

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD
OF THE TOMPKINS COUNTY PROGRESSIVES
June 1, 2017**

Present: Emily Adams
Martha Laux
Ted Laux
Cait Darfler
Deborah Dawson (first 20 minutes)
Margaret Fisher
Ronny Hardaway
Kris Hodges
Anna Kelles
Kim Knight
Ryan McHugh
Katy Nicholson
Joe Lawrence (arrived later)

Absent: Jason Cortell

Guests: Shawna Black (first 20 minutes)
Henry Granison
Susan Boutros
Marc Messing
Bernie Fetterly
Rebecca Elgie
Susan Multer (first 20 minutes)
Pam Mackesey

Co-chairs Emily Adams and Kim Knight called the meeting to order at 6:05 pm.

Shawna introduced herself to the committee. She is running to replace Peter Stein on the Leg. She brought her credentials: a tie-die Bernie tee-shirt. Was a main organizer behind the Ithaca contingency at the Women's March in DC (8 bus-loads full), and of the new Ithaca group "Rise Up." She and her wife have 3 children in local public schools. The issues she would like to focus on are childcare, affordable housing, public transport (TCAT) and the opioid crisis.
Website: www.shawnablack.com

Henry introduced himself to the committee. He is running to replace Carol Chock. He has 2

kids, has lived 17 years in Ithaca, attended CU law and met his wife there. Went away to work in Boston and Minneapolis, but returned for an 11- year position in admissions at Cornell Law. Now retired but still teaches some law for TC3's online program. His main interests are social services, minimum/living wages, unions, diversity. Would like to look at the policy around local tax abatements, make the requirements stricter. (i.e. if a builder wants tax abatement, they should use local union labor...) Website: www.henrygranison.com

1. DemEnter committee: Ted and Martha repeated their call for us to recruit new TCDC members. Petitioning starts on June 6th. There are many new recruits already. Ted clarified: Any TC resident can run in any TC election district, also carry their petitions there and witness them. However, only *residents* of the ED can *sign* the petitions. (by contrast, for the Leg, a person can only carry a petition for the candidate who is running in the district where that person lives.) Example: Emily will run in Ulysses although she is registered to vote in Caroline. She can carry a TCDC petition in Ulysses, or carry a petition in, say, Enfield. But she can't carry a petition for Annie Koreman. Only someone in Annie's Leg district can carry a petition for Annie.

Another clarification: If a voter lives in a district that is allocated 3 seats on the TCDC, he/she can only sign for 3 candidates. If he/she signs for more than that, only the first 3 will count.

2. Economic Committee: Deborah had nothing new to report. Joe told us that Public Citizen (a top-notch organization) is working on a national campaign around global trade. Trump is going to re-negotiate NAFTA, we should follow closely and lean on Reed, in particular concerning arbitration boards (get it free from trade industry hacks.) (Joe: did I get this right? Please feel free to edit...)

3. Election Justice Committee: Schneiderman's bill, NY votes act, is not yet dead. Session ends in a few weeks. People are pushing, although some are backpedaling on the registration deadline part. (Schneiderman called for 25 days, versus current 6-9 months, versus new versions with 3-4 months....) More info at www.easyvotingny.com. Big lobby day in Albany on June 13th. Emily and Mary Thorpe will be going, most likely. Car pool options.

4. Environmental Justice Committee: multiple fronts.

- Cargill: see major facebook post/ mailing from Cait
- [CLEAN](#): (Cayuga lake Environmental Action Now) hosting an event on June 13th, with Walter Hang, to focus attention on the lake
- [Former Ithaca Gun Factory](#): DEC has decided that "no further action is needed" on cleaning it up, Cait urges us to provide public comment, will tell us how in her next newsletter
- Solar array at Cayuga Power (18 megawatt) is happening, will hook into existing

coal-powered infrastructure, should be able to replace the coal over some years. Will include a teaching classroom aspect. They did it right: allowing lots of public input, hiring local union workers to install (after installation, will not employ many folks.)

- The industrial solar installation in Dryden is meeting with resistance from local residents and even some activists. Members would like to have more info on the pro's and con's.
 - <http://www.ithacajournal.com/story/news/local/2017/04/27/public-split-proposed-dryden-solar-projects/100965208/>
 - <https://ithacavoices.com/2017/04/dryden-solar-panel-debate-heats/>
- Dominion update?

5. Healthcare Committee: Margaret and Ryan urged us to keep up the fight (session is ending...) although if ACA gets repealed, the NY leg might call emergency session to re-visit. Our local focus is on Pam Helming (new Republican, not entrenched) and Jim Seward (on health care committee, which needs to vote to allow NY Health Act out of committee.) Proposed new tact: emphasis how NY Health Act would allow schools and businesses to expand. Right now the 2% property tax cap is handicapping local governments.

6. International Justice Committee: nothing to report

7. Outreach and Publicity Committee: Emily told about election results in Long Island, where a progressive won a special election by 16 points, in a district carried by Trump with 32 points. One lesson learned: when NYPAN (or locally, TCP) throws itself into a campaign, it should have a press release ready to go, for when/if they win. NYPAN didn't get much credit in the media for this big upset, even though they were largely responsible for it.

8. Political Action Committee (+ "other items" topic 11 from the agenda): Anna and Katy have been working on the questionnaire and endorsement process. (Katy: can you attach that text at the end of these minutes?) The "procedure" was approved by the EC. Katy will be setting up 2 evenings with interviews (each candidate will have 30 minutes -- 20 for formal questions from our list and 10 for questions from the floor). All dues-paying members (who have registered and paid their dues before the start of the meeting) are invited to attend these two interview evenings and cast their votes (either in person at the meeting or via email up to one week after the event.) Members of the public are also welcome at these events but will not be able to vote. We will prioritize candidates running in contested races (including Democratic, Independent and Green candidates) first.

It isn't too late for issues-experts to submit their own possible questions for the interview sessions. Pam, Ronny and Joe seemed to have some ideas they wanted to add.

While discussing possible questions for candidates seeking endorsement, we realized that TCP would probably do well to come up with its own “laundry list” of issues, i.e. a real platform, in addition to our fairly general mission and vision statements. That way, among other things, candidates will know whether they really want to get our endorsement or not. We will ask Deborah to put this on the agenda for our next meeting.

9. Political Literacy Committee: Kris reports that she has been aiding other efforts more than pursuing things with her own committee. Ernesto is busy with New York 23 Votes -- they had 40 people show up for canvassing on May 7th. They will do more at the Ithaca Festival and Tom Reed’s town hall in Trumansburg (extra volunteers welcome.) The League of Women Voters is organizing an event about fake news, in October. Kris will attend a listening event in Dundee on June 10th, being put on by Susan Cosentini (Emily now signed up as well). Info is now posted on the TC website calendar.

Kris has also arranged with the folks from Better Angels to do their full training on July 14-16, half way between Ithaca and Binghamton. Kris responsible for half the participants: 5 Clinton die-hards and 5 Trump die-hards. Needs help finding good candidates. No cost to participants: Better Angels is applying for grants.

10. Social Justice: Kim reported that the Multicultural Resource Center is working on a talking circles 2-day workshop for us and Indivisible. It will be a whites-only workshop (which sounds strange, but there has since been email exchange about this. Community members of color find that the intro workshops don’t address their needs at all, when they are mixed race, because most of the time is spent just convincing the white participants that there really is an issue. People of color have their own issues that they would like to address. So these workshops are set up so that the first ones are separate, and after that they are mixed race. It should also be noted that the original mixed race talking circles included “race alike” working groups.)

More info on Talking Circle history and design:

<http://multiculturalresourcecenter.org/talkingcircles/>

<http://tompkinsweekly.com/news/2017/02/27/still-talking-multicultural-resource-center-program-helps-bridge-discussion-race-racism/>

There are still openings for this workshop (last weekend of August) -- if we can’t fill them with members of our two organizations, we will open them to other like-minded organizations, etc. The cost is around \$100 per person, but the TCP may partially subsidize its EC members who would like to participate.

Other item number 12: High School Students?

We had a teacher reach out with a student who would like to get involved / intern with TCP. What should we do? Suggestions: direct that student (and others if more come forward) to go work on specific campaigns. Or to help with tech (websites, social media). From our side, we could reach out to Leyman HS, New Roots HS, the Learning Web, to pitch such ideas to them, see if they want to take the ball and run with it. Students at New Roots would be better recruiters at, for example, IHS, than we would be. Campaigns (and the Young Dems group that Katy is starting up) are very happy to have active members and volunteers from 16 on...

The meetings went to executive session to discuss TCDC and endorsements, and adjourned at 9:00 pm.