

**CLINTON COUNTY REPUBLICAN PARTY  
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES**

January 4, 2024 – 7:00 pm

Victor Township Hall

*Approved 2/1/24*

1. **Call to Order** – Chairman Steve Willis called the meeting to order at 7:10 pm.
2. **Invocation** – Steve Willis
3. **Pledge of Allegiance** – Led by Sheriff Dush
4. **Roll Call** – 17 members of the Executive Committee were in attendance; a quorum was established.
5. **Approval of Agenda - Motion to approve agenda: Bill Sherman; Second: Sharon Conklin. Approved.**
6. **Approval of 11-16-23 Minutes – Motion to approve minutes: Tim Roberts; Second: Bill Sherman. Approved.**

**Invitation for Newcomers to Introduce Themselves** – Steve Willis

Three people who had not attended our meetings before introduced themselves to the group.

**7. Reports of Officers**

a) **Treasurer's Report** – Nancy Bareham, Deputy Treasurer

- i) Hardcopies of the report were made available to Executive Committee members
- ii) Political Account - During December one contribution was received and Paypal account funds were deposited. Ending Balance \$8,834.03.
- iii) Administrative Account – No activity during December. Ending Balance \$3,792.40.  
**Motion to approve report: Val Vail-Shirey; Second: Paula Caltrider. Approved.**

b) **Chair's Report** – Steve Willis

- i) **Tom Barrett Petitions** – Barrett's Campaign Manager, Brian Marchese left petitions for us, he will collect them when each page is complete. He can be reached at (630) 310-7760 or brian@tombarrettforcongress.com for more blank petitions, or to turn in completed petitions.
- ii) **Precinct Delegate Applications**
  - (1) Applications were made available during the meeting.
  - (2) We will have a couple special meetings for signups and have a notary public at the meetings (Missy Porterfield)
  - (3) We will check over the forms before submission, notarize them and deliver to county clerk in bulk
- iii) **Election Inspector Applications**
  - (1) Applications were made available for people to submit to their local/county clerk; you cannot work in your own voting precinct if you are on the ballot.

- iv) **Eagle Update** – Troy Stroud, Eagle Twp Supervisor gave this update:
  - (1) Eagle Township has its own zoning as of 1/1/24
  - (2) They are getting good turnout at meetings
  - (3) LEAP has requested private meetings with Stroud and other board members which have been refused, Stroud has invited them to attend public meetings if they wish to address the board, communications will not take place in private
  - (4) The NDA with LEAP which the Township Board was under has now been rescinded
- v) **Initiative Petition to Restore Local Zoning Control of Wind & Solar Projects**
  - (1) This WILL be on the ballot in November 2024
  - (2) Ballot language is being drafted now for approval by the SOS and Board of Canvassers
  - (3) We will need people in Clinton County to collect signatures
  - (4) We have been asked not to make this a political issue against Whitmer/Democrats, so communications to our CCRP members will be sent from Steve Willis personally, NOT come from the CCRP.
- c) **Vice-Chair's Report** – Nancy Bareham
  - i) Legislative Update: There are a lot of session days on the calendar but there will not be much voting on the floor until the two empty seats from members who won mayoral races are filled.
  - ii) Governor's State of the State will be on 1/24/24.

**8. Replacement of Executive Committee Member Jim Renner** – Steve Willis

- a) Renner has asked to be removed due to ongoing legal issues related to GOP Electors
- b) Article IV, Section 2, paragraph b of our CCRP Bylaws which pertains to vacancies was reviewed with the group and per the bylaws, Chairman Willis asked for nominations for a current precinct delegate to replace Renner on the Executive Committee for the remainder of the term expiring 12/31/24.  
*Motion by Missy Porterfield: Nominating Andy Barrone. Second: Paula Caltrider. There were no other nominations. Barrone was approved by unanimous voice vote.*

**9. Modification to CCRP February 15, 2024 "Call to Convention"** – Steve Willis

- a) Regarding the language in the County Call to Convention where precinct delegates are asked to submit their name if they wish to be on the ballot to go to the District Convention as a voting delegate or alternate delegate, the chairman suggested that we may ask them to also declare the name of the presidential candidate they intend to support so that this information can be included on the ballot. He asked if there was any support for this idea from the Executive Committee.  
*Motion by Val Vail-Shirey: Amend the February 15, 2024 Call to Convention to ask that any precinct delegate seeking to attend the District Convention declare which presidential candidate they intend to vote for. Second: Mark Balfanz. Approved.*

**10. County & District Convention Update and Process**

- a) **CCRP Convention** will be Thursday evening, February 15, 2024 at Victor Twp Hall
  - i) Selection of 21 voting and 21 alternate precinct delegates to go to district caucus will take place
  - ii) "Call to Convention" email will explain the process
  - iii) Presidential candidate preference will appear with each name on ballot
  - iv) Precinct delegate elevations will take place at the end of the evening

- b) **District Convention/Caucus** will be Saturday, March 2, 2024 at Huntington Place in Detroit (10:00 a.m.)
  - i) Each congressional district will select 3 voting and 3 alternate people to go to the National Republican Convention
  - ii) Cross over Dems will not have a voice in our selection process
  - iii) Precinct delegates will have opportunity to express their intent to go to district and national conventions

## 11. Committee Reports

- a) **Legislation/Ordinance** – David Smith, Chairperson
  - i) Wind & Solar Update – The Citizens Advisory Committee has presented its recommendations to the Clinton County Board of Commissioners
  - ii) State control of zoning – The ballot initiative to repeal laws mandating statewide standards will be crucial to maintain local control
  
- b) **Election Integrity** – (We are looking for someone to chair this committee, contact Steve Willis if interested)
  - i) Check My Vote Door-to-door Canvassing – Maureen Hillary
    - (1) Check My Vote is free to use by anyone to check for irregularities in the voter file. Everyone should use the Audit My Address feature to see who is registered to vote at their address. If someone is listed at the address and is not living there, they can flag the registration so the person will have to clear that up before they can vote. Palm cards were made available at the meeting for delegates to share with family, neighbors, and friends to audit their addresses.
    - (2) Check My Vote was included in the report released 1/3/24 by Donald Trump's legal team on Fraud in the Swing States in the 2020 election.
    - (3) 55 Counties in Michigan have more registered active voters than adults over the age of 18. Another 23 counties have greater than 90% registration rates for adults over 18, which is not statistically normal.
    - (4) In Clinton County they have canvassed residences in 11 of our 20 jurisdictions and have started canvassing in mobile home parks and apartments. Some of the jurisdiction clerks are requiring that any challenges to the questionable voter registrations be presented by a member of the jurisdiction.
    - (5) They need help from members of jurisdictions to go with them to submit affidavits: Bath, Bengal, Bingham, Dallas, Eagle, East Lansing, Essex, Greenbush, Lebanon, Olive, Ovid, Riley, St. Johns City, Victor and Westphalia. Maureen will prepare the paperwork and will be glad to accompany anyone as part of the team when they go to see the clerk.
  - ii) Check My Vote Digital Canvassing of apartments and properties – Anne Hill
    - (1) There are two projects with indoor (warm!) volunteer opportunities: Apartment complex numbering research, and BS&A home sale research. Contact Anne if interested (ahill695@hotmail.com).
  - iii) Election workers, poll watchers and poll challengers are needed – applications were available at our meeting
  
- c) **School Boards** – Steve Willis (Looking for someone to chair this committee, contact Steve if interested)
  - i) Committee is focusing on 4 of the 14 school districts in Clinton County – Bath, DeWitt, Ovid/Elsie, St Johns
  - ii) They have identified current board members and open positions in all 4 districts and are meeting with current conservative board members and potential candidates in each district
  - iii) Goal is 2 solid conservatives on each board – still looking for more candidates, contact Steve with suggestions
  - iv) St Johns Bond Issue – David Smith
    - (1) St Johns is seeking \$95M (on top of the current \$75M debt) that includes funds to build a new pre-school building. David is researching better options (e.g., a sinking fund)

- d) **Candidate Recruitment** – Nancy Bareham, Chairperson
  - i) 75<sup>th</sup> District and 77<sup>th</sup> District – we have found candidates to run for both districts
    - (1) Patty McPhee will run for 75<sup>th</sup> District (St Johns, Bingham, Olive, Ovid, Victor and Bath)
    - (2) Cady Ness-Smith will run for 77<sup>th</sup> District (Westphalia, Riley, Eagle, Watertown, DeWitt)
  - ii) County Commissioner – 4 year terms begin in 2025, filing date is in April
    - (1) District 1: Vail Vail-Shirey, R (is running again)
    - (2) District 2: Dave Pohl, R (unknown if Pohl is running again; Shane Hilyard announced he is running for D2)
    - (3) District 3: Bruce DeLong, R (unknown if running again)
    - (4) District 4: Ken Mitchell, R (is running again)
    - (5) District 5: Bob Showers, R (running for 1 more term)
    - (6) District 6: John Andrews, D (looking for Republican candidate to run against Andrews)
    - (7) District 7: Dwight Washington, D (looking for Republican candidate to run against Washington)
- e) **Precinct Delegate Recruitment** – Steve Willis gave report; Lisa Barrone is the Chairperson
  - i) The recruitment and vetting are underway
  - ii) Our Precinct Delegate apportionment went from 198 to 211
  - iii) Filing deadline is May 7, 2023 (13 weeks before primary)
  - iv) We will have a couple special meetings for signups and have a notary public at the meetings
  - v) We will check over the forms before submission, notarize them and deliver to county clerk in bulk
  - vi) We will recruit for open slots and check with current delegates to verify if they want to run again
  - vii) Elevations will be done at county convention on February 15, 2023

## 12. Elected Official / State Party Candidate Reports

- a) **Tony Spagnoulo, Clinton County Prosecuting Attorney**
  - i) Trauma-informed Remodel of Office – repainted to provide soothing, calming environment for victims.
  - ii) Truth in sentencing – please contact Filler, Tsernoglou and Devendorf to tell them you do not want truth in sentencing to go away.
  - iii) Spagnoulo was accompanied by one of his Victim Advocates and Arlo the comfort dog
  - iv) Staffing – recently hired one new assistant prosecuting attorney, but still needs 2 more. The new hire is Shane Hilyard who is from western New York and recently moved to Bengel Twp.
- b) **Sean Dush, Clinton County Sheriff**
  - i) Has seen a dramatic increase in activity from Prosecuting Attorney’s office
  - ii) They are fully staffed for now (including corrections)
  - iii) Crime is up; SWAT team being called out much more frequently in last 2 years
  - iv) Have gone from 4 to 5 road patrol shifts
  - v) Recruitment is going well, getting applications because officers want to work in Clinton County is desirable place to work
- c) **Ken Mitchell, Clinton County Commissioner**
  - i) Spoke about his work as volunteer road patrol officer
  - ii) Applauds Eagle Twp for taking control of zoning
  - iii) Applauds Prosecuting Attorney for what he is doing
  - iv) Advocates for Sheriff and Prosecuting Attorney

d) **Val Vail-Shirey, Clinton County Commissioner**

- i) Acknowledged the good work being done by the Check My Vote folks
- ii) Still on a learning curve and has lots of things to clean up
- iii) Sees a lot of change, some positive and some negative
- iv) Approved the budget in October
- v) Feels it is important to involve the public
- vi) Reports that Planning Commission Meetings have been packed
- vii) Thrilled with the Wind/Solar Ballot Initiative, we must be prepared in case the law is not overturned
- viii) Reports that all of the commissioners support local planning & zoning, gave kudos to Eagle Twp, stated the county still has planning & zoning responsibility for 10 townships
- ix) Next Planning Commission meeting will be 1/11/24 to vote on Wind and Solar Plan

d) **Paula Caltrider, District 7 GOP Secretary**

- i) District meetings are open to everyone
- ii) She will keep us posted on the schedule and what they are doing

**13. State Party Issues Discussion**

- a) Steve Willis provided background and explanation of current efforts by a small group of State Committee member to remove Kristina Karamo as Chairwoman
- b) A meeting organized by Kristy Klamer and billed as an opportunity to “hear from both sides” was held in Portland on 1/3/24, and several Clinton County Precinct Delegates attended the meeting.
- c) A few of our delegates who attended the meeting expressed disappointment that Karamo was not there in person to address the group
- d) The majority of delegates who attended the meeting said they felt it was a clear attempt to discredit Karamo and were not surprised by her absence.

**14. Next CCRP Executive Committee Meeting** - Thursday, February 1, 2024 – Victor Township Hall.

**15. Adjournment** – *Motion to adjourn: Lisa Barrone; Second: Tim Roberts. Approved.* (Adjourned at 10:56 pm)

Submitted by Missy Porterfield, Secretary