

Augusta County Republican Committee Meeting Minutes

April 18, 2023

Common Ground

15 Angela Ct, Fishersville, VA 22939

Dave Bourne, Chairman, called the meeting to order at 7:08 p.m.

INVOCATION: Mike Lawson opened the Committee meeting in prayer.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Craig Scott.

REPUBLICAN CREED: Mike Desjadon read the Republican Creed.

PROXY AND QUORUM: A quorum was established.

WELCOME/ACKNOWLEDGE ELECTED OFFICIALS AND CANDIDATES: Dave Bourne welcomed Mark Obenshain, Senator, 26th State Senatorial District; Chris Runion, Delegate, 25th District, VA House of Delegates; Chris Head, Delegate, 17th District, VA House of Delegates; Steve Landes, Augusta County Clerk of the Circuit Court; Butch Wells, BOS, Beverly Manor District; Gerald Garber, BOS, Middle River District; Jeff Slaven, BOS, North River District; Mike Schull, BOS, Riverheads District; Scott Seaton, BOS, Wayne District;

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA: Before adoption of the agenda Dave Bourne noted discussion about a policy that Ray Eppard has been working on for endorsing School Board candidates would be moved to next month's meeting because Ray Eppard, Vice Chair Precincts, the originator of this proposed policy was unable to attend tonight's meeting. Dave Bourne then asked for approval of the agenda, minus the endorsement policy item.

Motion made by Dave Grembi to adopt the agenda, minus the discussion about the endorsement policy. Seconded by Daniel Carter and carried.

READING AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Motion was made by Daniel Carter to approve the minutes from the March meeting. Seconded by Wende Harris and carried.

APPROVAL OF NEW MEMBERS AND REINSTATEMENT OF MEMBERSHIP:

None

At this point Dave Bourne recused himself from the remainder of the meeting. Marshall Pattie, Vice Chair Programs, then led the meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Marshall Pattie, Vice Chairman Programs

- a. Marshall noted he met with leadership representatives from across the 6th district. He noted this included leadership from City Elders and Red Wave, in addition to the six Republican Units. He noted the group is working collaboratively on the Christmas party and the July Picnic, but a major focus was on implementation of a deployment in which we pool our labor and resources and ship them to a competitive Senate district location. There are five very competitive districts where we can help Republican candidates win. Activities most likely would include door knocking, phone calling, and possible fund raiser for candidates in those very competitive districts. Training is tentatively targeted for the end of August. Another major outcome of this effort is continuing to create unity among the Republican organizations and conservative groups in the district.
- b. Another item discussed was a headquarters for Staunton, Augusta, and the Women's Republican Units. The Executive Board recommends renting John Avoli's old office and holding it until after the 2024 Presidential election. The rent is approximately \$200/month, but our goal is to share the cost with the Staunton RC, the Women's group and the elected officials. Mona Huffer noted the Women's group is in favor. Marshall asked for a motion to go forward with the headquarters contingent upon Staunton collaborating with us and sharing expenses. Bill Shirley made a motion to move forward as noted. Darnell Kaiser seconded, and the motion was unanimously carried.
- c. Marshall also noted collaboration with Staunton, Augusta, Waynesboro and Women's Republican units to be present at the Augusta County Fair. There also is an effort to consolidate a Republican Flyer/Pamphlet and share the costs among the three Republican committees. Harold Bess made a motion to work collaboratively with the other units to create a single pamphlet containing information about all three groups and sharing the expenses. The motion was seconded by John Wise and carried by unanimous vote.
- d. The July 4 parade will provide another collaborative event for the Staunton, Waynesboro, Augusta, and Rockbridge Committees. A social event will be planned for the participating Committees following the parade. More information about parades will be presented at future meetings.
- e. Marshall noted the Executive Board discussed the nominees for this November, and we have no competitive elections, so the Party Canvass scheduled for May 20 has been canceled. All the candidates were certified by the Candidate Certification Committee, and the announcements were posted and distributed as required. The certified nominees include Tim Martin for Commonwealth Attorney, Steve Landes for Clerk of the Circuit Court, Dave Bourne for Treasurer, George Page for Commissioner of the Revenue, Mike Schull for BOS in Riverheads District, Jeff Slaven for BOS in North River District, Scott Seaton for BOS in Wayne District, and Carolyn Bragg for BOS in South River District. We congratulate them and pledge support for their elections.
- f. The Executive Board also discussed the open seat for Board of Supervisor in the South River District, and it is the ACRC Executive Board's recommendation to the Augusta County Board of Supervisors that Carolyn Bragg be selected to finish that term. She is the Republican nominee and is expected to win that race, so we ask the Board of Supervisors to appoint her to finish this term.

2. Ray Eppard, VC Precincts
 - a. Ray Eppard was absent today, so we will follow up with his agenda items next month.
3. Kevin Harris, VC Communications
 - a. Kevin noted he is a member of a state Christian conservative coalition and at the last meeting a member representing Spanish conservatives in Virginia voiced concerns about the Republican “brand” and that we should consider changing it at the local level if we want to attract the Spanish speaking immigrants. This would be important for gaining support of minorities and immigrants. There was a recommendation that we get the elected officials on board with us and help us develop a plan and message.
 - b. Kevin also noted the ongoing increase in our Facebook and social media following. Please join the Republican Facebook page if not already engaged.
4. Wende Harris, Treasurer
 - a. Wende reviewed the March Treasurer report and the year-end report. She noted we are doing well with finances and within our approved budget for the past year.
 - b. Wende also reviewed the 2023 budget by line item. This was reviewed by the Executive Board, and they recommend the Committee approve the budget. Bill Shirley made a motion to approve the new budget. Dave Grembi seconded, and the motion carried by unanimous vote.
 - c. Wende also reminded all members that dues for the year are due no later than April 30 per the ACRC Bylaws.
 - d. Wende provided follow up on Win Red noting it is a credit card processor system that is utilized by many candidates. We are currently discussing fundraising and trying to define our strategy. There was discussion and consensus that a card processing system would be extremely helpful in financially supporting our candidates. Bill Shirley made a motion that allows the Executive Board to select an online payment system where we could accept credit cards. Sharon Griffin seconded and there was unanimous approval.
5. Dave Grembi, Election Integrity Task Force
 - a. Dave provided a power point presentation regarding manpower needs for the upcoming elections this Fall. The presentation will be sent to all members.
 - b. Brenda VonSoldeneck, Augusta County Electoral Board member, noted she was a new Electoral Board member and looks forward to attending our regular meetings as a representative of the Board.

OTHER BUSINESS

Party Canvass Call and Rules: Marshall noted the Executive Board discussed a concern with the recent process of selecting our Republican nominees. For future reference we will consider language in our Party Canvass/Mass Meeting/Convention Call Notifications and Rules that state if a candidate declares they are running for re-election, then withdrawals, we should extend the deadline for filing for that position to ensure there is total transparency and opportunity for interested others to file.

Candidates Speaking Tonight:

1. Mark Obenshain, Senator, 26th State Senatorial District

2. Chris Head, Delegate, 17th District, VA House of Delegates; Nominee for Senate District 2
3. Chris Runion, Delegate, 25th District, VA House of Delegates
4. Steve Landes, Clerk of the Circuit Court
5. Dave Bourne, Nominee for the Augusta County Treasurer
6. George Price, Nominee for Commissioner of the Revenue
7. Carolyn Bragg, Nominee for South River District Board of Supervisors
8. Scott Seaton, Wayne District Board of Supervisors
9. Mike Schull, Riverheads District Board of Supervisors
10. Jeff Slaven, North River District Board of Supervisors
11. Page Hearn, Candidate for Riverheads School Board
12. Sharon Griffin, Candidate for North River School Board

Republican Women of Greater Augusta: Mona Huffer noted the RWGA is not an affiliate of the ACRC but works collaboratively with the ACRC and would like to encourage women to join the organization and help with ongoing initiatives to help increase members of the Republican party.

ADJOURNMENT MOTION: Dave Cash made a motion to adjourn. Seconded by Mike Desjadon and carried. Marshall Patti adjourned the meeting at 8:42 p.m.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Dave Grembi, Secretary