

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD
OF THE TOMPKINS COUNTY PROGRESSIVES
September 7, 2017**

In Attendance:	Emily Adams	Don Barber
	Jason Cortell	Scott Brim
	Cait Darfler	Deborah Cipolla-Dennis
	Deborah Dawson	Joanne Cipolla-Dennis
	Margaret Fisher	Ian Golden
	Ronny Hardaway	Bernie Fetterer
	Kris Hodges	Stephanie Heslop
	Kim Knight	Amanda Kirchgessner
	Martha Laux	Anne Koreman
	Ted Laux	
	Katy Nicholson	

Co-chair **Kim Knight** called the meeting to order at 6:07 pm.

Members in attendance were invited to participate in a public comment period, but no one spoke at the time.

Emily Adams and **Kris Hodges** discussed the difficulties of preparing questions for candidates' debates or for a in the many upcoming elections in the City of Ithaca and in Towns around Tompkins County. They noted that it was extremely difficult to become conversant enough with each location's issues to draft relevant and difficult questions. They also said they began to question where such locality-centric events should be held, and who should be allowed to vote to endorse local candidates – our membership from around the County, or just members in the localities where the elections were taking place. For all of these reasons, they decided to cancel the forum scheduled for Durland Library on September 6.

Adams, Hodges, and Katy Nicholson sought input from the Board members as to what our TCP's endorsement policy and process should be for the remainder of this election season. Several board members acknowledged the difficulties inherent in conducting an endorsement process for all local elections, and stressed the lack of resources, time, and manpower available to us between now and November 8. Accordingly, the Board agreed that this year's endorsements would be limited to races at the county level, in which two or more candidates who are not Republicans or Conservatives are running. As a practical matter, the only race meeting this description, in which TCP has not taken an endorsement vote of its members, is the race between Amanda Champion and Jen Karius.

Joanne Cipolla-Dennis observed that some local races are important to everyone in Tompkins County: *e.g.*, races in the Town of Lansing can have a huge impact on water quality in Cayuga Lake. The Board agreed that we would offer local candidates across the County an opportunity to speak for a few minutes, and take a couple of questions, at our October Board meeting. We might also have a social time afterwards so that members and Board members could mingle with and talk with candidates one-on-one.

Cipolla-Dennis also pointed out that members – especially LGBTQ members and members of color – were likely to have questions for candidates that the white, cisgender members of our Board would simply not think to ask. AND that those members were likely to be more intimidated by the prospect of asking their questions, so they would need the Board members to ask those questions for them. The Board acknowledged the validity of these points. After some discussion, it was agreed that members of Finger Lakes Pulse who might be willing to take on the task of educating our Board were welcome to work with Knight’s Social Justice Committee to facilitate communication, teaching, learning, and cooperation between TCP and the LGBTQ community in Tompkins County. It was agreed that this partnership would be especially important and productive as we move into the Congressional primary season next spring.

Board members discussed possible formats and venues for next year’s Congressional primaries, including programs hosted by Josh Brokaw and Theresa Alt on WRFI, and putting on a live stream debate like the one that the IJ and IV (Jolene Almandarez) put on last year for our DA candidates. Everyone agreed that livestreaming with livestream questions was a most inclusive format. Some one or more Board members will have to step up to get to work on this by the end of this year.

Cipolla-Dennis thanked **Margaret Fisher** for the email she sent to the membership requesting that they call Senator Gillibrand to support Bernie Sanders’ Medicare for All Bill. She observed that it was fast and easy to do, because all the necessary information was in the email. Everyone agreed that we should be using the membership listserv for requests like this one. Martha Laux will be the contact person if anyone has a “to do” item they want shared with the membership. **Ronny Hardaway** noted that we can also post “to do” items that are events on the TCP website.

Knight asked that we defer discussion of last month’s MRC talking circle event until our next meeting.

Cait Darfler wondered how we might best serve our membership with respect to the Constitutional Convention initiative that will appear on our November ballots. This is a contentious and very complicated issue, about which most of our Board members have not yet made up their mind. It was agreed that TCP’s role should be to educate our membership so that they can make individual, informed decisions. Hardaway will write a blog post about the

ConCon for our website. Adams will include information about the LWV ConCon debate, currently scheduled for September 25, in our next TCP newsletter. She will also check to find out if the debate will be videotaped so that people who are unable to attend on the 25th can watch at their convenience at a later date.

Adams mentioned the “Cornell on the Streets” event scheduled for Saturday, October 28, from noon until 4 pm. She wondered if we might like to use some of the participating students to canvas for Con Con, or perhaps to talk about Con Con at the Wizarding Weekend scheduled for the same date. The Board members thought that would be a good idea. Fisher would also like to use some volunteers to canvas for Single Payer NY.

Bernie Fetterer reported that he had delivered a Single Payer packet to all of our NY 23rd candidates except John Hertzler, and discussed the issues with them. He sought help with getting contact information for Hertzler, and Darfler and Nicholson volunteered the information they had. Nicholson noted that a new candidate, Charles Whalen of Geneva NY, just entered the crowded NY 23rd race:

Our next meeting is scheduled for October 5, 2017..

The public meeting was adjourned at 7:35, to go into Executive Session.

No official actions were taken in Executive Session.