



## State Meeting

### Teleconference

July 23, 2017

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## GPVA BUSINESS MEETING MINUTES 23 JULY 2017 & 6 AUG 2017

### 18 MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE:

(An asterisk \* denotes a local representative.)

- Arlington: John Reeder\*, Kirit Mukherjee (treasurer)
- At-Large: none
- Blue Ridge: Charlie Jordan\*
- Central Virginia: Kimberly Lowe\*
- Fairfax: Casey White\*
- Fredericksburg: Chris Fink\* (webmaster)
- Hampton Roads: Bryce Davis\*
- Loudoun: Maria Bergheim\*
- Lynchburg: Marcus Sutphin\*, Sid Smith (co-chair)
- New River Valley: Steven Gillespie\*
- Piedmont: Elizabeth Melson\*, Tim Cotton (press secretary)
- Richmond: Scott Burger\*, Jonathan Newby
- Shenandoah: Tom Yager\*, Tamar Yager (co-chair)
- South Fork: Andrew Franke\*

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#### COMMITTEES

[Interim](#)

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[Structural Reform](#)

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Meeting convened at 3:05 pm using FreeConferenceCall.com and recorded. Sid Smith chosen facilitator, Marcus Sutphin time keeper, Kirit Mukherjee vibes watcher.

(0:06) The agenda was approved with the addition of consideration of Tamar Yager for reappointment to the GPUS Finance Committee and consideration of Sid Smith for appointment to the GPUS Platform Committee, and with a discussion of online group decision-making software Loomio might have to offer to us.

On request of Charlie Jordan (0:08) reading of the minutes was deferred to our next meeting.

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#### GREEN LOCALS

[Arlington](#)

[Blue Ridge](#)

[Central Virginia](#)

[Fredericksburg](#)

[Hampton Roads](#)

[Loudoun](#)

[Lynchburg](#)

[New River Valley](#)

[Northern Virginia](#)

[Piedmont](#)

### REPORTS (0:16)

The officers and most local reps submitted written reports, and these are appended below. The following additional comments were offered:

- Sid noted that he still has many copies of Green Pages and would be happy to send them to locals for distribution to their members.
- Webmaster: Chris Fink invited all locals to send him all their data, including contact info, email addresses in particular, and local geographic boundaries. He can also publicize

[Richmond](#)  
[Rockbridge](#)

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**THE TEN KEY**  
**VALUES**

[Ecological Wisdom](#)  
[Social Justice](#)  
[Grassroots Democracy](#)  
[Nonviolence](#)  
[Decentralization](#)  
[Community Based](#)  
[Economics](#)  
[Feminism](#)  
[Respect for Diversity](#)  
[Personal & Global](#)  
[Responsibility](#)  
[Future Focus &](#)  
[Sustainability](#)

any upcoming local meetings. He also emphasized that IT members can log-in to the new Drupal site to work on needed tasks.

- Arlington: Has endorsed a candidate for Arlington County Board of Supervisors, and invites Greens in the area to help with tabling. The AGP is also working with the Sierra Club and others on improving building energy standards, and want to get an advocacy campaign going to get the state board to enact a tougher standard. The board is appointed by the governor with a member from each congressional district.
- CVG: Having trouble getting people to come to meetings. Tamar suggested calling it a “meet-up” rather than a meeting, and have people meet at a restaurant. Kimberly said transportation was an issue for some people. Tom said working on a local campaign, such as Marcus Sutphin's, can help get people active.
- Fairfax: Casey White said the local has been somewhat dormant recently. They met earlier today, and will be updating their bylaws soon.
- Fredericksburg: They have mostly been working on the Anderson for Delegate campaign, including a big event yesterday.
- Hampton Roads: They are having a campaign kick-off event for Jeff Staples on August 18th. Also working on issues like solar farms and the pipeline.
- New River Valley: They have been networking about the KKK rallies in Charlottesville about appropriate responses, and also about the Mountain Valley Pipeline. Some members got some direct-action training. Casey suggested those attending counter rallies should get proper training, and suggested contacting an organization called Redneck Revolt.
- Piedmont: They are working with FairVote on Ranked Choice Voting on raising awareness in Virginia about the issue. They've had a few conference calls and many email discussions. The Ranked Choice Voting bill will be reintroduced in the next legislative session. They are also working on the Will King campaign. Elizabeth also talked about her work raising awareness about hemp farming.
- Richmond: Will be meeting on the 24th. Working on the Montigue Magruder campaign. They will consider endorsing a program called Put Schools First, which will be pushing for modernization of the city's public school buildings using a petition campaign for a ballot issue to redress the issue in the budget.
- Shenandoah: Helping with Will King's campaign, with an event next weekend and a table at the county fair.

## **CAMPAIGN UPDATES (0:47)**

Sid reported that all five of our nominated House of Delegates candidates have made ballot access.

Tim Cotton reported that King's campaign is drawing voters from both the left and the right; the right with issues like hemp and veterans' issues, and the left with progressive issues. They are knocking doors (1200 doors so far) and doing literature drops. They are doing a candidates' forum and making good use of social media. The incumbent has never campaigned, but he has started to do so in response to the King campaign. They've raised \$40,000, and want to hit \$70,000 by election day. Tim believes they've got a good shot at hitting a plurality on election day.

Marcus Sutphin reported that his campaign is working on raising money. The race in his district has become a four-way race, and this may help his chances. They have speaking events and tabling events coming up. The website is up and they are working on literature. It is hard to work out the best way to reach voters in a district that is almost entirely rural.

Chris Fink reported that the Anderson campaign is doing well, but needs volunteers. He has a schedule of upcoming campaign events that is now published on the GPVA website. (Chris encouraged all candidates to send their campaign and event schedules to him for publication on the website.)

Bryce Davis reported that Jeff Staples campaign is getting a lot of contributions and is partnering with progressive groups in the area to get additional help.

Scott Burger reported that Montigue Magruder is campaigning hard.

## **BYLAW PROPOSALS**

(0:59) The proposal to change the name of the Interim Committee to the Leadership Council was introduced. Discussion ensued. (1:07) Charlie Jordan objected to the word "Leadership," on the grounds that Greens shouldn't use a "leader/follower" model of organization. The merits of the term were discussed. Sid called for consensus, and Charlie registered a blocking concern. The proposal was passed on a roll-call vote. Voting yes were the co-chairs, the press secretary, the treasurer, and all locals except Blue Ridge which voted no, and Fredericksburg and Richmond which abstained.

(Andrew Franke then had to leave, and gave his proxy to Tim Cotton for the purpose of voting on the bylaw proposals, saying that it was the consensus of the South Fork Greens that he do so. Charlie objected. Discussion ensued. ( 1:24) It was agreed that such situations should be addressed in the bylaws. A vote was then taken whether to allow Tim to give Andrew's vote for South Fork Greens. A vote was taken to determine whether this would be allowed. The treasurer, BRG, Lynchburg, Richmond, and Shenandoah abstained, and there weren't any "no" votes, so it was agreed to record Andrew's votes as provided by Tim.)

(1:37) The proposal to create a GPVA party of General Secretary was taken up. After some members expressed concern that the job description had too many duties for one person, it was agreed to change the language regarding production of a party newsletter to state that the Secretary would "coordinate" the production of the newsletter, rather than being responsible for producing it themselves. The proposal was then adopted as amended by consensus, with Charlie Jordan standing aside.

(2:01) The proposal to delete the words "final form" from bylaws Para. 12.1 was taken up. Charlie Jordan objected that this would open the door to changing proposals without any constraints on content that might be added to a bylaw proposal, making it possible for major changes to be sprung on the membership. Sid replied that in parliamentary procedure amendments that do not preserve the intent and substance of the proposal would be out of order. Charlie replied that our procedure was Consensus Practice, not Robert's Rules. After further discussion several members called for a vote on the proposal. A vote was taken, and the proposal passed with the Treasurer and Blue Ridge voting no, and all others voting yes except Richmond and Arlington, whose members had left the meeting.

(2:23) The proposal to adopt a procedure to determine when a pending decision is major or minor under our bylaws was taken up. After some discussion Charlie Jordan blocked consensus, and the proposal then passed on a roll-call vote with all voting yes except Blue Ridge, which voted no, and Richmond and Arlington who had left the meeting.

(2:34) Discussion of our committee structure was then taken up. It was proposed that we create an ad hoc committee to gather the opinions and concerns of the membership and then

promulgate a comprehensive proposal regarding our standing committees for consideration at a future business meeting. After discussion it was agreed that such a proposal would be discussed when the meeting reconvened on August 6th.

The meeting was suspended at 6pm, and reconvened at 2pm on August 6th, with Sid Smith and Tamar Yager (co-chairs), Tim Cotton (press secretary), Kirit Mukherjee (treasurer), Chris Fink (webmaster), Charlie Jordan (Blue Ridge), Sean Immanian (Fredericksburg), Bryce Davis (Hampton Roads), Maria Bergheim (Loudoun), Marcus Sutphin (Lynchburg), Steve Gillespie (New River Valley), Elizabeth Melson (Piedmont), Andrew Franke (South Fork), and Ryan Wesdock.

(0:02) The members agreed by consensus to appoint Tamar to the national media committee, and Sid to the national platform committee.

(0:06) Discussion returned to our standing committee structure. Based on the discussion the previous two weeks, and some discussion on the listserves in the interim, Sid outlined a proposal to appoint an ad hoc committee to gather information from the membership and then formulate a proposal. After further discussion it was agreed that the committee would have five members, and that in addition the state officers would serve as observers and advisers to the committee. Nominations will be taken until Friday the 11th for people to serve on the committee, and that an approval vote for the membership would be taken for the next three days, ending at midnight on Tuesday, August 15th. The committee would convene by email and select its own chair and procedures. It was agreed that the committee will have five weeks to gather information, formulate a draft proposal, and promulgate it to the membership. The final proposal would then be scheduled on the agenda of a business meeting by the co-chairs. This plan was agreed with consensus, with Charlie Jordan standing aside.

(0:53) Discussion of a Political Response Team was taken up. After some enthusiastic discussion, it was agreed that the co-chairs would develop a proposal for our next business meeting to establish a Political Response Team to include the press secretary, a legislative coordinator, an campaign coordinator, and a political liaison from each local.

(1:06) Discussion of a Party Summit was taken up. Time introduced the idea, commenting that the party could use more focus and a clearer message. Sid suggested having the summit as our fall general meeting. Lengthy discussion ensued about what the protocol would be, and what kinds of statements we would be trying to develop. Consensus began to build around having the Leadership Council talk to their locals and then hammer out an agenda for the summit. It should include a vision or mission statement supplemented by clear statements on broad policy goals. It was agreed that the co-chairs would schedule the summit for a weekend in mid-September. Charlie Jordan registered a concern that he wasn't sure what the outcome would be, and that it might not be very accessible to the hearing impaired, and stood aside from consensus.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:02.

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## **APPENDIX: TEXT OF BYLAW PROPOSALS**

### **PROPOSAL: Rename the Interim Committee to the "Leadership Council"**

Rationale: With the recent changes in our bylaws to voting rights and procedures on major decisions, the representatives of locals are the principles responsible for major decisions whether at in-person meetings, teleconference meetings, or when convened through the IC list-serve. This new designation is more consistent with the changes already adopted. In addition, this language clarifies the nature and purpose of the group as the primary governing

and decision making body of the party, as, in fact, it has generally been in practice.

Current vs. proposed language: Throughout the bylaws, replace each instance of the words "Interim Committee" with the words "Leadership Council."

Edit Para 10.1.1 to read: "Each Local, through an inclusive democratic process, shall designate a Local Representative to serve as its member of the Leadership Council and as its principal point of contact with the state party."

Edit Para 10.2.1.2 to read: "The Leadership Council member or certified alternate from each of 50% or more of the affiliated locals."

Edit Para 10.3.1 to read: "Major decisions shall be made by consensus of those GPVA members present or, if consensus cannot be achieved, by a vote of three-fifths of the members of the Leadership Council present, unless the Bylaws specify a different approval threshold for the decision at hand, and provided quorum has been established. Alternate local representatives may vote on behalf of their local's Leadership Council member provided the alternate is certified in writing to the Co-Chairs by their local's Leadership Council member prior to the start of the meeting. Officers may not designate alternates, and no person present shall have more than one vote. At-large members present at state meetings may vote in accordance with Para. 7.4.2, and are treated as a single member pro tem of the Leadership Council while the meeting is in session."

Edit Para 17.1 to read: "The GPVA shall have a Leadership Council, accountable to the GPVA and responsible for GPVA major decisions in accordance with Para. 10.3."

Edit Para 17.2 to read:

#### 17.2 Composition

17.2.1 The members of the Leadership Council shall consist of the officers whose office is prescribed in these bylaws, and the Local Representative of each affiliated local.

17.2.2 The Leadership Council shall be convened by one of the Co-Chairs any time there is business that, in the opinion of both Co-Chairs, requires its attention in accordance with Para 17.3, or upon request by at least 50% of Local Representatives. Meetings that are not in-person or teleconference meetings scheduled in accordance with Para's 10.6 and 10.7 shall be called "interim meetings." Interim meetings shall be conducted using a designated email list-serve.

17.2.3 If the Co-Chairs fail to convene an interim meeting of the Leadership Council within three days of a request by 50% or more of Local Representatives, the requesting Local Representatives may, by consensus, designate any member of the Leadership Council as the convener pro tem, to serve for the duration of the requested meeting.

17.2.5 All procedures of the Leadership Council, including transcripts of list-serve emails, shall be open and available to any member of the GPVA. Interim meetings of the Leadership Council shall be announced to the general membership at the time they are convened, including the reason, the business to be conducted, and the decisions to be made. Input from all GPVA members to interim meetings shall be encouraged. Local Representatives are responsible for the timely reporting to the Leadership Council of the input of their local's members, and the Co-Chairs are responsible for conveying the input of at-large members, or of any member who brings input to their attention.

Edit 17.4 to read:

#### 17.4 Decision Making

17.4.1 Quorum for interim meetings of the Leadership Council shall be established in accordance with Para 10.2.

17.4.2 The Leadership Council shall strive for consensus in all of its decisions. When consensus cannot be achieved, decisions shall be made in accordance with Para's 10.3 and 10.4.

17.4.3 Interim meetings of the Leadership Council will be facilitated by the convener. A period of not less than 5 full days, excluding Sundays and public holidays, shall be permitted for discussion of any major decision, and a voting period of not less than 72 hours, excluding Sundays and public holidays, shall be designated for any major decision.

17.4.5 All decisions of the Leadership Council not taken at a meeting of the GPVA that has been scheduled in accordance with Para's 10.6 and 10.7 must be confirmed and may be subject to revision at the next regularly-scheduled meeting.

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### **PROPOSAL: Create an office of GPVA Secretary**

Rationale: There are many clerical duties essential to the success of any large organization. These include the maintenance and publication of agendas, minutes, and reports; the upkeep of membership lists with all their attendant data, such as the (shifting) electoral districts in which members reside; the creation and updating of an historical record of the organization, including written accounts and timelines, photographs, videos, news clippings, press-releases, and so on. Without a secretary, many of these duties in the GPVA have fallen to the webmaster in our bylaws, and those activities about which the bylaws are silent have been accomplished haphazardly or not at all. Moreover, the responsibilities of the webmaster already include a full suite of non-secretarial duties. Clearly, designating and filling an office to perform clerical duties is long overdue.

Current vs. proposed language:

Edit Para 14.1.1 to read: "The Green Party of Virginia shall establish the following positions ("Officers"): two equal positions of Chair, not both of which shall be filled by male or female at the same time, unless there are insufficient candidates; a Treasurer; a Press Secretary; a General Secretary ("Secretary-Archivist"); and a Webmaster."

Edit Para 14.1.3.2 to read: "In even-numbered years elections shall be held for one Co-Chair, the Press Secretary, and the General Secretary. In odd-numbered years elections shall be held for one Co-Chair, the Treasurer, and the Webmaster."

Renumber 14.2.4 to 14.2.5 (amended below), and insert a new 14.2.4 as follows:

14.2.4 The duties of the General Secretary shall be as follows:

14.2.4.1 Manage the production and online publication of official internal party documents with the use of consistent and professional styles and links. These documents include but are not limited to:

Agendas and minutes of all regular and interim meetings, including the members of the Leadership Council present, the substance of any discussions, the nature of any decisions made, and any elections held and their results;

The party bylaws, including the current and previous iterations with a timeline record of all changes;

The party platform, highlighting recent updates;

The rules and procedures governing standing committees;  
Dated reports from officers, committees, and locals;

14.2.4.2 Maintain a current database of all current and past members and officers, including:

The name, phone number, email address, physical address, electoral districts, and GPVA Local affiliation; the date of membership; volunteer and/or donation status; and contact preferences of each registered member of the GPVA;

The roster of past and current officers with their date of election and term of office, and appropriate contact information.

A list of affiliated locals and their past and current Local Representatives, with appropriate geographical and contact information.

A list of GPVA committees, including a membership list, the past and present conveners with appropriate contact information, and with links to their rules, minutes, and reports.

The roster of current GPVA members on GPUS committees, with their date of election/appointment and term of service.

14.2.4.3 Conduct votes and elections by the Leadership Council at regular and interim meetings, in accordance with procedures designated by our bylaws, and announce and record the results.

14.2.4.4 Coordinate production of a GPVA newsletter (electronic or print as appropriate) at least annually but as often as practical for distribution to the general membership, summarizing all GPVA activity and highlighting news of interest to members.

14.2.4.5 Maintain a party history, including the dates of general meetings and their activities, participation in public events, media clippings about the party or its members, and other data of historical interest. The data archive should include records in any appropriate format, including text, photographs, recordings, and so on.

Amend the current 14.2.4, renumbered to 14.2.5, as follows:

14.2.5 The duties of the Webmaster shall be as follows:

14.2.5.1 Develop and maintain the GPVA website and other internet services, and manage all associated information technology infrastructure, including:

domain names, IP addresses, and ICANN records;

server purchasing/leasing and maintenance;

software acquisition, installation, and updating;

database integration and maintenance;

appropriate user roles and permissions for other GPVA members;

and information security including strong passwords, strong encryption where warranted, and redundant and ongoing data backups.

14.2.5.2 Optimize our website and other internet services in accordance with current technology and best practices, and advise the membership regarding changes in technology that impact the party's effectiveness or online reach.

14.2.5.3 Facilitate the posting and updating of documents and other data by the General Secretary and other designated officers and representatives of the GPVA.

14.2.5.2 Serve as convener of the Information Technology Committee.

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**PROPOSAL: Delete the words "in final form" from Para 12.1 regarding the publication of proposed bylaw amendments prior to meetings at which they will be considered.**

Current language: 12.1 Proposals in final form for Amendments to these By-laws must be published to the GPVA membership 31 days prior to the next state meeting.

Proposed language: 12.1 Proposals for Amendments to these By-laws must be published to the GPVA membership 31 days prior to the next state meeting.

Rationale: The language of this bylaw has always been interpreted to mean that any bylaw proposal must be published 31 days in advance of any state meeting at which it will be considered or voted upon. It has not been interpreted to mean that a proposal cannot be amended at the meeting--or that if it is a vote on it cannot then be taken.

For example, at the May 2015 meeting a bylaw proposal made by Audrey Clement was discussed, a friendly amendment offered and accepted, and the proposal--as amended--was adopted by a majority vote. Again, at the October 2016 meeting, a bylaw proposal by Tamar Yager was taken under consideration, a friendly amendment to the language was offered and accepted, and the proposal as amended was adopted on a majority vote. A like procedure has been followed throughout the party's history.

Recently, however, two members have raised an objection to the adoption of a bylaw amendment at the January 2017 meeting, on the basis that it was altered at the meeting from the original proposed language, and therefore failed the "final form 31 days prior" regulation. The reading of Para. 12.1 on which this objection was based is inconsistent with the way it has been applied previously, it is additionally inconsistent with common parliamentary procedure, and it would have the effect of seriously inhibiting the conduct of the party's business. Proposals, even those requiring only trivial alterations affecting grammar, style, or clarity, would either have to be adopted without editing or amendment, or amended but then tabled for an indeterminate period until the subsequent state meeting. Such a procedural quagmire would hobble the conduct of party business unnecessarily.

In the manner in which the paragraph has been interpreted up to now, the words "in final form" are not essential to an understanding of its meaning, and their elision will prevent any further confusion.

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**PROPOSAL: Add a new Sub-paragraph 8.4, to provide a clear procedure to follow in determining whether a given decision is major or minor.**

Proposed language: 8.4 In the event that a pending decision at any meeting is not clearly characterized by these bylaws as major or minor, the co-chairs shall formulate a determination of the decision as either "major" or "minor," and ask the members assembled for consensus. If the co-chairs cannot agree on a determination, or if any member blocks consensus, then the determination will be made as itself a major decision in accordance with Para 10.3.

Rationale: Concerns have been raised over what to do if a given pending decision is not unanimously understood to be a minor or (alternatively) a major decision. The proposed language is intended to provide a clear and logically consistent procedure in such cases.

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B. Sidney Smith  
GPVA Co-chair

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*Send your comments & suggestions to the [Webmaster](#).*

**The Green Party of Virginia**

*Original Post: Aug. 13, 2017*

*Update to include bylaws text: Oct. 4, 2017*