

May 2009

Ferry County Democratic Central Committee

May 17

Our meeting was moved to a different time and location to include members and PCOs on the east side. We met at Barney's Junction at 2 PM on a Sunday. Although the meeting was well advertised and many were reminded by phone and email it was poorly attended. None of our target members were there. Attending were: Michael Sternberg, Kisa, Sandra Sweetman, Melissa Rose, Bryan Bremner, Bob Heath, Demi Sims and Dennis Wuerth. The meeting was called to order at 2:10 PM and Michael led the flag salute.

Bob Heath, Ferry County Commissioner, was our featured speaker. He mainly shared his experiences as a new commissioner. He told us that he has a monthly report for his constituents in Huckleberry Press. He reported that the County budget still has a short fall of \$200,000. Some ongoing expenses include \$7,000 per month for legal fees paid until Ferry County comes into compliance with the Growth Management Act. There was also an insurance claim of \$340,000 owed because of a suit filed and won against the Sheriff's Department for denying employment to a qualified applicant.

Another issue mentioned in passing had to do with perception, the Court House face lift, and lack of funds to run the county. In reality the County has a grant to restucco the exterior. The public doesn't always distinguish between grants and budget moneys and often can't understand the situation.

There will be a public meeting about adjusting the County Budget on May 26th. So far the Commissioners are looking for other ways to make up for the shortfall besides a Reduction in Force (RIF). Loss of jobs and raising health insurance rates were negatives for RIF. Bob mentioned that the Chesaw mine has a 30-70% split with Ferry and Okanagon counties for road maintenance. Some funds may have to be borrowed from the Road Dept. budget.

Bob spent a lot of time answering questions about the rail corridor and the newly formed Ferry County Trail Committee mediated by Karen Van Soest from Tri Counties Economic Development. He mentioned that he tried to change some of the bylaws so it would change board members every two years. He said that he spends a lot of time on the Off Road Vehicle issue even though it is a non-essential issue in running the county. It was pointed out that 80-90% of residents do not want a motorized trail. That there are many safety and nuisance issues because the rail bed goes over private property next to a highway with frequent ore haulers. Two commissioners are in favor of motorization and are not receptive to putting it on a ballot.

He said he recently went to Concunully to see how ORVs on county roads was working out. Some liked it, others hated it and found the ORVs to be a nuisance. The economy did not get a great boost so far. The situation there is different than in Republic as Concunully is a destination resort at the end of the road, not a town. He also mentioned that though he is opposed to motorizing he is willing to consider compromises if it will bring a win-win resolution soon. Thank you notes are being sent to Bob and Barney's Junction.

Old Business

The minutes were not read or approved from April. There was not Treasurers report or Treasurer. It was mentioned that Bryan and Kisa still have not received the \$50 for travel expenses.

Because we were running late there were very brief reports from Bryan, State Committeeman and Kisa, a member of the Caucus/Primary Task Force about their experiences. It seems economic to send only one Committeeperson each meeting. Bryan reported that the WSDCC, our own state Democratic Central Committee needs to operate monthly in an election year and in a non-election year! Makes you think.....

The Task Force turned out to be for improving the Caucus. It is a DNC directive that we have a Caucus only. It would probably take a massive national protest to make any change although only a few people favor it over the Primary for delegate selection.

New Business

Upcoming events were announced:

Campaign Training will be held in Yakima on June 8th

There will be **an Okanagon Agricultural and Rural Caucus** meeting on July 17th in Omak. See the information posted on our website for details and an application.

There will be **a Democratic National Committee Western Regional Caucus** meeting in Coeur d'Alene 7. 8 & 9th

There was a discussion about having a float in the **Barrel Derby Day** (June 7th) and **Prospector's Day Parades** (June 12th). Bryan Bremner is the person to contact.

It was decided meet quarterly until such a time as Committee business necessitates more. Our next meeting will be at Tamarack Pizza in Republic at 6:00 PM on August 19th, our regular 3rd Wednesday meeting time.

Meeting was adjourned at 4:30 PM. Minutes submitted by Sandra Sweetman and Kisa.