

San Mateo County
Democratic Central Committee
General Meeting Minutes
May 16, 2019

Prior to Meeting

- At 7:33, the Chair invited Francesca Segre to introduce Kimberly Ellis to speak about her candidacy for California Democratic Party Chair.
 - Ellis spoke for approximately 15 minutes and then took questions from the audience.
 - April Vargas asked about why the CDP website is not up to date.
 - Ellis: The website should be accessible to people with disabilities, in other languages and should be brought into the 21st century and should also have up to date and meaningful information. It should also be a conduit to do more effective outreach. Independent and No Party Preference voters now are registering at a higher rate than Dems. That's a problem.
 - Guest: I've been a Dem my whole life. I hear you about not putting your thumb on the scale as chair. The incumbent has a strong advantage. If that person isn't representing our values, should we sit it out and not show support for that person?
 - Ellis: Once the nominee is selected, I will work to get that person elected. If you are running for the highest office in the land, you should be prepared to answer tough questions. Also, I don't believe that the Chair should support any candidate for any office, including ADEMs, president, or any office. We should embrace people who jump in to run for office.
 - Greg Loew: "Serve the people" can you talk more about what that means?
 - Ellis: I do not intend to be the Chair who hangs out with legislators and lobbyists in Sacramento. I will be all around the state. We've visited all 58 counties. There are three regions that are all saying the same thing. Northern rural, central valley, and Inland Empire feel left out and forgotten. They want the infrastructure to build the party in those areas. I will be out in those areas with my sleeves rolled up. We can't have one size fits all solutions. We have to go talk and listen to what they need. In Calaveras, they talked about a speakers bureau with speakers who could come speak at our events. A candidate couldn't raise enough money to have her ballot statement printed. The county chair should be able to call

the CDP chair and get the funds to ensure a candidate is on the ballot and has a ballot statement. Also, our staff shouldn't have to volunteer unpaid. They should be paid a fair paid internship. We have to do a better job in the long game. What happened in '16 didn't just happen. It's the result of investments over decades by the GOP. California GOP just elected a Latina millennial as chair. State legislature is going to turn over because of term limits. Majority of local and municipal elected officials are Republicans. If we're not careful, they could take a stronger position and even take majorities.

- Francesca Segre introduced our next speaker, Nick Lochrie in June.

Call to Order, Adoption of Agenda & Approval of Minutes

- The call to order occurred at 8:06pm by Committee Chair, Nicole Fernandez.
- The May, 2019 meeting agenda was adopted.
- The April, 2019 meeting minutes were approved.
- The April, 2019 financial report was approved.
- New visitors were asked to speak.
 - Guest: Neighbor invited me. Looking to get more involved.
 - Guest: Wife and I are in Burlingame. Wanted to see what was going on. Get more involved.
 - Mary: Was invited by Alexis Lewis. I'm passionate about politics. I came here young from Iran. I can't believe what is happening in our country. It's terrifying. I want to use my voice and be of service.
- Please check in on social media.

Executive Board Reports

Chair (Nicole Fernandez):

- Different agenda this month. No regular reports. Solely focused on the recommendations of the Endorsement Committee. If you like nerdy policy stuff, you're at the right meeting. Any other officer, club, leg reports will be done in a lightning round. Convention will be in 2 weeks.
- If you are new, please check out Dems LEAD! We have experienced speakers come to talk about campaign issues. This next Monday, Hene Kelly will talk about campaign ethics.
- Convention in 2 weeks. We could use your place. We have proxy forms.
- Clubs liaison, Chelsea Bonini, got our clubs into the pre-endorsement process for the convention voting. The club rechartering is happening now. You have until the July meeting. \$1 per member plus the roster of your club.
- Nancy Yarbrough: Kudos to Sam Manneh for locating the restaurant. It's buffet style. So that's easier. It's sold out.

- Chair: Sponsors are: Harini Krishnan, Chelsea Bonini, Jerry Hill, Julia Mates, Charles Stone, Alexis Lewis, Kevin Mullin, Marc Berman, Anna Eshoo, Rishi Kumar, Phil Ting, Scott Wiener, Shelly Masur.

Endorsements Committee Recommendations:

- Chair invited Karen Maki to take the meeting.
- Maki invited Endorsements Committee to the front of the meeting.
- Thank you to the entire committee, (Brigid O’Farrell, Shikha Hamilton, Diana Reddy, Robert Bernardo not here.)
- Thank you to Kalimah Salahuddin and Steven Booker for being here. Tom Mohr. Cliff Robbins. And our Chair.
- A number of issues came up last year. We want to resolve those and have no problems going forward. The changes we recommend must be accepted by a majority of the central committee.
- We settled on 4 key factors. There is an election this year. So we couldn’t take a very long time.
- Maki read the 4 recommendations.
- To gain perspective, we asked other central committees how they handled these issues. We also held meetings. Asked people to submit ideas. They were all shared on Google Docs which you should all have.
- We held a meeting on May 3rd and made suggestions based on all the discussions.
- We now bring these recommendations to you to vote on. A committee member will explain the idea. There will be opportunity for discussion. Then we will vote. That’s the process.
- There are other processes that need to be started in June.
- Francesca Segre read a statement from Brigid O’Farrell.
- Steven Booker read recommendation #1.
- Bill Lex moved to adopt. It was seconded. Question for discussion. Seconded. David Burruto called the question. Seconded. Motion passed unanimously.
- Cliff Robbins introduced the second recommendation. This is somewhat similar to Santa Clara County. The rationale is that we need to have a process if something bad happens. To protect to endorsement. But it also needs to be clear and transparent. It needs to be a process that’s spread out, but also gives the Chair the ability to act if time is of the essence. Also requires eboard approval. Motion to accept the question. Seconded. Discussion begins.
- Ashleigh Evans: I would recommend “compelling reason” section be changed. We should cut the part where it says “to the SMC DCC Chair” because it should go to either the eboard or the broader committee. The way it’s written, it would go just to the chair. An “evil” chair could hear the message from the candidate and inappropriately disregard it.
- Robbins: The idea here was that we had adequate opportunity for the candidate. What we wanted to avoid was time or availability being the barrier.

- Rick Bonilla: Suggests that the language should be replaced with “the deciding body”.
- Chair: We don’t want to embarrass the candidate. This let’s the candidate keep confidentiality.
- Sandra Lang: My concern is that the information could rise through other people and get out and still embarrass the candidate.
- Judith Christensen: I have confidence that the chair would keep it private. I don’t want to have information out unless it reaches the 60% threshold. If it does, it can go out to the entire body.
- April Vargas: I think it’s important that the candidate be able to make their case to the body and not just the chair. Who decides what is “compelling”?
- Chair: The Chair.
- Vargas: Is there any specificity as to what constitutes “timely”?
- Robbins: Other counties haven’t specified. The idea is to keep it broad enough to be flexible. The idea is that by opening to the eboard that it will be more balanced than if just one person is handling it. It’s an effective check.
- Chair: We are adding guidelines and norms for conduct for endorsements committee.
- Chelsea Bonini: I would like to modify the “compelling reason” language. Santa Clara refers to their fair campaign pledge. Something similar.
- Christianson: It’s a compelling reason to consider not to rescind. The chair goes to the appropriate body. Then it requires 60%. I trust the 60%. It’s impossible to define “compelling” reason. We have to trust the body to make that decision.
- Bonini: When we had the endorsement committee meeting, we agreed that 60% be the standard. Whatever happens, it’s better to have more specificity.
- Greg Loew: The definition of “compelling” is hard. Any person could find something that’s compelling. How does the procedure play out? Does it have to go to the Chair?
- Chair: Yes.
- Loew: It’s not clear where that comes from.
- Robbins: We’re not asking the criminal charges question. The universe of “bad conduct” is wide. Someone has to bring it to the Chair. The chair decides.
- Loew: The way the flow of information goes (to the chair) should be more clear.
- Nick Akers: I agree with Greg. The way it’s written, it’s not clear that it has to go through the chair.
- Robbins: I suggest alternate language for tonight that includes these ideas. The Bylaws Committee is going to have to make this fit bylaws language. The bylaws process is long.
- Evans: Calls the question. Seconded. Passes.
- Robbins: Motion to approve item 2 as amended? Moved, seconded. Passes unanimously.
- Maki: Read item 3.
- Question called. Seconded. Discussion opened.

- Evans: Diana Reddy was asked that she had to leave the room before discussions in the primary. I think this would have prevented that, yes?
- Chair: Yes.
- Loew: “Do not apply” does that have to do with the vote?
- Robbins: That means the elected member can vote in the central committee
- Akers: Ballot measure campaigns and candidates themselves.
- Oster: Concerned that with so many people here that have donated a small amount (\$10 or \$20) to a local candidate, they can’t participate. It might be hard to actually find people who can be on the committee.
- Kalimah Salahuddin: Only applies to that one race.
- Vargas: This opens the net of people who might serve. It might be good.
- Chair: I want to add that to the long list of things we do.
- Bonilla: Suggests language to clarify recusal for the endorsement committee.
- Chair: All in favor of accepting as amended. Motion passes unanimously.
- Kalimah Salahuddin read item 4. The rationale was that we could go into the stats of the criminal justice system being highly biased against people of color. The data clearly suggests that people of color are also more likely to be convicted and the penalties are usually much more severe. I was pulled over for a traffic stop and was charged with a felony. I am not sure if I answered the answer on the endorsement questionnaire. I was running for school board at the time. Removing this question makes this a more open and inclusive process.
- Motion to accept item 4. Seconded. Motion passes unanimously.

Lightning Round (one-minute announcements/remarks)

- Mitchell Oster: Want to congratulate myself for getting the new 2 mic system.
- Ashleigh Evans: San Mateo County Democracy for America, our next meeting is June 5, Wednesday. Program is a conversation with 2 candidates for State Senate. Sally Lieber, served in the Assembly, running for Senate district 22. Other candidate is Senate district 15. Ann Ravel, former FEC chair.
- April Vargas: Voter Reg report, we’re hoping to do voter reg at pride event. We’re considered a partisan group. Trying to make this work. Doing a training with Stand Up Peninsula. If you have a community group who would like to register voters, we will come to you with out mobile trainings.
- Karen Maki: My PGE resolution has been modified to just utility. Sent to CDP for consideration at the convention.
- Alexis Lewis: Contact Mullin and Berman 392 use of force. When police use tactics.
- Jason Galisatus: Jackie Speier, Jerry Hill, Kevin Mullin, Dave Pine are hosting a conversation about housing. Saturday, May 18, 1:00-2:30 at Skyline theater. San Bruno.
- Sandra Lang: Shout out to Jerry Hill for being persistent on PG&E. It’s great when a public official tries to protect human beings. A lot of jurisdictions have a lot of

water but fire season is coming and I think we have to protect defensible areas. Talk to your city officials. It's important.

- Erin Chazer: Sister District (co-sponsored by PDC and PYD) - a comedy fundraiser night. Details here:
<https://www.facebook.com/events/1568923466572113/?ti=icl>. PYD Flag Day party: There will be food, drinks, and American trivia. Your most patriotic outfits are highly encouraged! Tickets available for purchase soon.
- Mike Dunham: Hi Everyone, I'm Mike Dunham, and I'm part of Housing For All Burlingame. I've spoken during the lightning round the last few months about the Peninsula Health Care District and 8 acres of public land they own just 5 minutes of here next to the Mills-Peninsula Medical Center, where the old Peninsula Hospital used to be. I wanted to double-co-sign what Jason said about the housing townhall on Saturday. It's going to be a great event that will shine a spotlight on the Health Care District's plan to build medical office space and mostly market rate senior housing on public land, when many groups and elected leaders want them to build affordable housing instead. Please join this Saturday at 1 pm at Skyline College, and you can see more and get tickets by Googling 'Jackie Speier housing town hall'. Thank you!.
- Alex Walker: Speaking for Assemblymember Phil Ting. Today was the day of the appropriations committee suspense file, 13/14 of our bills made it out. Including ADU granny flats, CVS receipts, resentencing guidelines, and more. I will send info on our convention parties. Will send to Nicole.
- Chelsea Bonini: Fundraiser for Shelly Simons for VA. Donations are being matched. That's great. May 30. Date has been set for PDC annual event. It's August 19. Consider sponsoring, please note the date. Encourage you to come to the Disabilities Caucus. I will be running for board member at large. There is a Santa Clara based slate, so I could use your support. Voting beforehand. Please come by. Hene is running for chair of that caucus. Also, I have filed to run for Area 4 San Mateo County Office of Ed.
- Nevada Merriman. I'm very happy with the changes to endorsement process. I also want to encourage people to attend.

Adjournment

- The meeting adjourned at 9:05pm.