

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD  
OF THE TOMPKINS COUNTY PROGRESSIVES  
March 2, 2017**

In Attendance:       Emily Adams  
                              Susan Boutros  
                              Ann Byrne  
                              Jason Cortell  
                              Caitlyn Darfler  
                              Deborah Dawson  
                              Margaret Fisher  
                              John Fracchia  
                              Keith Hannon  
                              Ronny Hardaway  
                              Kris Hodges (via Skype)  
                              Nancy Kane  
                              Anna Kelles (via Skype)  
                              Kim Knight  
                              Ryan McHugh  
                              Martha Laux  
                              Ted Laux  
                              Joe Lawrence  
                              Mark Messing  
                              Katy Nicholson  
                              David Shapiro  
                              Faith Taylor

Co-chairs Emily Adams and Kim Knight called the meeting to order at 8:10 pm.

**Local Candidates' Presentations:** Katy Nicholson introduces three candidates for local office: Faith Tyler (running for Mayor of Groton; David Shapiro (running for Carol Chock's TC Legislature seat); and Keith Hannon (running for Jim Dennis's TC Legislature seat). All three candidates are seeking TCP's endorsement, and all gave very compelling presentations about why they have decided to run and the issues that are important to them. Tyler is concerned that entrenched and unchallenged leadership has failed to maintain Groton's infrastructure and to try to revitalize its economy. Shapiro has finely honed skills in managing not-for-profit budgets and personnel, and hopes to apply those skills to county government. Hannon is committed to correcting the "disconnect" between the values and priorities of his district's residents and their representation on the Legislature. (Please see addendum to these minutes.)

It is beyond the scope of these minutes to report the details of the candidates' presentations and answers to questions from Board members and other people attending the meeting. As endorsement decisions are made, information about endorsed candidates will be posted on the TCP website and/or the FB page.

**Admin Committee and Treasurer's Report:** Jason Cortell reported that TCP had a net loss of \$250 on the Greenstar events it hosted on February 15 and March 1. TCP's "net worth" is now approximately \$1250.

The Board voted unanimously to reimburse Cortell for the \$50 he spent to purchase the Sister Giant videos for TCP.

Knight reported that the Admin Committee had agreed to modify the procedure for putting new members in contact with issue committee chairs. Going forward, the website will include "email forwarders" that will enable new members to directly contact the chair(s) of committee(s) in which they wish to participate, but without publishing the chairs' personal email information on the website.

Knight also reported that the committee is considering switching TCP's listserves to Action Network.

Finally, the committee is still discussing procedures for dues waivers, but it did have a recommendation that the Board approve a waiver request from a particular individual. In order to preserve individual privacy, it was agreed that waiver recommendations will be presented, discussed, and voted upon by the Board in Executive Session.

**DemEnter Committee:** Ted Laux reported that, even with the seating of five TCP Board members on the TC Democratic Committee, there's still plenty of room for progressives who would like to join the Committee. In fact, there are still 48 vacant positions on the TCDC. If anyone would like to join the Committee during the coming year, there is a simple procedure for circulating petitions for nomination, a process which usually takes place in June. If you are interested in joining the TCDC, or running for local office, please contact Laux via the DemEnter email forwarder on the TCP website.

**Economic Justice/Labor:** Joe Lawrence reported on his committee's "successful" email blasts in opposition to the Puzder nomination for Secretary of Labor. In Deborah Dawson's absence, Lawrence reached out to several promising new members in February, and he and Dawson are planning to have a meeting of the Economic Justice/Labor Committee in mid-March. Dawson reported that she had sent out several "action" emails over the past month to "ACA activists" who signed up at the January 15 learn-in event. She also urged everyone to show up at Tom Reed's Ithaca Town Hall meeting on March 11, and object to the Republicans' secretive (or sneaky) approach to legislating a replacement for the ACA.

**Election Justice:** Ronny Hardaway reported that his committee now had one new member and a “prospective” new member (someone who had a glitch with paying dues on line). He plans on meeting with his new committee soon. Hardaway also noted that he would be adding gerrymandering as an additional area for possible action by the committee.

Ann Byrne reported that Tufts University will be running a summer program this year to teach statisticians and other “techies” how to generate equitable redistricting schemes. The Board agreed that it would be very valuable to have someone attend such a program.

Susan Boutros asked if the Election Justice Committee would be exploring ways to expand our voter rolls; Hardaway said that he would look into the issue.

**Environmental Justice:** Cait Darfler reported that neither she nor Boutros have met with prospective committee members yet, but all of them had been added to her local environmental action listserve, which goes out several times a week. Meanwhile, Darfler has met with Gay Nicholson (Sustainable Tompkins) and Irene Weiser (Fossil Free Tompkins) to discuss possible joint actions and events. Darfler and Adams indicated that we are exploring the possibility of cosponsoring a local Earth Day event.

Boutros and Darfler plan to meet soon to create an agenda and determine priorities for the Environmental Justice Committee.

**Healthcare Committee:** Margaret Fisher reiterated her focused commitment to getting a single payer law passed by New York’s State Assembly and State Senate, and signed by the Governor. She is working closely with the Finger Lakes single payer organizing group to make this happen. Fisher reported that there will be a rally in Albany on April 4, when a single payer bill will be up for a vote for the third time in three years. Fisher expressed frustration over using the same tired and ineffective strategies year in and year out: she said it felt like using conventional weapons against germ warfare. Anyone who has ideas/suggestions for new tactics, or a new strategy, should contact Margaret via the Healthcare Committee email forwarder on the TCP website.

**Outreach Committee:** Adams reported that the Greenstar folks have ceded effective control of future Greenstar events to TCP. Everyone agreed that, since we are no longer wedded to someone else’s schedule, we should cut these events back to once a month, and give our existing committees a more prominent role in each event. The questions relating to whether we should try to provide food, and, if so, how to do so without losing money, remain to be determined. The Outreach Committee will meet to discuss these and other issues later this month.

**Peace Committee:** Cortell reported that this brand new committee now has one member besides himself.

**Political Action Committee:** Nicholson reported on the numerous events and initiatives that this committee has promoted, in cooperation with her regional Indivisible group, to keep political

pressure on Tom Reed and his staff. The Town Hall Meeting at the Southside Community Center next Saturday at 8:00 am will be the next opportunity to confront Reed about our issues. Of course, we all know that the TC Legislature passed resolutions in support of the ACA, and against using local law enforcement and government to enforce Federal immigration law, during the month of February. Although it was not mentioned at the meeting, we congratulate Anna Kelles on her hard work and success on these resolutions.

**Political Literacy:** Kris Hodges reported that her committee now has 3 or 4 members. She is continuing to participate in SURJ's "rural listening" initiative. She is also planning to meet this week with a new group (including Ann Byrne) that participated in the February 15 Greenstar event.

**Social Justice Committee:** Knight reported that her committee now has a member. She indicated that the committee's focus will be on diversity and inclusion.

The next meeting of the Executive Board will be on Thursday, March 2, at 7:00 pm at 55 Banks Road in Brooktondale.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:44 pm, to go into Executive Session.

Two actions were taken in Executive Session:

1. The Board voted to endorse Faith Tyler's candidacy, since the Groton mayoral election will be later this month.
2. The Board voted to waive dues for a member pursuant to the Admin Committee's recommendation.

## ADDENDUM TO MINUTES

From a newspaper interview with Faith Tyler:

- 1. What made you decide to run for this position?** Well, first of all, I think I would do a really great job. The future I see for Groton includes serving the entire community. I want villagers to feel welcome at board meetings and have their concerns met with real action. I have been endorsed by Trailblazers and the Tompkins County Progressives which involved interviews and board votes. I am currently the chairperson of TCAction's policy council and I have a lot of experience with facilitating meetings for other community focused programs. I believe in a transparent government who works for the people, as a public servant.
- 2. What is your connection with the municipality you are running for? What are your local ties?** I've lived in the village for over five years and frequently walk with my children, husband, and dogs and have gotten to know a lot of neighbors that way. My son attends the elementary school and I coached his soccer team this summer. I shop locally when I can and am friendly with the business owners and employees. I worked with other Democrats on the campaign to ban Fracking in Groton and to get Kelly Smith on the Town Board. I created a Groton Mom's Facebook group and share local events and info there. I attend the community events the village offers and am looking forward to the BiCentennial Celebration. I have attended village board meetings and read the minutes to stay up to date on what's happening.
- 3. What type of qualities do you have that you think make you fit for this position?** I'm very likable and feel comfortable talking with anyone, and that includes speaking in front of a crowd. I have chutzpah, when I feel strongly about something I am tenacious, I don't give up in the face of adversity. When the village board claimed that the playground at Memorial park was not dilapidated and in need of replacement, I wrote a letter to Senator Seward who had his office contact me almost immediately and came to visit in person that same week. The result was a \$140,000 grant for a new playground and pool renovations.
- 4. What are some ideas you have that you think will help improve the municipality?** The streets and sidewalks are in very rough shape. I would make them a top priority if elected. Personally the biggest reason I like living in a village is that I can walk to most places or it's a quick trip by car. If our infrastructure is unsafe, what kind of message does that send our taxpayers? We have two senior housing centers and three schools. People in wheelchairs, parents pushing strollers, kids walking to and from school deserve a safe corridor to get there. Other achievements I would like to make in the short term are enforcing housing violations and attracting a grocery store. Those are the biggest complaints I hear from villagers.
- 5. What makes you the best candidate for this position?** Isn't it obvious yet?! Ha! I do have a sense of humor, but I am committed to being up front with my intentions, I take honesty very seriously. I will not let anything influence me besides what seems like the

best plan for the residents of Groton. By running for mayor, I am already making a positive difference, and if I win the seat, I will be able to accomplish much more.