

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD
OF THE TOMPKINS COUNTY PROGRESSIVES
August 3, 2017**

In Attendance:	Emily Adams	Dave Bradley
	Jason Cortell	Rebecca Elgie
	Cait Darfler	Bernie Fetterer
	Deborah Dawson	Henry Granison
	Margaret Fisher	Keith Hannon
	Ronny Hardaway	Marc Messing
	Kris Hodges	Ben Roach
	Anna Kelles	Susan Sarabasha
	Kim Knight	
	Martha Laux	
	Ted Laux	
	Katy Nicholson	

Co-chair Emily Adams called the meeting to order at 6:05 pm.

Members in attendance were invited to participate in a public comment period.

Bernie Fetterer and **Rebecca Elgie** referred everyone to Bernie's OpEd on Single Payer NY, which appeared in the July 24 edition of the Ithaca Journal. They were also pleased to report that 5 announced candidates (and a representative of a candidate who has not yet announced) for the NY23rd Congressional seat attended the District's Progressive Picnic in Stony Brook last month and all declared their support for Single Payer. Bernie and Rebecca left informational handouts explaining Single Payer.

Marc Messing reported that the County is working on revisions to its emergency services program. He agreed to the Board's request to research the proposals and report his findings at the next Board meeting in September.

Dave Bradley provided extensive and well researched information on the availability of close to 100,000 acres of arable land in Tompkins County that could be used for the cultivation of productive hemp crops. He noted, however, that the more useful and remunerative types of hemp are currently prohibited by NYS because of their slightly higher THC content. He urged that we work for repeal of the State prohibition, so that these more valuable and productive crops (yielding up to \$2,000 per acre) could be grown here. (By my math, \$2,000 x 100,000 acres = \$2 million, which would be a major economic game-changer for Tompkins County.) Bradley also emphasized that we should be looking for ways to create economic demand for hemp products and by-products, in order to incentivize farming. The Board agreed that this should be a topic for consideration at a future meeting.

Keith Hannon reported that his campaign is appealing the Board of Elections decision to invalidate his Independence Party petition. Meanwhile, he is concentrating on gathering the necessary signatures to run on the independent Cayuga United party line. Hannon is seeking TCP's endorsement.

Deborah Dawson and **Susan Sarabasha** introduced the next agenda item, a kick-off activity to begin the creation of TCP's platform. All in attendance were invited to organize themselves into charettes to work on broad subject matter areas. Dawson stressed that each group should identify the "concrete material benefit(s)" of its policy recommendations and articulate the moral value(s) underlying those benefits – because, otherwise, conservatives will articulate their versions of our values, and that never works out well for us! Each group would then create an agenda of short term, mid-term, and long-range policy initiatives that would achieve the benefits they had identified.

Four groups coalesced around the subject matter areas of Environment/Climate/Energy, Equality, Universal Health Care, and Free and Fair Elections. After 45 minutes, the groups reported their progress. It is beyond the scope of these minutes to incorporate all of their results. Dawson and Sarabasha will compile them and provide a report to the membership with the next Executive Board meeting announcement and agenda.

This is only the beginning of TCP's platform process. The Board agreed that, sometime this fall, TCP should have at least one membership meeting that is devoted to this charette process on policy issues. The results will be incorporated in TCP's platform. Stay tuned for further details. We welcome your participation.

Anna Kelles and **Katy Nicholson** led a discussion about how to structure the voting process to determine which candidates TCP would be endorsing in Democratic Primary races and in the Legislative District 5 race (where neither General Election candidate is a Republican). After lengthy discussion, the following procedure was unanimously adopted by the Board:

- Videos of candidates John and Steeberger (District 2), Granison, Osorio-Gil, and Shapiro (District 3), and Hannon and Koreman (District 5) will be posted on the TCP website before this coming weekend, and the links to the videos will be sent out to the general membership;
- A ballot link will be sent out to the general membership on August 7 (a test ballot will be sent to the Board members beforehand, to make sure everything is working properly);
- The ballots will allow members to vote for each and every candidate they feel will effectively represent their progressive values/agenda, so members can vote for more than one candidate in each race;
- Candidates will appear on each ballot in randomized order;
- Ballots will include links to each candidate's video and their website;
- Members must submit their ballots on line by 5:00 pm on Friday, August 11;

- The votes will be tabulated in a Google Forms spreadsheet. Members' votes will be anonymous to the extent that no member can see how any other member voted. Kelles and Nicholson will require members to identify themselves by their names and email addresses (to verify that they are members eligible to vote) and to provide their phone numbers (in case there is some question about their vote), but only Kelles and Nicholson will have access to that identifying information.
- In each race, the candidate who receives the most votes will win TCP's endorsement, provided, however, that a candidate must receive at least 50% of the total number of votes cast in his or her particular race in order to receive an endorsement. If no candidate receives at least 50% of the votes cast, TCP will not issue an endorsement. If there is a tie and the tied candidates receive at least 50% of the votes cast, TCP will endorse the tied candidates.

Finally, the Board agreed that Messing's and Bradley's comments suggested possible issues/projects that TCP could sponsor going forward. Kelles also indicated that she had a number of project suggestions for TCP to consider. We will have plenty to do in the months ahead.

Our next meeting is scheduled for September 7.

The public meeting was adjourned at 8:30, to go into Executive Session.

No official actions were taken in Executive Session.