

REDDING REPUBLICAN TOWN COMMITTEE
Town Hall Meeting Room
February 4, 2008

MINUTES

Attendance:

A quorum was present:

Gary Miyashiro
Gerry Casiello
Ward Mazzucco
Hon. Richard Emerson
Joan DeSalvo
Rand Guffey
Michael Thompson
Parker Coates
Jerry Sarnelli
Tom Derderian
Stan Rhodes
Julie Gorman
Scott Palmer
Lewis Brey
Don Stroetzel
Laura Hoeing
Andrea Cotton
Burdon Hickok
Urs Furrer

Guest - David Lewson

The meeting was called to order at 8:02 p.m.

Treasurer's Report

Gary Miyashiro presented the Treasurer's Report and noted a balance of \$1690.87 as of Feb. 4, 2008. Ward Mazzucco ("WM") reminded members that they are encouraged to contribute \$100 annually to the RTC. Nine members have contributed to date.

General Issues

Email Database

WM briefly described the work that Jerry Sarnelli and Tom Dederian are doing to establish a database for broadcast emails and other voter-related communications. Jerry and Tom both requested that RTC members forward email addresses to them (first name, last name and email address) of friends, family and others who might be interested in receiving information from the RTC.

Possible Endorsement/Table at Polls

A group discussion took place regarding whether the RTC should make an endorsement prior to the Presidential Primary. Because the Primary is taking place tomorrow, it was felt that it was too late for an endorsement to be effective. The discussion turned to whether the RTC should have a table at the polls. Many felt that primary goers are active voters and would know who they were going to vote for so a table would probably be unnecessary.

Wilton Candidate Forum

WM asked if anyone had attended the presidential candidate forum in Wilton last week. No one had attended although several had heard that there was a strong turnout.

Voter Registration/Recruiting

WM and others described recent articles in both the Pilot and Ridgefield Press noting that more Democrats than Republicans had registered during the past year in Redding and Ridgefield and that the Secretary of State's office recently published numbers suggesting that over 11, 000 new Democrats had registered statewide since November 1 compared to approximately 4,600 Republicans. A discussion ensued about why there was a disparity and what could be done in town to recruit new Republicans.

Several members mentioned that in the past, Christine Polio would send a letter to people recording deeds in town hall asking if they wanted to register as a Republican. Everyone agreed that it sounded like a good idea to do so again. Lewis Brey offered to draft a form letter and to check with the town clerk's office regarding the procedure for identifying new property owners in town.

The discussion continued regarding the best ways to recruit new Republicans. Laura Hoeing suggested that Lewis' draft letter could contain relevant "facts" to help educate people. David Lewson suggested a possible local news email/newsletter to help build a stronger base of voters.

Campaign Coordinators

WM mentioned that local coordinators were needed for various campaigns this year. Lewis Brey offered to serve as coordinator for John McCain's campaign and Tom Dederian offered to again serve as coordinator for Chris Shays' congressional campaign.

Vacancy Committee

Gerry Casiello announced that Greg Meyers resigned from the Planning Commission and that Mike Bikanis, the current alternate, had agreed to serve as a regular member. As such, a new alternate is needed and Gerry noted that Jerry Sarnelli had agreed to serve as an alternate.

Burdon Hickok then moved to recommend Mike Bikanis to the Selectmen as a regular member of the Planning Commission. The motion was seconded by Tom Dederian and was passed unanimously. Tom Dederian then moved to recommend Jerry Sarnelli to the Selectmen as an alternate member of the Planning Commission. Parker Coates seconded the nomination and it also passed unanimously.

Gerry Casiello then noted that the new RTC is to be installed in March and that there will be four to five vacancies at that point. Tom Dederian suggested that we should consider asking town officials like Art Poltrack, Chris Hocker and Frank Taylor if they would like to join. Gerry Casiello reminded everyone that in seeking new members care should be taken to avoid having too many members on the RTC from any single town commission in order to avoid any possible conflicts or freedom of information problems. WM noted Gerry's concern and also expressed his willingness to contact Art, Chris and Frank to see if they would be willing to serve. Judge Emerson said he would investigate whether there are any regulations addressing the conflict issues Gerry Casiello had raised.

Delegates for Caucuses

WM then noted that delegates would be needed for the various nominating conventions this year and that delegate lists needed to be submitted by April 1 to State Central. In order to meet that deadline, WM announced that our April meeting will need to be rescheduled to April 1 from April 7. WM noted that while delegates select the candidates and that it is normally a pro forma process, sometimes the conventions can "go down to the wire" and the role of a delegate can become very important. WM said that he will be looking for volunteers to fill the amount of delegate seats that Redding has for the following races:

Fourth Congressional District: 5 delegates
State Senate: 5 delegates
House District 2 (Bartlett): 2 delegates
House District 135 (Stripp): 3 Delegates

State Central

WM informed members that he had received a letter from State Central saying that they have upgraded the Voter Vault software to Version 3 from Version 2 and that they will be providing training sessions for anyone who wants to attend. Jerry Sarnelli expressed interest and WM promised to provide Jerry the email contact information for State Central.

Fundraising

WM next raised the topic of fundraising and referenced the group's prior discussion regarding a possible fair. Scott Palmer reported that since the last meeting he had tried to contact two local companies to discuss the possibility but had not heard back from either. Scott wondered if anyone had any other suggestions. WM mentioned that the RTC used to hold auctions and other events in years past but the most profitable undertaking of all typically is the annual fundraising letter. Gerry Casiello agreed that the auction took a great deal of time and not much money was raised. Tom Dederian felt we should stick with the letter because those that donate are likely the same people that would come to an event anyway. Scott and others then raised the issue of possibly expanding the Pig Roast to generate more funds as well.

Book Awards

Update from Tom Dederian who said that he is getting the books for the three awards and is coordinating with the Joel Barlow representative.

Sanford Award

A brief discussion ensued regarding the annual Sanford Award. Julie Gorman volunteered to talk to and coordinate with the event organizers. The donation last year from the RTC was thought to have been \$100. The event is June 4.

Primary Results

WM noted that the RTC had to report primary results to State Central after the polls closed and said he would take care of doing so.

March Meeting

WM reiterated that the new RTC takes over in March and that four or five members are dropping off or becoming senior members. WM noted that we will also need to select new officers in March. WM asked that anyone interested in running should let him know. WM also noted that some reorganization of committees will have to take place and that he will assume everyone wants to stay on the committee they are assigned currently unless he hears otherwise. Gerry Casiello noted that he could use some help on the Vacancy Committee. WM reminded everyone that Christine Polio had informed him that she is resigning as Chair of the Events Committee and that a new leader is needed for that important group. WM said that he would get a list of current committees to everyone for their review.

Miscellaneous Issues**Shays Campaign**

Tom Dederian mentioned that he, Natalie Ketcham and Don Takacs would be attending the quarterly meeting for Chris Shays in Norwalk. Tom noted that the campaign was "gearing up" and was facing another tough contest. This year, Congressman Shays will likely be running against a retired hedge fund manager from Greenwich, Jim Himes, who has a great deal of money. Tom noted that Karen Dolan has vowed that "they are going to win." Congressman Shays is very excited and is also a big supporter of John McCain so the campaign will certainly draw a great deal of attention once again

Week on Washington

Tom then noted that State Central is looking for a volunteer to supervise the annual "Week on Washington" trip. The trip takes high school students to D.C. every year for four to five days for an up close look at how the Capital works. Several students from Redding have been involved and it is a great program. State Central organizes the trip and several former students assist, but unfortunately the gentlemen who has been overseeing it for a number of years cannot do so this year. If anyone is interested or knows anyone who might be interested in supervising the trip please let Tom know. Adjournment Richard Emerson moved to adjourn the meeting, which was seconded. The motion unanimously passed. The meeting adjourned at 8:58 p.m.

Adjournment

Richard Emerson moved to adjourn the meeting, which was seconded.

The motion unanimously passed. The meeting adjourned at 8:58 p.m.