberry from San Diego will stand aside as it is too long. They will leave the second part of auto bullet 2 in, because of a concern. Ken Adams did not object to second part of bullet 2, just the first part. Stand aside on gasoline tax from Tom from North LA.

Consensus reached

Reapportionment Presentation and Discussion

Michael Borenstein explained that currently the counties are organized into 13 regions: The four largest in terms of registered Greens have two seats each: 1st: Los Angeles 2nd: Bay Area 3rd: Sierra/Sacramento 4th: Riverside/San Bernardino/Orange The remaining six regions have one seat each, and six representatives are statewide, for a total of 20 CC seats.

The Michael Wyman proposal has 11 regions

The Jonathan Lundell proposal has 1, 3 or 4 regions. They would have proportional representation through choice voting The Ricardo Newberry Proposal has 5 regions. Choice voting will be used to select representatives. An advantage to this proposal is that the population of regions will be about equal.

Implementation of the new scheme will take place in April.

Questions and concerns:

Peggy Lewis from Sacramento: In the 11 region plan we (Sac/Sierra) will have half the counties, but we can handle it

? from Oakland: question (not recorded)

Coby Skye LA County: 11 is not population-based (?)

Sola from Santa Cruz: For 11 as it is more grassroots, and the 3 and 4 might lose touch with their support with super-districts.

Gloria from San Mateo: Against 1.

Cameron Spitzer from Santa Clara: The problem itself was not adequately explained.

Learner from San Bernardino: Against 1 region, 11 is about as efficient as existing system, would propose that we vote for none of the above.

Platform Proposal – Session #2: Public Education

Clarifications

Nancy Perlman: Please clarify whether or not the part about equitable funding referred to equitability of ....(not recorded)

Robyn Oetinger: (not recorded)

Elena Quintana(?): Hw is special education or needs of children with learning problems being addressed? We are experiencing bi-lingual education learning problems. No mention of this to this issue.

Ricardo Newberry: The Platform Committee met recently. Did the Committee get to review comments from the earlier plenary session? Answer from presenters: NO.

Peggy: We tried to incorporate all revisions people offered

Gloria (Purcell?): We can't tell teachers how to teach in our platform. Also, the issue of high numbers of bilingual (students?) may already be addressed.

?? (Un-named female member of Committee) re-read the part in the platform and asked Elena if this addressed her concern. She responded by saying funding wasn't exactly her concern. Children with ADD and other challenges, philosophy is that if child isn't learning, it's your fault. More children than ever with these difficulties. Teacher preparation adequately trained to deal with these problems.

Beth said that platform is being revised every couple of years and it will never be complete. But if this working document is sufficient for now, maybe we should approve it. More people are always welcome to help craft the next revision, they need that imput.

Elena: That's fine.

No more clarifying questions: Moved to concerns and affirmations

Nancy Perlman: Internet access part needs to be reworded or removed from document. They were probably thnking about not wanting advertising at schools. But sometimes the only way to sustain funding for programs is to bring in partnerships and leased operations. It's not feasible at the higher academic level to not allow these kind of leasing operations. So, we need to rewrite this or pull it out so we can rewrite it (later?).

Cameron Spitzer: Was ready to affirm untill he read the sentence in 5th paragraph referring to standardized testing as "meaningless drivel".

Ricardo: has lots of concerns from the San Diego delegation. Length is a concern. The 5th paragraph about "school has a tremendous influence" seems out of place. General concerns: nothing too innovative, too conservative, nothing groundbreaking. Friendly amendments but no time to explain them. (Submitted in writing this morning)

Lesly Bonnet : wants to see more specifics , more innovative suggestions. Everybody wants more money, but where are we going to get it? Wants more specifics. Offered to send something about a more participatory educational system in the community.

Johnathan Lundell: Seconds Cameron's concern about "meaningless drivel". More overarching structure to this plank. 1st paragraph : ability to navigate through sources of information is not enough to come away with.

Chuck Olston: Marvelous document. Remove "teachers are underpaid" because others are even more underpaid

Tammy Tatum: Plank wasn't innovative enough. Policies could use some push so there's funding for them. Compared to current platform and felt it doesn't offer enough improvements.

John Isleberger: Disagree that school influence on social development should be stricken. Unhealthy competition is not necessarily so bad but could expand on that issue in document.

Jody Bibi: Consumerism concerns. Incorporate language about having classes on balancing checkbooks or credit cards. Corporate influence: look at source of cell phone towers on school property for revenue. Also mentioned that student privacy issues should be addressed in this document.

Kevin McKeown: Works for school district. People on this plank did their job by getting us up and talking about this issue. Said he stands for keeping corporate out of schools or sooner or later we won't have public school's, we'll have corporate schools.

Kevin: People did a lot of work on this plank. Thrilled to hear these concerns from people. As Greens we can only do the best we can. Rather than vote this down, let's vote to add this to our platform and move forward from here. If others want to contribute, your efforts are more than welcome on the platform committee.

Test for consensus.

There were 3 blocking concerns. Vote with delegate cards.

Beth reminded everyone that when we vote we need 2/3 on business matter. But this needs 80% because it's a policy matter.

Ricardo expressed frustration that because of lack of time there wasn't the ability to address all the concerns.

Test for quorum: Jo Chamberlan pointed out that once quorum is established, it holds for the rest of the day. This is going to be 80 percent of the delegates we have right now. Beth explained the voting process. Reason for standing aside needs to be given to the notetaker.

Yes: 41/42
No: 4
Standasides: 4

91.1%

The plank gets adopted into the platform.

Chuck Huddleston: no because felt they colluded to railroad the vote. Felt they should have eliminated the sentence about drivel. Shot themselves in the foot about teachers woefully underpaid. Ignored friendly ammendment.

Bylaws – Retain/Remove

Michael Borenstein: The next item did not make it through committee, so it was pulled from the agenda.

Endorsement Proposal for 2002 election cycle

Next twenty minutes wll be spent addressing Endorsement Proposal for 2002 election cycle.

John Strawn: co-chairs of campaigns and candidates WG are Susan King and Orville Osborne.

Susan: Wanted to clarify what this is and isn't. This is a process that we're asking you to affirm. We are going to implement this process within the C&C WG. We are talking about endorsing Green candidates for office only for 2002 election cycle. We will discuss a more comprehensive endorsement process also.

GPCA CC in conjunction with the Campaigns and Candidates WG. Only for uncontested offices. Laura Wells is running against David Blanco. Right now we are proposing that the CC & WG can endorse all those other candidates for non-contested races. Last plenary we decided not to endorse because at that time there were two slates running against one another. At this time that has changed so we want to go ahead and endorse.

Candidates seeking endorsement for State Assembly and Senate and US Congressional races. You would affirm the process for WG and CC to conduct a poll and decide which candidates to endorse. We have Jo Chamberlain, Doug Riley Strom, Warner Bloomberg (17th Dist.), 41st is Ray , Jay Pont in 8th Cong, Dist, Phill Courtney in Riverside. We have not made endorsements in those races. We wanted to have a litmus test. A candidate must receive endorsements from all the locals in the area you are running. Don't know the status of all those candidates.

Clarifying questions and comments:

Mike Wyman: From the Treasurer's point of view, the reason we are doing this now is we have the opportunity to help these candidates because we can give them a list of contributors , help them fundraise , etc.

David Shorey: Has the GPCA confirmed with the Sec. of State of CA that we are not violating any law, etc.

Response (person not recorded): Yes, there is precedent; no, we haven't received confirmation from Sec. of State. Susan King: We will follow up on that

Nanette Pratini: Why was this not in the packet that went out? We didn't get to address in our locals. How to you propose to handle districts that cover more than one local?

Mike: This was late getting into the packet. We didn't get word of whether or not had contested races from Sec. of State until after the packet deadline. This is just an affirmation of the process, we can work out how to handle certain situations later.

Louie Lafortune: Question about Laura Wells for Controller. Her opponent was not confirmed.

Susan: Laura and David have both been certified.

Kevin: We have made a transition from being greens to a Green Party. Emphasized how important early endorsements are. Candidates need to get going.

Stan Ryan: Has it been talked about denouncing anyone who uses the name of Green Party without really being green?

Would not receive our endorsement but would not send out negative response.

Johnathan Lundell: Wanted to confirm this process. It's akward to not have endorsement of state party when we should have them.

Gabriel Weeks: Will there be a double endorsement for Blanco, who was from the other slate, or only Comejo & Warren?

John: We will not endorse any races that are contested. State law prohibits it.

John Huelet: The party doesn't exist for the treasurer's expediency.

Tian Harter: Glad we're not making an endorsement in contested race. Like to see a contested primary.

Mike Borenstein: This is first time we've had contested races and also a full slate.

Test for consensus:

Concern by David Shorey. Not sure on legality of this.

John Strawn: We'll be looking into legality first thing next week. Thanks for bringing it up.

Jonathan Lundell: who decides ?

Susan: C&CWG and CC. Apologized for not having this more together this time.

No outstanding concerns. Consensus was reached.

Reapportionment Consesus Session

(Results of Choice Voting?):

Jo Chamberlain: Everyone worked very diligently over lunch .

Ricardo Newberry:

The 11 region model had 43 votes and won

Of the 62 ballots cast, 52 showed , 31 for 10 (current), 45 (63%) for 5 region, 32 for 4 region (52%), 21 for 3 region model (43%), 6 for 1 (10%),

We need 80% for change as this is a bylaw change.

Test for consensus:

Concern: We should have that number increased; east section is too large and Shasta, Modoc should be in north west (El Dorado)

Derek Iverson from LA county: 2nd the concern for the big pink area, as many of the counties are not organized now. We should hook up inactive counties with active counties.

Kevin McKeown from LA county: Calls for unity behind 11 region plan, as existing is seriously flawed.

David Shorey from Sacramento: Expresses support for 11 region, affirms that other regions can assist weak regions.

Craig Peterson from Conta Costa county: ?? (not recorded)

Nancy from Santa Cruz: SC supports the 11 region plan; could we separate pink region?

Learner Goude from San Bernandino: We need to get something better than the existing plan, but none of the plans so far are much better.

Responses:

Michael Borenstien: We have held gender balance in all our regions so far. As far as big pink being too big, we are looking to hook up weak counties with strong counties.

Michael Wyman: Gender balance - we are for proportional representation, existing problem with old sytem, to get balanced with ?? (not recorded)

Concern:

Ken Adams says we should assess the results of this reorganization later.

Consensus reached.

Beth from Nevada County noted that John L created all the wonderful CA maps, and that the reapportionment is an ongoing process.

Kevin McKeown notes that in CA, 45% of people rent. And that we should all attend the renter's rights workshop tomorrow.

Sunday, Jan. 20

Armenian Genocide

Beth Haines: the Armenian genocide thing did not have any contact info so there could be input.

David Shorey, Sacramento: notes that we do need to follow our process

test for consensus:

Consensus reached (editor's note:??)

Karren N. San Diego(presenter): There were two concerns raised yesterday: people agreed with Armenian genocide issue, the main point being that this genocide was the first genocide of the 20th century, but USA has not recognized this as a genocide, just a tragedy... etc. but Italy and other European countries have... (?) Second point: according to Geneva convention...(?)

Clarifying questions:

Question: what was the...(?)

Armenian Genocide is noticed April 24 every year.

Question: you received wrong info because you don't need to have backing of state party to get national party attention. We need flowcharts. Apology for the frustration you have been through over the Genocide recognition.

Question: (W Bloomberg from Santa Clara) This item was already on the consent calender, after the item was taken off it was put back on without discussion.

Green Issues WG: It was pulled only because Karren would not have been able to present.

R Newberry San Diego: this is not a consent item but an decision item, the reason it took so long is because there were wrong directions from the national level.

Question (B Smithers from Santa Barbara): What ever happens with this question, why wasn't this handled before?

Concerns and Affirnmations:

R from San Francisco: Main reason to do this is because is this was a genocide and a global wrong.

(Person not recorded): we think that there should be a state-wide genocide plank for our platform

J Holmes from Santa Clara: we must recognize people's history or we are no good.

Cameron from Santa Clara County: We never saw a complete presentation of the item. Will Boldstand aside.

Wendeall from San Mateo County: We are hesitant to point fingers to other...(?)

San Diego: affirmation

Consensus reached.

Barbara Lee

Peter Camejo, Co-Presenter: We are not endorsing a candidate, the focus will be one thing: she resisted the insane war drive. If she wins, it will be a blow against George W Bush. I don't like to endorse Democrats, but this is an exception.

Clarifying Questions:

D Shorey from Sacramento: Are you seeking permission from the Green Party as candidates (yourselves) to endorse, or for GPCA to endorse her? (Response: we are asking that GPCA endorse her)

How does local green party... (?) (Response: we don't want to encourage...(?))

Rosemarie from Contra Costa: What do we have to gain?

R Newberry, San Diego: which committee is sponsoring this proposal?

Mandel from Santa Clara County: Is the language going to change to be more explicit?

Mark Stout, San Francisco: Local level should.....(?)

Peter Camejo: Apology for the confusion; we are trying to win over some Democrats by endorsing Barbara Lee...(?)

Point of Process (D Shorey from San Diego): ...(?)

Beth, Nevada Co.: we support this in spirit, but we must make sure we don't go against our platform and work out the matter later.

R Newberry, San Diego: Two options, the letter is from Camejo, or the letter is from the Green Party.

Friendly Amendment (C Skye LA Co.): Camejo and Warren have already sent the letter, they don't need GPCA endorsement to do so.

Freindly Amendment (Camejo): Let's drop it or test for consensus on support for BL's vote. This will not happen until after March, and they will request the GPCA endorsement.

Straw Poll: GPCA “support”, but not endorsement, was favored

Proposal withdrawn.

GPUS Delegate Nomination and CC Affirmations:

Michael Wyman and Beth Moore Haines (Nevada Co.) Are nominated as the new national representatives from the GPCA.

No concerns.

Announcements of CC reps from the different regions:

Orange/SB/Riverside: Tish Anderson.

Ventura: C Paige

(?): P Mandel

Contra Costa: S Peterson

Bay Area: Bud Dickinson (temporary)

LA: Kevin McKeown (temporary)

[Editor Note: This “announcement” appears to be the affirmation of CC Reps from the schedule. No concerns were recorded. -js]

CC positions:

Co-Secretary to State CC: volunteers are needed for secretary positions: editing, plenary minutes, computer work, word processing, etc.

Volunteers: Nanette Pratini, Elaina Quitana

Platform - Session #3: Energy

The presenters handed out revisions: shortening of the introduction, p 13 and p 14

Concerns:

Nancy Pearlman , LA: Why are we so supportive of unions when they are for oil interests in Alaska?

B Smithers, Santa Barbara: First paragraph has inflammatory statement about 9-11. Friendly amendment to remove explicit reference. (FA accepted)

J Bebe, San Diego: The platform should incorporate pt 10's terminology

N Pearlman, LA: Why endorse unions? (off stack)

D Shorey, Sacramento: Affirmation that we should outreach to labor unions.

POP, Beth Haines, Nevada Co.: We need to hurry up.

Lesly Bobbet, Oakland: Language should be changed.

M Stout, SF: Friendly Amendment: Clean up the language.

Pamela : Don't say anything about shutting down nuclear power plants.

J Bebe, San Diego: Two questions: last line has unreferenced comparison, part 8

Jo Chamberlain, San Mateo: do we support non-clean-energy labor unions?

N Pearlman: Reiterated concern over supporting unions that damage the environment.

Consensus reached.

Sunday Afternoon (Jan 19)

Facilitators: Jo Chamberlain, Mike Wyman
Time Keeper: Nathan Stankowski
Notetaker: Robin Oetinger

Platform – Session #4: Economics

Presenters: David Scheidlower, Budd Dickinson

David: This is more than just a plank, this is the entire economic section, comprised of planks.

A dispute over whether or not we had quorum was brought up by Jim Stauffer and Faramarz Navabi.

David: The issue we're discussing now is do we adopt this new economic section or do we keep the existing one?

Clarifying questions: Jim Stauffer: What part of the document is new? A: 40% is new. Most was updating specifics. This time we cited the 1999 California state budget rather than the 1992 budget which was cited in the existing platform. There ís also new information on insurance.

Faramarz: asked whether we were trying to approve the entire economic section all together or as separate planks. A: All together.

Ricardo Newbury: asked if San Diegoís comments submitted Saturday morning had been incorporated in the document before us today. A: No.

Concerns/Affirmations: (25 minutes was allowed for this.)

Beth Moore-Haines: was concerned that it was too long but affirmed all the work that was done. She also reminded the general assembly that it ís possible to come back and revisit these planks in 2 years so everything doesn't have to be perfect right now.

David Shorey: offered an affirmation that David Scheidlower had put so much work into this platform section even while he ís in the midst of running his campaign.

Ricardo: Expressed concern with the process. He said he appreciated Budd's ability to incorporate San Diegoís concerns into the Energy plank this morning and would have appreciated that this be done for the Economics section as well. He said he doesn't appreciate the trivialization of their concerns. He felt it ís disrespectful to the delegates for being here because now is the time to be making these revisions.

Nanette Pratini: has an issue with the insurance plank about not subsidizing risky behavior.

Faramarz: Explained that he has a background in economics. Obviously we have a diversity of economic views. He expressed concern that we appear to be adopting a Georgian economic policy and that we haven't adequately looked at economic implications of the things that are proposed here. He mentioned that the land tax has the potential to increase sprawl and other problems. He had an issue with auto insurance and prop 103, and that our health care plank calls for people to pay for their own health services. He also mentioned True Cost pricing. Faramarz handed out a flyer of his reasons for opposing this economic platform. [See flyer]

Chuck Huddleston: Said he loved the Green platform and we need equitable social arrangements. He said we need to eliminate the tax revenue neutral clause and that the higher gas tax is a problem too and needs to be eliminated.

Denise Rob: LA submitted changes Saturday morning and she wanted to be sure the Platform WG had those changes. She said she supports almost all that ís in the economic section and is grateful to see the land tax in there because it ís part of the international green platform. She noted that #1 & #5 are in opposition to the taxation section.

Jonathan Lundell: Agreed with endorsing single-payer health care but that the wording "buy services" is confusing. Said that property taxes lead to gentrification because itís unrelated to people's ability to pay and that he was concerned about a flat repeal of Prop 13 because raising commercial property tax relative to residential encourages commercial development. This is a problem we've experienced in San Mateo County. Felt we should reject revenue neutrality since we advocate programs (eg single-payer health care) that will require the raising of revenue.

Lerner Goode: Felt the section was too long and confusing. Asked that we simplify it please and resolve the fact that there is contradictory language. He said he could not stand aside on his concerns.

Tammy Tatum: Said that the San Diego delegation tok this very seriously and she feels frustrated that their input isn't being considered. The presenters for the Energy plank incorporated the concerns submitted at the beginning of the plenary and this should have been done on the Economics section too.

Dorencat: Affirmed the statements about the land tax, trying to counter earlier concerns stated on this topic and added that the emphasis on taxation takes us in the wrong direction.

Michael Borenstein: Affirmed the process stating that Economics is very complex and that since the platform is what the public sees up front, it ís especially important that we get it right.

The stack was closed and no more concerns or affirmations were heard. The facilitators consulted with the presenters on how they would like to proceed.

Resolution

David Scheidlower: First apologized to San Diego for not having addressed their concerns. He said they would be bringing this economics section back to the next plenary after they had a chance to incorporate all the concerns submitted. He explained that there ís a difficult balancing act in putting this section together and it ís difficult to make everyone satisfied. Regarding the concerns about the length, he reiterated that, unlike the other planks, this is an entire section consisting of multiple planks and that none of the planks is any longer than the other planks that have been presented thus far. He conceded that the buying of health care issue needs to be re-written. He addressed Faramarz's comments and urged Faramarz to be more involved in drafting this section since he does have an economics background and had so many concerns. Regarding revenue neutrality, they've received proposals for all kinds of programs. Part of the difficulty is that the Green Party was not built entirely on economic values but we have had to develop our economic agenda based around our other values. David encouraged everyone to please offer more suggestions before the next plenary. He also reminded the assembly

that this is not a budget. There are lots of things in here that are goals, not necessarily to be achieved but to work towards.

Budd: Explained that he has been very involved with the issue of Land Tax and although it is controversial, there has been a lot of work to update it.

David: Ended by saying that they anticipated that this would take more than one plenary to solve. Please send comments early so we have a better document to bring before the general assembly next time.

Proposal returned to commitee [Editor's assumption -js]

Break at 1:45 pm.

Editor's Note -js:

The following items are known to be missing from these minutes:

Ratify San Mateo minutes
Consent calendar (join CalIRV; endorse Prop 40)
Ratify Sacramento minutes