

# State Meeting

## Richmond Public Library February 7, 1998

Present: Jana Cutlip, Philip Ruggaber, Michael Jurka, Michael Key, Jim Lowenstern, Linda Martin (facilitator), Eric Sheffield, Sherry Stanley (note taker), Stephen Jones, Brandon Smith, Charlie Jordan, Mal Graves, and Gretchen Graves.

1. Minutes from fall meeting --- We approved the minutes from the October meeting.

2. Treasurer's report and consideration of 1998 budget --- Eric reported that we have already collected the semi-annual levies from the locals with the exception of Rockbridge and New River Valley. He updated us on memberships in individual locals:

Blue Mountain Greens 26,  
Charlottesville Greens, 14,  
GOV 106, Valley Greens 1,  
Northern Virginia Greens 41,  
New River Valley Greens 14,  
Rockbridge Greens 140,  
Student Greens of Virginia 16, and  
Tidewater Greens 12.

These totals do not reflect changes of local membership that will result due to the formation of two new locals.

The current balance for the GOV/GPVA is \$462.24. We approved the following budget for the coming year and reviewed the actual numbers for 1997.

<b>INCOME</b>	<b>1997 Budget</b>	<b>1997 Actual</b>	<b>1998 Budget</b>
<b>Dues and Donations</b>	2635	1448	1450
<b>Local Levy</b>	600	510	700
<b>GPUSA Dues</b>	100	57	45
<b>Previous Yr. Bal</b>	0	428.16	225.09
<b>Write-in Lawsuit</b>	0	50	0
<b>T-Shirts/Buttons</b>	0	15	100
<b>Concert Fundraiser</b>	0	213	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	3335	2721.16	2520.09

<b>EXPENSES</b>	<b>1997 Budget</b>	<b>1997 Actual</b>	<b>1998 Budget</b>
<b>Fundraising</b>	200	346.19	350
<b>Newsletter</b>	1800	1142.62	1500
<b>GPUSA Dues</b>	100	42	45
<b>Write-in Lawsuit</b>	0	450	0
<b>Bulk Permit</b>	85	85	85
<b>Meeting Preparation</b>	200	0	0
<b>Platform Revision</b>	150	0	0
<b>RGLPC Booth</b>	0	50	0
<b>Concert Fundraiser</b>	0	197	0
<b>T-Shirts/Buttons</b>	0	90.75	0
<b>Copy, Stamps, Misc.</b>	200	92.51	100
<b>TOTAL</b>	2735	2496.07	2080

3. Interim committee report --- Sherry reported the following decisions that the interim committee made in the time between the fall and winter meetings: approval of press release re McKinney bill for zero cut in national forest land; invitation to a nominating committee for GOV officers; and approval of letter on climate change drafted by the European Federation Green Parties and sent to the Climate Change Convention meeting in Kyoto, Japan

4. Introductions and reports from the locals --- We introduced ourselves, noting that we have three new members, all of whom are in college presently.

Rockbridge Greens have adopted a two-year plan to build a platform and then nominate a full slate of candidates for

county supervisors in 1999. They recently had a meeting in which Joe Szakos of the Virginia Organizing Project led a session geared toward one-on-one conversations with the community to design a platform.

Valley Greens has had its first meeting with a provisional membership of fourteen people. They have nominated Michael Key to run for the city council in Harrisonburg.

Charlottesville Greens --- Brandon again said that the Charlottesville Greens consist of only three people, and he gave personality sketches of those three. Brandon answered challenges to the membership of the C G by saying he did not support the Green Party of Virginia. He said he had helped to form the Greens of Virginia, but did not believe the Green Party of Virginia was legitimate. He challenged each of us to prove we represented actual locals. Brandon repeatedly ignored the requests of the facilitator to let us continue with our meeting. Eric reminded Brandon and us that he has no documentation that Brandon is or ever has been a member of the GOV/GPVA. Eric also repeated our requests that Brandon cease disrupting our business meetings as stated in a letter the clerks sent to him after the summer meeting. Brandon repeated that he does not support the GPVA. Sherry invited him to fill out a membership form at that time. He refused. Jana called for a vote to ask Brandon to leave our meeting. At this point, Brandon had dominated 50 minutes of our meeting. With one no vote, we agreed to ask Brandon to leave. He refused to do so until we sent for a security guard. We agreed that our Green presence and progress in Charlottesville has been hampered by Brandon's constant disruptions of state meetings, disruptions at local meetings, and disruptions and disparaging remarks against the GOV at public gatherings, including but not limited to our draft-Nader efforts. Sherry said she would try to find a Green in the Charlottesville area willing to organize a local there. Jana said she is revitalizing the Blue Mountain Greens in that area, and Charlie said he did not think we should have two locals in one area.

NoVa Greens --- Jim said they are involved in local issues, including expansion of the Wilson Bridge. They have gained new members and appear to be "alive and well."

Blue Mountain Greens --- Jana has contacted the list the clerks provided her and plans a meeting for February 25 to reactivate the Blue Mountain Greens.

Blue Ridge Greens --- Charlie and Eric, who facilitated BRG's first meeting, reported on this new local in the Roanoke area. They decided to meet the community in several community festivals, including Earth Day. They discussed the viability of entering elections but did not choose to do so at this time. They made a decision to call themselves the Blue Ridge Greens.

Richmond Greens --- Stephen said he would be leaving Richmond and moving to Charlottesville soon. He regretted that he will not be running for city council as planned.

5. We accepted Peter Robinson's letter of resignation, Appendix B. Eric and Sherry agreed to send a letter to Peter apologizing for any false information they may have conveyed.

6. New locals: Valley Greens --- Michael Key affirmed that the Valley Greens have elected a treasurer and an interim committee member and asked for affiliation. We accepted the Valley Greens into the GOV.

Blue Ridge Greens --- Charlie represented the BRG (referred to as the Roanoke Greens in the agenda) and asked for affiliation. We accepted the Blue Ridge Greens also.

7. Report from fall elections --- Sherry said the campaigns gained quite a bit of attention, candidates did well, and at least she would consider running again. We did elect the first two Greens to offices in Virginia --- two members of Natural Bridge Soil and Water Conservation District in Lexington and Buena Vista. We encouraged everyone to find Green candidates to fill slots in all unopposed races in Virginia.

8. Report on GPUSA fall meeting --- Jana attended the fall meeting of the GPUSA in Massachusetts. She said the major discussion was on structure. Congress, based on state and local structure, will meet yearly and the Conference will meet every other year. Congress, "the highest decision-making body of GPUSA", is open to representatives from all locals which have a min. number of GPUSA members. The Green Council, which makes decisions between congresses, has two open seats for the GPVA, but we at this time do not have anyone to fill them. Jana explained that she has been president of the Council for four years and because of GPUSA bylaws will not be able to serve again. She asked that we endorse or co-sponsor the First Grassroots Conference on Biotechnology and Genetic Engineering to be held in July in St. Louis. We decided we could not afford the \$100 co-sponsorship, which would be rebated against registration, because we do not have anyone willing to attend, but we would endorse the conference and try to include an announcement in our next newsletter.

9. Report on ASGP fall meeting --- Linda reported on the meeting in Maine held last fall. She said that the general feeling at the meeting was that the national split is near ending. The delegates set up a contact committee to meet with the GPUSA so that some time in the future the two groups can work together. The ASGP is starting a speaker's bureau and a monthly newspaper, for which she asked for contributions from the GOV. Their next meeting is in April in Santa Fe. 10. State structure, process, officers, locals, quorum

A. Consensus decision-making proposal --- Muriel Grim, unable to attend, asked that we adopt a consensus process either identical or similar to the process used by Rockbridge Greens for our state meetings (see Appendix A). Eric noted that the process is compatible with our bylaws. We suggested calling it the Greens of Virginia Guidelines for Decision Making. Sherry suggested that we practice using the process for a while and then decide if we feel comfortable with it or wish to modify it in any way. We could decide at some later date whether to adopt it or not. We agreed to do that and will

introduce the practice at the next meeting.

B. State meeting proposal --- NoVa Greens proposed a revision of the bylaws to redefine what is meant by a quorum (see part C below) be resubmitted after the following suggestions are considered: Instead of 4 statewide business meetings per year, they proposed 2 business and 2 social meetings. The business meetings would be held in the spring and fall at a central location. This would facilitate the attendance by all locals. Charlie opposed having a business meeting in the fall because it would interfere with elections, but Sherry reminded everyone that we are facing city council elections in the spring. There was discussion of how many business meetings we need and what they should accomplish. The discussion included the reminder that we are growing and need to find a model for our political party; for instance, will we hold conventions? We could not meet consensus on this idea and agreed to continue talking about how, where, and when we should meet. Michael Key will work on a committee to talk about these ideas. Meanwhile, we decided we would continue with our quarterly business meetings for now.

C. Quorum proposal --- Eric Sheffield proposed and we approved by consensus the proposal that the following addition (italicized) be made to article VI section A of the GPVA bylaws. VI. MEETINGS AND DECISION MAKING.

... For major decisions, there must be a quorum which consists of at least one of the Clerks or the Treasurer, and at least one member each of 50% or more of the affiliated locals. Locals which have no representative present and have not sent representatives to either of the two preceding business meetings of the GPVA will not be counted for purposes of the 50% quorum requirement. ....

D. Disaffiliation of locals --- Sherry withdrew her proposal that we disaffiliate the following locals because they have not held a public meeting in more than a year: Blue Mountain Greens, Charlottesville Greens, and New River Valley Greens. She said adoption of Eric's quorum proposal answered one of her concerns about inactive locals. Nevertheless, she still questioned the list of local contacts that are printed in the newsletter. Michael Key said our outreach material should not have contacts that are not real. We agreed to take invalid information off all contact material and asked Sherry to check each contact to make sure all information was valid. Linda reminded us of the need to do this on our web page also.

E. Bylaws amendment --- Eric proposed and we approved by consensus that the following addition (italicized) be made to article V section C of the GPVA bylaws.

... However the process ends, the Clerks should file a brief minute giving the names of the accused and the accuser, and stating what, if any, resolution was reached.

If at any time during the above process the Clerks determine that the accused is not making a good-faith attempt to cooperate, they may bring the matter before the next meeting of the GPVA to seek a final resolution.

F. Bylaws amendment --- Charlie Jordan withdrew this proposal: to make this addition (italicized) to Section IV.A. LOCALS OF THE GREEN PARTY OF VIRGINIA

A local is a group of three or more Virginia residents who meet together on some regular basis to advance the Ten Key Values (Article II). Locals may be defined geographically or by common interest. For the purpose of participating in GPVA, a person can only claim membership in one local at any given time.

G. Election of clerks, treasurer, press secretary --- The nominees were as follows: co-clerk, Sherry Stanley and Eric Sheffield; treasurer, Eric Sheffield; press secretary, Chris Simmons and Jodi Mincemoyer. Eric asked to withdraw his name from the co-clerk position and said he would not serve, Chris Simmons sent communication that he would withdraw his name because of possible employment conflicts, and Jodi Mincemoyer has not filled out a membership form. Sherry nominated Linda as press secretary with Chris Simmons assisting her. We elected Sherry as clerk, Eric as treasurer, and Linda as press secretary. We now have an open position for co-clerk.

11. GOV-LIST proposal --- Eric Sheffield proposed that the Greens of Virginia e-mail list (GOV- LIST) shall be open to use only by members of the GOV/GPVA. We tabled this proposal because we may need to move from our present list server anyway and will need to evaluate the situation at that time. Linda and Charlie agreed to see what they could do to look for a free list server and what methods are available for limiting access. They agreed to convene a committee to offer suggestions as to the best procedure here.

12. Decisions concerning national organizations

A. By-laws amendment --- Charlie Jodan proposed the following revision to bylaws. Because the copy of the bylaws we had available omitted part of this section, we decided to table this proposal. Revision to section XV. OTHER GREEN ORGANIZATIONS

Strike A, B, C, and D and addThe GPVA takes no position on the question of higher-level organizations. Locals are encouraged to consider as many options for participation in umbrella organizations as possible.

B. Delegates to GPUSA and ASGP --- Jim Lowenstern has served as ASGP delegate since its beginning and asked to stand aside for a while. We repeated our concern of national participation and individual cost. Linda nominated Jonathan Bates as ASGP delegate. We approved Jonathan and Linda as delegates to the next meeting.

The next GPUSA Council meeting is in Iowa on March 28 and 29. Jana cannot continue as delegate, as explained above, and we had no ready nominee. We agreed that if we have a delegate come forth, we can make that decision through the

interim committee.

C. FEC Letter proposal --- NoVa Greens proposed sending a letter (Appendix C) to the FEC, opposing the G/GPUSA receiving National Committee status at this time. The proposed letter reflects editing done by the clerks prior to the meeting. We approved with a vote of 2 abstentions, 2 no, and 7 yes.

13. Platform --- Charlie made two proposals as part of his desire to have 34 planks added to our current platform. Eric described the huge process platform revision requires and his concerns that it would take time from the efforts of any potential congressional candidates. Several people suggested ways that candidates could augment the current platform. We advocated teams within districts working on a district-relevant platform that would not need the endorsement of the entire GPVA. We decided that we cannot support a platform revision this year. See Appendix D for text of Charlie Jordan's proposals.

14. Ballot access report --- Linda reported on her testimony before the House of Delegates Privileges and Elections Committee in support of House Bills 47, 48, and 49. These bills would improve ballot access conditions for third parties. We have been working in conjunction with the Libertarian Party to foster support of these bills. Senate Bill 316, a companion bill to HB49, would decrease the number of signatures needed for a candidate to gain a ballot line and has a better chance of approval than the more-third-party-friendly HB 49. Valley Greens and Blue Ridge Greens have signed faxes to members of the committee, and other Greens have made phone calls, personal contacts, and sent faxes. Linda expressed her desire that next year we should have a representative to work with other third parties as part of a legislative committee.

15. Discussion of city council races/other elections --- Presently we have one candidate for spring elections, Michael Key for city council in Harrisonburg. Sherry asked if we could use the GPVA data base for fundraising purposes. We decided that there was precedent for this, but the mailing must come from the GOV and we would want to wait until after our annual fundraising mailing was sent.

16. Brandon Smith --- Eric asked that this item be added to the agenda. He reminded us that he has no documentation that Brandon is a member of the GOV/GPVA and that he had at this meeting refused to sign a membership form and made statements to the effect that he was not now and never had been a member of the GOV/GPVA. We agreed, by consensus, that in light of Brandon's statements and the lack of any documentary evidence to the contrary, that Brandon Smith is not now, and never has been a member of the GOV/GPVA.

## APPENDIX A

### Rockbridge Greens Decision Making Guidelines

#### 1. Presentation of issue

A. The problem

B. Review of alternatives

C. Explanation of proposal 2. Proposal presented in writing

3. Answer questions for clarification of intent and setting limits of the issue

#### 4. Discussion

A. Friendly amendments. Simple ones may be informal, but all should be in writing for the notetaker.

a. Accepted by proposal makers --- becomes part of proposal

b. Rejected by proposal makers --- becomes the center of temporary discussion until it is understood what the rejected amendment is and why it was rejected.

c. The process continues until all offered amendments accepted or rejected by proposal makers. At this time the list of rejected amendments is taken in order and

1. The maker of the amendment is asked whether to pursue the matter further or not. If not, it is dropped. If so, it proceeds.

2. The amendment is offered to the group without discussion but with clarifying questions. If one-third of the members present wish to pursue the matter, it then proceeds to a consensus decision using steps 4.B and 4.C.

B. Agreement --- If there is no disagreement the process ends with adoption of the proposal.

C. Disagreement

a. Without blocking consensus (abstention/standing aside/recorded in minutes)

b. Blocking consensus --- responsible for alternative proposal. A reasonable amount of time is given to prepare a proper

proposal.

1. Start back at step 3 and go through step 4.C.

2. A straw vote may be necessary to determine which proposal is to be used as the vehicle toward decision making.

3. An attempt is made to arrive at decision by using step C.a.

c. Any member present may call for a halt to consensus and request a vote on the proposal. A vote of 3/4 of those present shall affirm the decision.

D. Should a question become too involved for the committee of the whole it may be appropriate to select a committee representing all views to

a. Rewrite the proposal.

b. Prepare minority proposals.

E. Committee reports later in the meeting or the next meeting.

a. Start again at step 2.

b. A 3/4 procedural vote to postpone to a specific time and place may be taken.

#### APPENDIX B

To: Greens of Virginia/Green Party of Virginia

At the request of the clerks of the Green Party of Virginia, I have submitted my resignation from the GOV. Please note in the minutes that both of the clerks conveyed false and damaging information about me to other Greens within the last month. I am requesting an official apology from the Green Party of Virginia for these actions. Peter Robinson February 6, 1997

#### APPENDIX C

Federal Elections Commission, Office of the General Counsel, 999 E Street, NW, Washington, D.C. 20463

ATTN: Mr. N. Bradley Litchfield, Esq.

Dear Mr. Litchfield:

This letter is being sent to you from the Green Party of Virginia, a state Green Party organization that is affiliated at the national level with both the Greens/Green Party USA (G/GPUSA) and the Association of State Green Parties (ASGP). As a state party affiliate with the Greens/Green Party USA and the Association of State Green Parties, we support many of the activities and goals of these organizations. However, we do not support any immediate application for National Committee status from either of these organizations.

We do foresee a time within the next three years when a consensus will emerge within the Green electoral movement --- agreement among legitimate state parties and support for an organization that should receive National Committee status from the FEC. At that time, we will communicate our wishes to your agency concerning the granting of national committee status. Meanwhile, we urge you to deny any Green Party application for FEC national committee status.

Sincerely, Eric Sheffield & Sherry Stanley, Green Party of Virginia Co-Clerks

#### APPENDIX D

A. Bylaws amendment (Charlie Jordan) Revise section XIX. PLATFORM REVISION PROCESS, part B as follows:

The GPVA will institute the above process in [strikeout] odd-numbered [end strikeout] years [add], unless a decision is made to keep the previous year's platform unchanged [end add]. In extraordinary circumstances, the GPVA may amend the platform at any regular meeting as specified in Article VII Section C.

B. Platform proposal (Charlie Jordan)

Whereas, public perception and participation of the Green Party in elections is enhanced by the careful articulation of shared principles in a common platform, and Whereas, the 1997 platform promotes state matters to the exclusion of local, federal, and foreign policy, leaving it an insufficient statement for promotion by 1998 candidates, and Whereas, the GOVA bylaws (in XIX.B.) allow the platform to be amended under extraordinary circumstances, Be it resolved that the GPVA recognizes that extraordinary circumstances exist which make amendment of the bylaws appropriate, and Be it resolved that the GPVA creates a committee to seek and consider proposals for the amendment of a 1998 platform and to report back to GPVA at the next quarterly meeting with a recommendation regarding further action.

<Latest Update: June 24, 2010

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