

Meeting of PDCW and WSPC
Ellensburg, WA 2-27-05

1. Introductions – Brief statements of identification and purpose from body
 - a. Jim Mullins (Seattle): Re-engaged in politics with the Kucinich for President campaign. National delegate for Kucinich from Washington State. Attended Progressive Democrats of America (PDA) Convention in Boston after the DNC. Worked to start the Progressive Democratic Caucuses of Washington (PDCW) and Progressive Change for Washington (PCFW). King County Democratic Central Committee Male Alternate for 46th LD.
 - b. Alex West (Seattle): Involved in youth politics, League of Women Voters. Kucinich delegate through the 7th Congressional District Caucus. Worked to start the PDCW and PCFW.
 - c. Chad Lupkes (Seattle): While recovering from cancer, realized healthcare for all was critical. Re-engaged in politics. Dean delegate. Webmaster for many of the Democratic LDs in Washington, PDCW, PCFW, Democracy for Washington. Newsletter editor and at-large member of the Executive Board of the 46th LD Dems.
 - d. Larry Kalb (Bellingham): Bradley national delegate in 2000; Kucinich campaign organizer for the 2nd CD and Kucinich national delegate in 2004; main issue interest is healthcare. Chair of the WSPC.
 - e. Bob Parazin (Richland): Dean supporter. WSDCC State Committeeman from the 8th LD and Vice-Chair of the Benton County Dems.
 - f. Ann Parazin (Richland): came with Bob to observe.
 - g. Sandy Gourley: John Edwards supporter, then Dean. WSDCC State Committeewoman from 8th LD
 - h. Keith Gourley: Part of the Clinton/Gore Field team in 1992; now the 4th CD Dems Chair
 - i. Whitney Neufeld-Kaiser (Seattle): engaged actively in politics with the Iraq invasion. Kucinich delegate through 7th CD caucus. Worked to start the PDCW and PCFW.
 - j. Jessica Beckett (Seattle): issue of interest is education. National Kucinich delegate from Washington State. Worked for Kerry campaign. Staffed the Progressive Caucus meeting at the WSDCC re-organization meeting.
 - k. Justin Simmons (Seattle): got involved in politics after 9/11/01. Worked for United Way of King County then took a year off and volunteered for Dems. Dean supporter. Worked on Talmadge campaign. Worked to start PDCW. At large member of 46th LD Executive Board; Treasurer for King County Dems; now works for Church Council of Greater Seattle.
 - l. Judith Shattuck (Redmond): Worked on Jackson campaign in 1984 and 1988; was in DC for the October '02 demonstration against the Iraq invasion. Active in SNOW. Washington State Kucinich campaign office manager. Secretary for the 45th LD Dems. Northwest organizer for PDA.

2. Statements of Purpose

- a. PDCW (Jim Mullins). Jim returned from the National Convention with energy to start a Progressive Caucus in the Democratic Party. He connected with Alex West, who had been talking to people about the same thing. They, along with Whitney Neufeld-Kaiser, drafted a proposal and discussed the concept with other progressives. Some thought that the caucus should be unaffiliated with any political party; some thought that it should clearly be inside the Democratic Party. The former began a group called Progressive Change for Washington. The latter began PDCW, along with some of the Executive Board members in the 46th LD who had been meeting for coffee to brainstorm about ways they could push the party leftward, to ensure that the progressive platform is brought to life. The PDCW first met in October, 2004. **The mission statement developed by that group is on the home page (so will not be reproduced here)** of the website www.pdcw.org, which came online 12/1/2004. 1/18/2005 Paul Berendt called Jim Mullins and said he wanted to recognize PDCW in his electronic newsletter, which was sent to 30,000 Dems across the state about 1/22/05. The PDCW held an educational forum with Congressmen Dennis Kucinich and Jim McDermott on 1/30/05 that drew standing room only crowds at the Seattle Labor Temple. The PDCW is most organized in the 46th LD, but a caucus has met in the 43rd LD and there are listservs beginning to form for the other LDs.
- b. WSPC (Larry Kalb). Larry was attending the state re-org meeting as a State Committeeman, and was intending to go to the Rural/Agriculture caucus. He walked by a room labeled “Progressive Caucus” and wandered in to see who was there and what was going on. He didn’t recognize many people. He had no intention going in to be an officer of the caucus, but decided to run because he wanted to make sure the caucus stays Progressive and doesn’t shift to the center or the right. He wants progressives to be united so that our voice loud. Jessica Beckett was volunteering for the state party at the re-org meeting and was asked by Paul Berendt to staff the Progressive Caucus, to represent the Party. She was unaware that there were no officers yet elected or that this would be the first meeting of a Progressive Caucus. Her goal in electing officers was to get the caucus off the ground. The officers elected that day were the Chair, Eastern WA Vice-Chair (who has since stopped down), Western WA Vice Chair, and Secretary. No treasurer was elected.
- c. PDA (Judith Shattuck). The PDA was started from people who were energized by the Kucinich and Dean campaigns. The goal of the PDA is to foster and support Progressive Caucuses in each state, as well as other grassroots progressive organizations. Some of the caucuses that have formed in other states are inside the Democratic Party; some are not. There are also other affiliate groups that are not Progressive Caucuses, such as Code Pink, Veterans of Peace, and the Backbone Campaign. The PDCW is currently listed on the PDA website as the Washington State version of a Progressive Democratic Caucus.

3. Fiscal Structure: Larry Kalb gave a brief overview of the differences between 501(c)(3), 501(c)(4), and 527 organizations, in what they can do and can't do. One of the key questions that arose is whether caucuses of the Democratic Party can separately endorse candidates. No one knew the answer clearly. The State Party bylaws do not address this issue. No one had a copy of the State Charter with them to review.
4. Goals for a Progressive Caucus. To figure out whether PDCW and WSPC can collaborate, each attendee discussed what their goals would be for a Progressive Caucus:
 - a. Whitney: Create a communication structure across the state so that Progressives working within the party can work in tandem, collaborating on issues and strategies, sharing resolutions, etc. to maximize our political leverage.
 - b. Jessica: Focus the energy of progressives on the Party like a magnifying glass focuses the rays of the sun.
 - c. Justin: Be the moral conscience of the Party. Offer a slate of progressive candidates/endorsements, even if they aren't Democrats. Not be a rubber stamp, give money and support to Progressive candidates.
 - d. Judith: Consolidate progressive vote so we realize the power we have.
 - e. Jim: Elect candidates that share our vision; force candidates who are elected to adopt our views; identify candidates who can challenge the status quo; coalesce scattered progressive voice; unit around fronts we can agree on
 - f. Alex: Define what it means to be a Democrat, picking up the votes of people who will vote Democrat no matter what, but also those of people who want the Party to stand for progressive values.
 - g. Chad: Identify the progressive position on issues, candidates, resolutions, and help the Party be that, supplement what the party does to get the progressive message out
 - h. Larry: Look for people to organize Progressive Caucuses in each LD, CD, county; write white papers and create talking points on issues to get the progressive message out; have an offence and a defense on issues; take positions and stand up for them; train candidates on how to run a successful campaign; lobby legislators; help to write legislation; create a progressive community; define job descriptions for outreach, media, campaign training, etc. in each LD,CD, county caucus.
 - i. Bob: He hasn't thought much about this, but would cast his vote to work inside the Democratic Party and see where it takes us.
 - j. Sandy: Wants to be sure any positions taken by the caucus on issues reflect the views of rural communities and all parts of Washington State.
 - k. Keith: Caucus shouldn't restrict itself to working either in or out of the Party; if both are better, consider doing both with two organizations.
5. Collaboration: As Chair of the WSPC, Larry said he is committed to working inside the State Democratic Party, and under its rules. Concern was raised about Paul Berendt's motive in forming this Progressive Caucus so haphazardly, with no notification of interested parties. A question was raised about what are the

ways that a caucus can successfully dissent from the main Party. A goal of the Progressive Caucus could be to create a communication structure that is not dependent on the state Party or the Party Chair. Three structures were proposed:

- a. Retain the officers that were elected on 1-29-05 and acknowledge that they are officers of a Progressive Caucus that encompasses the entire state. These officers would facilitate the growth of progressive caucuses across the state.
- b. Convene a Progressive Convention, possibly at the WSDCC in Pasco in April, and elect new officers that would have a broader mandate from progressives across the state.
- c. Those who were elected on 1/29/05 are the officers of the Progressive Caucus of the Washington State Democratic Central Committee, but are not officers of a broader Caucus that encompasses the entire state. Caucuses that form in LDs, CDs, and counties can elect their own officers and write their own bylaws (or not). The glue that binds these caucuses together is channels of communication.

The majority of those present favored option c, with three preferring option b.

Larry Kalb and Jessica Beckett agreed to send Chad Lupkes a write-up of how the WSPC formed on 1-29-05 with complete contact information for the officers elected. This information will be posted on the PDCW website on a page for the WSDCC Progressive Caucus. No other specific follow up action was decided upon by those present.

Whitney Neufeld-Kaiser
Recorder of the Minutes
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