



Minutes
General Meeting Agenda
April 16, 2023, 2:00 – 4:00 pm

Conducted via Zoom
Any Questions: MarshCreekDems@gmail.com

New 2023 Members:

Patty Bias
Karen White
Susana Williams

Renewing Members

Joan Budne
Ted Elwell
Dominique King
Jaguanana Lathan
Marivel Mendoza-
Matheu

I Call to Order and Introductions (New members, Dignitaries) (3 minutes)

A. Zoom:

- (1) All Zoom Attendees will be muted
- (2) Please rename your Zoom to your first and last name.
- (3) To ask questions: Raise Hand

II Minutes for March (3 minutes)

- A. Minutes for March and April will be approved at the next General Meeting

III Agenda Review (3 minutes)

- A. Any changes to the agenda? None
- B. Motion to Adopt Agenda: Motion CV 2nd EB approved by acclamation

IV Shannon Skinner – President (5 minutes)

- A. General update: All MCDC committees are looking for additional help
- B. Gary Chambers has volunteered to be Chair of the Precinct Captain Taskforce. Ray Cole has volunteered to be chair of the Social Justice Committee. Liz Fuller will be organizing Farmer’s Market Volunteers
- C. Vote to elect a new Secretary: Barbara Coffman approved as new secretary by acclamation.

V Carolina Villaseca – Vice President (3 minutes)

A. Upcoming Speakers:

May – Tim Grayson, California State Assemblyman
June – Dr. Sara Levin, Contra Costa Deputy Health Officer on women’s reproductive rights
July – Cheryl Sudduth, regarding participation on Environmental panel, Susannah Day of Giving
August – Lori Wilson, California State Assemblywoman

- B. If you have a person who would like to come and speak to our club, please contact Carolina Villaseca at (216) 570-1270 or mcvillaseca@yahoo.com

VI Today’s Guest Speaker – (15 minutes)

- A. **Barbara Lee, U.S. House Representative representing California’s 12th Congressional District and Candidate for State Senate**

See information included after Financial Statement.

VII Membership – Elinor Bell, Co-Chair (3 minutes)

- A. To date, we have 63 members;
- B. Dues are \$20 \$10 for students

- C. Ways to join — Credit Card at <https://www.marshcreekdems.org/all-products> or Venmo MarshCreekDems (3416) or Check sent to Thuy DaoJensen/MCDC, P.O. Box 521, Brentwood, CA 94513
- B. Renewing Members become Members in Good Standing and may vote as soon as dues are paid. New members become Members in Good Standing and may vote 30 days after their dues are paid.

VIII Voter Outreach: Linda Smith (5 minutes)

- A. Farmer’s Market Update – We tabled March 18th but not March 25th (It was toooo cold)
We have signups to table all the way through May 27th

March 18th	Linda Sue Higgins	April 1st	Linda Ray Cole
April 8th	Linda Liz Fuller	April 15th	Joe Ely Tamela Hawley
April 22nd	Joe Ely Liz Fuller	April 29th	Linda Sue Higgins
May 6th	Linda Suzanne Cook	May 13th	Linda Ray Cole
May 20th	Linda Liz Fuller	May 27th	Linda Ray Cole
- B. 1000 Postcards and Letters sent for WI Supreme Court seat election April 4th
 - 1. Cindy Blitz, Beverly Brown, Kathleen Bohnsack, Barbara Coffman, Bob Coffman, Suzanne Cook, Kathy Ely, Luci Flynn, Beau Gannon, Brenda King-Randle, Clifton Louie, Barbara Lutz, Martha Steel-Spellman, Marsha Tellier, John Tomei and Judy Zuckert
 - 2. Center for Common Ground sent 148,00 postcards to WI
 - 3. Vote Forward send 360,000 letters to WI
- C. June 20th Virginia Primary next
- D. Website www.MarshCreekDems.org – 2308 Visitors this year
 - 1. Website Editor Needed - Linda will train

IX By Law Changes: Democratic Party of Contra Costa County requested these by-law changes to qualify for rechartering. (5 minutes)

A. Existing By Laws AMENDMENTS section

- a. Amendments to the By-laws may be initiated by the Executive Board, By-Laws Committee, or by written petition signed by ten percent (10%) of the MCDC members eligible to vote.
- b. The Executive Board shall consider any such petition and make a recommendation at the next MCDC general membership meeting following receipt of the petition.

B. Changes To Be Voted On

- a. To align with DPCCC/CDC requested changes in our By-laws necessary to qualify for rechartering, the Executive Board may approve those changes by a majority vote.
- b. All by-law changes during the chartered period must be submitted to the DPCCC Club Development Committee within 30 days of the change.
- c. Any roster submitted to the California Democratic Party (CADEM/CDP) for participation in the CADEM pre-endorsement caucuses will only have members in good standing, as defined in these bylaws, as of the date set by the CADEM Chair prior to the caucuses.

Shannon made a motion to accept these changes. The changes to the by-laws were agreed by acclamation.

X Issues and Legislation – Bill Nusbaum, Chair (3 minutes)

- A. Meetings are held via Zoom on the first Saturday of the month at 11:30 am. The next meeting will be on May 6, 11:30

Topics for Development – Basis for recommendations.

- Voter suppression**
- Zoning and Growth**
- Ethics Rules for Courts**
- Gun Control**
- Civics in the Classroom**
- Poverty in Contra Costa County**
- Infrastructure of Climate Change**

Political Homelessness Publications and Social Media

Bill reported that the issues brought up at the last meeting are still being worked on.

The following issue was discussed: SB 423 – the extension of the bill designed to create more affordable housing in California. This is a difficult issue as affordable housing in California is an important issue. This bill, however, is basically a power grab by Sacramento in terms of doing away with any local decisions on home building and development. Major areas of concern are: This bill would extend what was SB 35 that had a sunset to now make it in perpetuity. The original bill had 20% of housing had to be affordable. They have lowered it to 10%. SB 35 currently demands union labor – this one does not.

There are no provisions for communities (cities, counties, localities) to have infrastructure demands placed on the builders and developers. For example, in Brentwood, we have a major infrastructure problem in terms of roads and the more buildings we have without requirements that builder's pay for certain features in terms of infrastructure goes away. (e.g. sewers, roads, city services, etc.)

The bill makes the cities and counties a rubber stamp for whatever a developer wants. Both the City Council and residents will not have any say about the development in their city.

The original bill removes coastal zone protections and now developers can come out and build wherever they want by the lakes and seas. This removes CEQA (The Environmental Quality Act) which requires environmental impact reports and assessments before any buildings can be developed and built.

We are proposing to write a letter to Senator Weiner and other elected officials to oppose this bill.

Carolina has talked with Tim Grayson about our concerns about this bill. She will be meeting him in person to go over it line item by line item. She has also talked with Joe Summers who is over all the trade unions and the carpenter's unions in California to get his feedback on why he thinks this is a terrible bill. She also talked with Andrew Meredith who is over the State Labor Board to do the same. She also talked with Tom Lassen who is a pipefitter, Chuck Carpenter who is a carpenter. The Sierra Club is also against this because of the CEQA protections being removed. Carolina brought this up at the DPCCC. It got out of committee. The message is to help bring affordable housing but not using this bill.

Jovita Mendoza informed us of the "builder's remedy". In this case, if a developer has not built at least one half of a project in 4 years, then the builder/developer can do whatever they want. This could lead to developers not allowing projects to start and in 4 years they can do whatever they want and the City Council has no way of forcing developers to develop land.

Bill Nausbaum will be writing a letter on behalf of our club and the Brentwood City Council already sent a letter stating their opposition to this bill.

Dr. Roberts was in a conference in Orange County. There are many lawsuits that are being submitted on behalf of this affordable housing mandate. Why have none of these lawsuits being heard? She will continue to do her due diligence on the water situation. This is really important. This is going to become a health issue for the City of Brentwood.

Susannah Meyer informed us that the California League of Cities oppose this bill and sent opposition to the legislature on this. She also met with Tim Grayson and he expressed that he felt this was responsible legislation as it applies to affordable housing.

We are encouraged to email our legislature personally on our opposition to this bill.

XI Carolina Villaseca, Chair of Publications and Social Media Committee (3 minutes)

- B. **Contact Carolina at** (216) 570-1270 or mcvillaseca@yahoo.com.
- C. We are continually posting important items on Facebook regarding news and calls to action. Send any call to action to Carolina at marshcreekdems@gmail.com. **Check our Facebook page often for our frequent updates, and post your comments and “likes” whenever you can!**

XII DPCCC District 3 Update – Carolina Villaseca, DPCCC District 3 Director (3 minutes)

- A. Brentwood: I would like to send a sincere thanks to our young people in Brentwood for showing with amazing public comment for extending the moratorium on oil/gas drilling in Brentwood. Our future is bright because of them! Thank you, Ian Cohen, Alison Chiu, Alexi Lindeman and Rohan Taigy! We now have a continuation for 1 year of the moratorium.

XIII Swing Left – Doug McClelland (5 minutes)

- A. <https://lincolnproject.us/Never-Again-Campaign>

Doug decided to cancel video. You can access the video by clicking the link above.

Swing left is getting ready to go at it again – working with Josh Harder in District 10 in Stockton to try to keep his seat. We are planning to go back to Reno. We have a secretary of state and senator who are up for election there. We helped last time by knocking on about 400 doors. He would also like to see us go to Pennsylvania and Michigan. We will be also writing letters and postcards. If you have friends that are not members of MCDC and are not Democrats but are like minded have them go to swingleft.org and they can join swing left.

XIV Treasurer’s Report – Thuy DaoJensen, Treasurer (5 minutes)

XV Brentwood Community Center Movie Event – Co-Chairs – Don Smith and Bill Randall (5 minutes)

Who We Are (1 hour and 22 minutes) – Wednesday, June 15th @ 6:30

Movie followed by discussion led by Bill Randall

Suggest donation: \$10.00

XVII For the Good of the Order (comments/suggestions) (3 minutes)

Joe Ely talked on campaign finance reform. There are twin bills being introduced in the State Senate and State Assembly that would be put on the 2024 ballot as proposition that would allow California to allow some form of public financing. The bills are SB 24(Umberg & Allen) and AB 270 (Lee) to let voters choose to repeal the ban on public financing of campaigns. According to the sponsor, the California Clean Money Campaign, this would allow any jurisdiction to pass this pro-democracy reform and make elections about ideas not money. The ban on public financing was enacted by 1988 amendment to the 1974 Political Reform Act. Five charter cities have voted to enact their own public campaign systems The cities that have passed some forms of public finance are LA, SF, Long Beach and Berkeley. Steve Glazer, our Senator, is Chair of the Senate Elections Committee. I think that he might not need outreach done because his committee passed the same bill last year before the court decided that the law would need be passed at the ballot box.

Here is the link for signing a petition for the bills. <https://www.yesfairelections.org/petition/sb24-ab270.php?ms=tye-friends>

The LA Times has an oped about the bills at <https://www.latimes.com/california/story/2023-04-13/column-will-public-campaign-financing-clean-up-local-politics>

There is an excellent presentation that is on our website that Joe Ely has written if you need more information.

Jovita Mendoza encouraged people to attend Brentwood City Council Meeting and the Antioch City meetings.

Cheryl reported about the situation in Antioch. There are 45 police officers involved. There are also one or two officers from Brentwood and officers in Pittsburg. The FBI has been investigating this for over one year and then they turned it over to the DA to investigate. The report was leaked. It is disturbing. There are many sexist and racist comments in their text messages. Everyone should be concerned because some of these emails are directed at school board members and council members in Pittsburg, Antioch and Brentwood. There were death threats against elected officials and people who were running for office. John Burris was on TV saying he thinks this is worse than the rough riders in Oakland. These officers need to be held accountable for their actions. There was concern about the union standing behind these officers.

Harry Thurston reported on the Police Commission in Antioch. The commission has been created and they are moving forward. They have received 20 applications for 7 seats on the commission. The Police Chief in Antioch now reports directly to the Council – there is no intermediary. This issue has been going on for a long time. This isn't just the current Police Chief – he was saddled with this. Not all of the police officers are involved in this.

Harry Thurston would like to go before his City Council and request that they make a ban in the City of Antioch of semiautomatic weapons. I would like a group of people to go with me to propose this. Maybe it would spread to surrounding cities.

XVII Adjournment 3:54 pm.

Marsh Creek Dems Treasurer's Financial Statement

March 5 - April 2, 2023

Date	Description of INCOME	Amount
	BALANCE as of March 5, 2023:	\$3,243.02
8-Mar-2023	SQUARE deposit of (1) membership dues	\$38.54
10-Mar-2023	SQUARE deposit of (1) membership dues	\$38.24
14-Mar-2023	SQUARE deposit of (1) membership dues	\$19.12
15-Mar-2023	CHECKS deposit of (2) membership dues	\$40.00
20-Mar-2023	SQUARE deposit of (1) membership dues	\$19.12
20-Mar-2023	SQUARE deposit of (2) membership dues	\$38.24
31-Mar-2023	CHECKS deposit of (1) membership dues	\$20.00
31-Mar-2023	CHECKS deposit of (1) membership dues	\$20.00
	Total INCOME	\$3,476.28
Check #	Description of EXPENSES	Amount
1080	Zoom invoice, MS Office 12, 1000 Postcards Vote Your Power	\$269.25

1081	Postage stamps by Doug McClelland	\$72.00
1082	DPCCC 2 year charter dues	\$40.00
	Total EXPENSES	\$381.25

BALANCE as of April 2, 2023: \$3,095.03

Carolina introduced Barbara Lee. Here are some highlights of Barbara Lees career:

- She worked on Congresswoman Shirley Chisolm’s presidential campaign included serving as her delegate at the 1972 Democratic Convention in Miami, Florida.
- Congressman Lee was elected to the California State Assembly where she served until 1996 when she was elected to the state senate. As a California legislator she authored 67 bills and resolutions that were then signed into law by then Governor Pete Wilson. These included public safety, education, healthcare, environmental issues, LGBT issues and hate crime reductions in school. She also worked to defeat the punitive three strikes law and she authored the first California Violence Against Women Act.
- In 2001 she received national attention as the only member of Congress to oppose the authorization of the use of military force or AUMF in the wake of the horrific events of September 11th. She believed this would become a blank check for endless war. As of 2013, this authorization has been used more than 30 times to engage in military action without Congress’ general oversight. Congresswoman Lee is working to repeal this blank check and restore Congress’ constitutional oversight over war and peace.
- She was an outspoken opponent of the Iraq War.
- Currently congresswoman Lee is on the Budget Committee and the powerful Appropriations Committee, State Foreign Operations, Labor Health and Human Services, Education, Agricultural World Development, Food and Drug Administration (which is now in the forefront of the news having to do with women’s reproductive health).
- She mentored Justin Jones of Tennessee while he was her intern. Tennessee Assemblyman Jones was ousted from the Tennessee Legislature for his opposition to the use of military style weapons and gun violence but was recently reinstated.

Barbara Lee talked about her background and how she as a progressive democrat continues to work for the rights of all people in California.

Here are some questions that were asked by members:

Q. In working with younger people at the High School District and also my young twins who are in college, what would you recommend in getting them involved? Many young people are concerned about racial justice.

A. I really believe in these young people. We need to get our young people doing work in our communities with us on all kinds of project and issues. The Martin Luther King Freedom Center was created in the 90’s. I mentor young people with the staff. I have gone to Selma , Montgomery and Birmingham, Alabama with John Lewis when he was alive and now continue this work. Young people who take a pilgrimage with you learn that it was young people who changed the world

in many respects. It was young people who led the voting rights efforts and civil rights movement. I have young people write legislation for me and we introduce, with high school kids, a bill to require teaching issues around the climate crisis in our schools. These young people wrote that bill and stood with me to introduce it at a press conference and we are having a town meeting with them. Including High School kids on issues they care about in very creative ways helps them see they too can make a difference. They are the ones who can understand racial and economic injustices and discrimination. They understand what corporate greed is. They understand all these issues better than a lot of us. Let them lead. I have young people come to hearings. Gen Z's are really supporting me in this election because they know a lot about me personally and trust me. Trust is really important. Mentor young people and get them engaged in whatever efforts you are engaged with, making sure they understand civic education, the need to register to vote and that their voice can be heard because you are listening and taking them with you on this journey. Once we talk and I spend an hour with them, they ask "how can I get involved." After COVID, Donald Trump and all these moments of the past four to five years, a lot of people feel beat down. It is up to us, whatever we are doing, to try to inspire people to get involved. Otherwise, the radical right-wing MAGA Republicans are going to take over. Young people will respond to this.

Q. It was very refreshing to hear a lot of people talk about the different symptoms of being in poverty, such as housing and food insecurities. What levers do you think we can pull to help our communities before they get to that point. We talk about it after the fact. They are already poor and do not have housing, food, education. What can we do to stop that before it even starts from day one?

A.

That's a great question. Here in California the cost of living is so high and inflation is high which is a global phenomenon. But here in California, first we not only have to fight to have a minimum wage but a living wage in California is not \$15-20 and hour. It is like \$40 to \$50 and hour. That is one part of it – the wage gap for women and people of color is huge in California.

Secondly, housing – We have to have new ideas for affordable housing – transit villages, housing trust funds. I have legislation now that would allow for security deposits – so many people who are low income can't afford an apartment or house because they don't have that \$5,000 or \$6,000 deposit. We have to think out of the box. We have to get HUD at the federal level to do some new kinds of effort for housing.

Third, job training - We now have this Infrastructure bill, the Chips Act, and the Inflation Reduction Act. The Biden administration has done a great job in investing in efforts that involve and require racial and economic equity in all these communities. We have to make sure that apprentice training programs go to the communities that need these programs and that we have young people and their parents in the pipeline for all these resources.

I am convinced that we can lift people out of poverty just by what the Biden Administration has done. Look at the child tax credit – 40% of children were lifted out of poverty when we had that. We need to make the child tax credit permanent.

I have worked very closely with Bishop Barber on the Poor People's Campaign. There is lot we can do to prevent people from falling below the poverty line but once there we have to do whatever we can quickly to lift them out of poverty.

In the State of California, we have 20 million people who are one paycheck away from poverty and we have to look at it in a comprehensive way. We can prevent evictions – that is one thing that exacerbates poverty rates and people living below the poverty line. Those ideas have to be championed in the Senate. You have a megaphone by being one of one hundred in the Senate to bring people together and to unify people around these issues that are really tough to deal with.

Q. I am very concerned about getting automatic rifles out of public hands. I am wondering – should the government be buying these back. Is there any way we can incentivize sellers to sell them to the government as opposed to someone on the street?

A. Thanks for raising this issue. We have more mass shootings just in the last 24 hours. First, we have to get the Assault Weapon Ban passed once again. We have passed it in the house a couple of times but the Senate won't move on it. Gun buybacks are very important and they work. I know in my area, hundreds of guns during gun buybacks are bought back but it is not through the federal government. I think it is a good idea to have the federal government buy back guns. The local communities would have to make their own decision. We have to do everything we can to get these guns off the street. It is getting to point where the NRA is running the show and we have to double down. Going to school now, students and parents are worried about getting shot. That is not the American way. We need gun buyback initiatives and gun tracing. I have legislation for gun tracing because after 24 hours it is even hard to trace a gun. We need measures that would close the Charleston loophole. There are many commonsense measures that would reduce the incidence of gun violence. I will check and see if the Federal government does buy back guns.

Q. Speaker thanked Barbara Lee for giving a shout out to public campaign financing in her introductory remarks. He also thanked her for her support of AJR48, a law that would say money is not speech and corporations are not people.

A. We have to get to public financing of campaigns so that we have a level playing field. This corporate driver of campaigns is corrupt, it's wrong and it is discriminatory. Just me as an African American woman, the challenges I have because we don't have public financing of campaigns are great. We're raising money, but not like my opponents can raise money because they don't have the barriers that black women have, that women have or women of color have. If we had public financing of campaigns money wouldn't be such an integral part of having raise and fight for given the fact that you have to have money to win in all states. Media in California is very costly. I am not going to raise enough money to blanket the state with media but I will be able to on raise enough money to have the media targeted where my voters are and to have a field campaign to bring out my voters to get in the top two in the primary. I have to work twice as hard because of the challenges that present themselves because we don't have public financing of campaigns.

Q. I have a question about the wage gap for women. Thank you for talking about the minimum wage and the living wage. What are your ideas about a guaranteed income and should this be done at the federal level. We know it started in Stockton and there are many projects like this across the country. Do you have any thoughts about guaranteed income and how this can be a disrupter of poverty.

A. I fully believe in guaranteed income. Dr. King talked about a guaranteed annual income as part of his overall agenda to reduce poverty and ensure people are able to live the American dream. I firmly believe that is a key step to making sure that the wage gap is closed and to lifting people out of poverty. It is really taking off – the efforts for the guaranteed universal income. We had here in Oakland for a while and it worked. I hope we can get it done at the federal level. That is a proposal that myself, Congresswoman Jaipal and others have put forward and I think we should definitely enact that.

Q. What strategies do you use to get important bills/legislation passed.

A. I am a progressive black woman and I believe you have to start out calling for what you believe is the right bill. For instance, I support affordable, accessible health care and I supported single payer and I support Medicare for all. That is where I start. You have to start if you are a progressive and you really believe in human rights, you start there (especially if you have a right winger that you are negotiating with) You have room to negotiate. I got a lot of legislation passed now and when I was in the legislature by starting with the ideal - what is the best possible solution to solve the problem for the

most amount of people and then you have a chance to negotiate. If you start in the middle and say I'm going to just start tinkering around the edges and you have a MAGA republican over here – there is no way, you have no room to negotiate. Just for example, on my repeal of the authorization to use military forces – I have Chip Roy and some of the MAGAs on board to work with me because of their views – they are libertarians. Unfortunately, we are still so far off of where we need to be in terms of caring for people but there are some areas of concern that we both have. So, you start by looking for areas of common concern and you try not to personalize any issue. I worked with our beloved Ron Dellums and he said always debate the issues, negotiate based on the issues, don't hit below the belt (which I don't, except for Donald Trump – I have had to call him out a few times) but always be respectful. So, I have been able to negotiate. I chaired the Appropriations Committee when we were in the majority, which is the first time an African American has chaired this committee. I had the responsibility for all of our diplomatic and development budgets all around the world. \$64 billion I had to negotiate that with Republicans and really right wingers and I was able to increase funding for our climate accounts, for our Global Green Climate Fund, for humanitarian assistance, for refugee assistance, for famine relief, for more focus on Africa and the Caribbean, for Haiti I was able to bring people together to help deal with a lot of the world's problems. I did this because I learned how to find common ground and not personalize issues and debates and try to find solutions to problems. Even though I am a progressive and I speak out and fight hard, I want solutions and I try to find solutions to people's everyday problems and to the world's problems.

Q. Another question regarding gun violence. It doesn't look like the NRA is going to come around to see things like we see things and the way parents see things and most people see things – which is children over guns, people over guns. I am wondering and I am seeing that there is an uptick now of schools putting in their budget the hiring of armed security guards like they have at banks. I am wondering what your take is on that. Initially I thought about it and didn't like the idea but now we have children going through metal detectors which is an awful, terrible. This is the time we are living in. I am wondering what you take is on schools upgrading to put that in their budget to safeguard our children here in the State of California?

A. I have never supported armed guards at schools. I am not sure. We have to do everything we can to protect our children. That's the first thing. Secondly, the NRA are gaining a lot of support rather than losing support. We have to get guns off the streets at the local level first of all. We have to find a way to protect our children without bringing more guns into the schools because that is another layer of having possible gun violence. I am not so sure right now. I am trying to think that through and if any of you have any ideas on that, please let me know because it is a really important question. We have to do something but having more armed guards at school, bringing more guns leads to the possibility of more outbreaks of violence and I am not so sure that that is the best way to protect our children.

Barbara Lee asked for our help. She feels that she needs to solidify her vote in Northern California can tip the scale in this senate race. Her efforts will be in the field – going door to door, texting being people to the polls and bringing people who didn't think they needed to vote or wanted to vote. She asked for our support.

The link for support to her campaign will be in our Facebook page. Barbara says any way you can help – even \$5 a month.