

GPNJ Statewide Meeting, May 13, 2017 @ 1 pm - Ferry Ave Library, Camden

Attendees:

Mike Mangels (Vice Chair), Denise Brush (Secretary/Gloucester), Aaron Hyndman (Elections/Tri-County), Laura Genna (Communications/Essex), Heather & Justin Warburton (Atlantic), Mike Skelly (Burlington), Geoff Herzog (SKD), Cheri (Cumberland), Barbara (Cumberland), Nate Fishman (SKD), Lael (Camden), Thomas (Camden), Gary Frazier (Camden), Melissa Tomlinson (Atlantic), Louise Magee (Camden), Kim Meudt (Camden), Mark Heacock (Camden), Theo Williams (Burlington), Brian Powers (Membership), Steve Welzer (Mercer), Roger Merle (Gloucester), Debra Sousa-Oliviera (Hudson), Barry Bendar (Ocean), Roger Sedmont (Gloucester), Jamhar James (Camden).

Agenda -

- Introductions - everyone introduced themselves, gave their counties and pronouns, and said how long it took them to get here. Thank you to the Camden GP for the food (pizza, vegan chili, and fruit salad), which kept us happy until Mike Mangels arrived to lead the meeting.
- Committee reports from each GPNJ committee
 - Membership - Brian Powers reported that we got one new member today (Theo)! The committee recently designated regional coordinators: Theresa Markila is coordinator for north region, Brian for the central region, south is vacant; approved committee bylaws, re-elected Brian as Chair, and elected Debra Sousa-Oliviera as Vice Chair. Twelve counties currently have locals, and our goal by the next annual convention is to have Green Parties in all 21 counties. The membership committee is currently running a contest to grow our Action Network database; the county with the most new members in AN by May 23 gets \$50. The GPNJ just went over 4,000 registered Greens according to Steve Welzer.
 - Elections - Aaron Hyndman said that the focus for Elections over the last few months has been getting signatures on ballot petitions for our various 2017 candidates. Melissa Tomlinson has 186 signatures for her Freeholder petition. We have to make sure they're "lawyer-proof." Brian mentioned that he's trying hard to recruit an opponent for State Senate President Sweeney - several organizations have offered to bring in money and support. Aaron told us about how he was recently shut out of an assembly candidate debate in his district.
 - Communications - Laura Genna explained the committee's important role in spreading news about GPNJ through social media and press releases. They are currently working on a document describing what the state should be spending the money on that's being spent on the NJ State House instead. Laura said the committee needs more people to do this work, so please consider joining!
 - Policy - Gerald Martin wasn't able to be here, so Denise talked about the committee's progress in reviewing the GPUS platform and adding material on New Jersey specific issues or changes. We are currently finishing up the third section, Ecological Sustainability, and have one more section to go. Mike mentioned that once the platform is done, the committee will be focusing on policy papers, such as the urban forests paper Mike Skelly is working on.

- Finance - committee chair Juan Silva was not here. The committee needs to meet soon because they are supposed to be getting quotes for printing Heather's brochures, and electing a chair for the new year that begins June 1. Mike said we're broke, please join the Finance committee and help us make some money!
- Reports from county locals and caucuses
 - Atlantic (Heather): trying to get trans-inclusive policy at local school district; fighting SJG pipeline through the Pinelands, actively petitioning (goal is 5000 signatures) against state takeover of water in AC; running Melissa Tomlinson for Freeholder; joined with Black Lives Matter in Bridgeton to protest Marshall Zamor's death in prison.
 - Camden (Kim): tabling at Cherry Hill Earth Festival 4/29 was a success in getting word out about Seth Kaper-Dale. June 1 they are doing a protest at a Norcross fundraiser in the Collingswood Ballroom - 70 people signed up, 1500 saw post on Facebook; please continue to share widely. If you come, show up 5 pm or as soon as you can, so we can greet people with signs as they go in. There will be a BBQ at Mark Heacock's house on the 27th, and they probably will make the signs there. Their next meeting is scheduled for June 8.
 - Essex (Laura): LD28 Senate candidate Troy Knight is collecting signatures; solar panel group is working on getting panels on municipal buildings. They will have a table next weekend 5/21 at the Maplewood Mayfest, and SKD is coming in person. Next meeting will be Mon 6/12 at 7 pm, possibly with Matt Smith from Food & Water Watch.
 - Gloucester (Denise): we finally opened a bank account! We have been focusing on collecting petition signatures for Seth Kaper-Dale. We collected signatures at our table at the Cherry Hill Earth Festival and at the March for Science in Trenton.
 - Mercer (Steve Welzer spoke for Jake Jones): they are just getting organized. Matt Lukowicz is running for Assembly, so they have been collecting signatures for his petitions. Steve mentioned that Memorial Day before a parade starts is a good time to get signatures since attendees are bored and civic-minded.
 - Ocean (Heather gave Al Clayton's report): the Ocean County Volunteer Fair organized by Jessica Clayton will be next Sat 5/20 at Toms River Library from 10 - 2. About 15-20 organizations will be there.
 - Tri-County (Morris, Warren, Sussex - Aaron); Aaron and Kenny are running hard for State Assembly. Aaron demonstrated the advantages of having your own portable sound system with mic to give several impassioned speeches to us.
 - Union (Diane): Diane, unable to attend, asked Denise to report that Union's next monthly meeting is 5/17 at 6:30 at the Rahway library.
- Geoff Herzog, campaign manager for Seth Kaper-Dale for Governor, spoke about the petition process and the campaign ahead.
 - They would like petitions turned in now (at this meeting if they're notarized, otherwise get notarized and mail to campaign office in Highland Park). Geoff, Nate, and Steve (campaign treasurer) are going to the Department of Elections in Trenton on May 22 at 2 pm to deliver their SKD petitions. Steve invited anyone interested to join them. They have over 1800 signatures at this point, so Geoff said at this point we should focus on getting signatures for our local candidates. Note from the

- secretary about the notaries promised for this meeting: it was mentioned at the Green Council meeting that there were several members who have notary licenses who were coming. Unfortunately your secretary did not follow up to confirm that they were able to make it, and they both couldn't.
- Gary Frazier asked what the Camden group can do for Seth's campaign. Geoff suggested the South Jersey folks meet for a little while after the meeting to start a South Jersey "Seth squad". Everyone will be needed to help to staff street festivals this summer to promote the campaign. Events will be posted on the campaign's Facebook page.
 - The big need now is MONEY to get into the debates and get matching funds. Remember \$4300 is the maximum individual contribution. They are selling t-shirts for a \$15 contribution. Nate described the campaign strategy of creating focus communities, such as the two new SKD focus groups started by the GPNJ Black Caucus and Lavender Caucus. Other groups include a Jersey Shore group, Environmentalists for SKD, Gamers for SKD, etc. There is information on their website on forming a focus community.
 - Black Caucus update: Gary Frazier reported that they're doing outreach across the state to get more people involved in the Green Party, register people as Green, etc. A Passaic event is coming up, check with caucus members for details.
 - Lavender Caucus (Laura) - GPNJ is going to have a table at the NJ LGBTQ Pride Celebration which will be June 4 in Asbury Park.
 - Upcoming statewide GPNJ meetings:
 - June 24 at Lawrence Branch of Mercer County Library – we will have bylaws voting at this meeting
 - July 22 in Ocean County - Manchester Library
 - Denise summarized the report that Chair Julie Saporito-Acuna sent out about the GPUS Annual National Meeting. It's happening July 13-16 at NJIT in Newark. We need volunteers to help during the meeting, especially with registration, giving people rides to and from the airport, the fundraisers, and hosting people with disabilities. To register to attend the ANM, go to http://www.gp.org/2017_anm_registration.
 - We took a group photo, then distributed cups of salt water. Laura made a video of us drinking salt water in support of the Palestinian hunger strike, and posted it to Facebook.
 - Meeting adjourned at 3:45 pm.

Submitted by
Denise Brush
Secretary, GPNJ
5/17/17