

CLINTON COUNTY REPUBLICAN PARTY MONTHLY MEETING MINUTES

August 17, 2023 – 7:00 pm

Victor Township Hall

Approved 9/21/23

1. **Call to Order** – Chair Steve Willis called the meeting to order at 7:10 pm.
2. **Invocation** – Steve Willis
3. **Pledge of Allegiance** – Led by Mark Balfanz
4. **Roll Call** – 15 members of the Executive Committee were in attendance; a quorum was established.
5. **Approval of Agenda** – Motion to approve: Mark Balfanz; Second: Paula Caltrider. Approved.
6. **Approval of 6-16-23 Meeting Minutes** – Motion to approve Paula Caltrider; Second: Mark Balfanz. Approved.
7. **Reports of Officers**
 - a) **Treasurer's Report** – Treasurer Ben Wetmore reports new accounts were opened at Dart Bank in order to avoid monthly fees at Fifth Third Bank. Funds are being transferred from the Fifth Third accounts to Dart accounts. Expenses: Lincoln Day Dinner (venue, food, décor, speaker, program printing) and Fifth Third Bank fees.
 - i) Political Account balance \$3,324.25
 - ii) Admin Account balance is \$4,353.82
 - iii) Paypal Account balance \$5,575.17
 - iv) Dart Account balance \$555.00
 - v) Total Position is \$13,808.24Motion to accept treasurer's report: Paula Caltrider; Second: Sharon Conklin. Approved.
8. **Chair's Report** – Steve Willis
 - a) **State Committee Meeting Update** – Given by Vice-Chair Nancy Bareham
 - i) MIGOP Chair Kristina Karamo is operating in a chaotic and unproductive atmosphere created by her own Vice-Chair and several others who are attempting to unseat her and sabotage her efforts to raise the funds necessary to rebuild the state party.
 - (1) Issues and Budget Committees were established as required per MIGOP Bylaws.
 - (2) The committees were allowed to choose their own chairpersons by special permission of Kristina Karamo.
 - (3) The Budget Committee was going to remove their chairperson due to their dissatisfaction with his performance and in order to expedite the matter and avoid further wasted time, Karamo stepped in and removed the chairperson as was her right per MIGOP Bylaws.
 - (4) Assertions that Karamo and the Budget Committee are not being transparent are misleading. The Budget Committee members must sign NDAs and following historical protocol of both Republican and Democrat parties, budget details are not made public in order to preserve strategic advantage.
 - ii) Due to recent changes put into place by Governor Whitmer's regime making our Presidential Primary Election earlier, the MIGOP is not in compliance and we risk losing a significant number of electors. The State Committee is working to change its processes to come into compliance and to preserve our current number of presidential electors.

- b) A GiveSendGo account is being set up for Clinton County Trump Presidential Elector Jim Renner.
- c) Good Neighbor Playbook – This is an online training tool developed by the MIGOP which includes 8 lessons/modules for new precinct delegates. The tool was deployed via email by MIGOP, but since some precinct delegates have not received it or possibly deleted it unintentionally, Steve will work with MIGOP to be sure Clinton County Precinct Delegates have an opportunity to register and use the tool. More details are coming in the next few weeks.
- d) CCRP Summer Picnic – The event took place July 20, 2023 in St. Johns, with 63 attendees. Receipts were \$1,430; expenses \$726.
- e) CCRP Weekly Surveys – Steve is developing and deploying a weekly survey aimed at educating and engaging CCRP members. There are 30-60 respondents each week. Attendees at this meeting voiced overwhelming support for the surveys and want Steve to continue sending them out.
- f) Luminar Software – RNC has developed this new software to identify people and affiliations. It replaces Campaign-sidekick which was flawed and cumbersome. Luminar allows users to conduct surveys and polls, capture information, and create personalized walk lists.
- g) Elections/Candidates
 - i) Eagle Township – November 7, 2023 – Recalled Supervisor Patti Schafer appears automatically on the ballot as a Republican, therefore challenger Troy Stroud will appear on the ballot as an Independent.
 - ii) CCRP will be working to find ways to influence races in the 75th and 77th Districts, 7th Congressional District, and school boards throughout Clinton County.

9. Committee Reports

- a) CCRP Website – Acting Chair Steve Willis reports improvements to the website continue: modifying content; adding weekly surveys, news and online payment option.
- b) CCRP Events – Missy Porterfield reports our next event will be the Eagle Fair Days CCRP Tailgate on Thursday, September 7, 2023 in conjunction with the Cruise-In Car Show and Food Truck Wars. CCRP will have a large tent near the entrance where we will be selling CCRP buttons to support the Jim Renner Defense Fund; host Eagle Twp Supervisor Candidate Troy Stroud; meet members of the Eagle community to educate them about the CCRP; and provide space for CCRP member fellowship. CCRP Club Sponsors will be given tokens to eat at the food trucks.
- c) Candidate Recruitment – Chair Nancy Bareham reports we have several people interested in running for Clinton County Commissioner seats and are looking for more candidates interested in running for office. Steve will be sending out more info via email.
- d) Legislation & Ordinance Tracking – Chair David Smith was absent tonight to attend the Clinton County Wind and Solar meeting. He is still heavily involved in the Eagle Township activities as well as county-wide solar and wind ordinances.
- e) Election Integrity – Chair Elizabeth Ayoub has resigned, Steve Willis has taken over for now. Steve reports:
 - i) The current structure in place to address election integrity includes:
 - (1) MIGOP
 - (2) Election Eagle (works with CheckMyVote to vet volunteers)
 - (3) CheckMyVote
 - (4) MIGOP EDO (Election Day Operations: election inspectors, poll watchers, poll challengers, drop box monitors, data collection, QVF cleanup)
 - (5) County Level – county leaders recruit people to check QVF files from clerks, check voters, use CheckMyVote tools, return data to clerks
 - ii) MI Fair Elections “Soles to Rolls” – Anne Hill will do a pilot training session in Duplain Township for 12 people. More details coming.
- f) Delegate Recruitment and Training – This committee has not yet been kicked off, waiting for the Good Neighbor Playbook to be deployed. (Chair Lisa Barrone)

- g) Bylaws Review – Chair Missy Porterfield reports the CCRP Officers are working on revisions to clarify and add structure to the operations of the CCRP. Revisions will be presented for consideration to the CCRP Executive Committee before the end of the year, to go into effect January 1, 2024.
- h) Voter Assistance – This committee has not yet been kicked off. (Chair Karen Andrews)
- i) Social Media – Chair Paula Caltrider continues to post material, reports interaction is down recently, reminds folks to follow our CCRP Facebook page and to like and share posts on their own pages to broaden our reach.
- j) School Boards – Acting Chair Steve Willis reports the committee focus is to identify open seats and check the number of votes needed to win the seats. Their goal is to win two seats per district to combat DEI, etc.
- k) Candidate Training – This committee has not yet been kicked off. (Chair Phil Bareham)

10. CCRP Executive Resolutions for Consideration – Steve Willis

- a) CCRP Resolution 2023-7 - A Resolution to the Clinton County Board of Commissioners urging them to Support the Second Amendment of the U.S. Constitution and the Michigan Constitution by Declaring Clinton County a “Constitutional County”
 Motion to adopt the resolution: Mark Balfanz; Second: Alan Cobb.
 Discussion: Ken Mitchell supported the resolution; Elizabeth Ayoub requested a modification to language changing “unconstitutional” to “encroaches upon the constitutional rights of Michigan citizens”; Ben Wetmore supported the use of the word “unconstitutional” based on the intent of the framers of the Constitution.
 Motion to keep the language in the resolution as-is: Sharon Conklin; Second Paula Caltrider. Approved.
 Motion to adopt the resolution as written: Sharon Conklin; Second Phil Bareham. Approved.

11. Elected Officials Reports/State Party Candidates

- a) Steve Wiswasser, Clinton County Treasurer
 - i) Shared a detailed account of his political history and appointment to the Treasurer position, as well as his plan to run formally for the position in 2024.
- b) Phil Hanes, Clinton County Drain Commissioner
 - i) Deferred presenting an update in the interest of time
- c) David Seeger, DeWitt Township Trustee
 - i) Deferred presenting an update in the interest of time
- d) Tony Spagnoulo, Clinton County Prosecutor
 - i) Reported the Clinton County Board of Commissioners approved funding for new positions (lawyer and discovery clerk) and some salary increases in his department
 - ii) The third floor of the DeWitt Best Western has become a “DHHS Voucher Floor” (housing migrants of unknown status)

12. Other Business

- a) Bengal Township Delegates Request for Funds – Geoge Ayoub
 - i) Request was presented for \$100 from the CCRP to go toward printing costs for “Protect and Restore” signs
 Motion to award funding: Paula Caltrider
 Discussion: Nancy Bareham shared information related to disclaimers required on political signage. Steve Willis explained the two CCRP accounts are specifically intended for support of political candidates and CCRP operations.
 Request was withdrawn by George Ayoub. (Meeting attendees then passed a hat to collect donations to support the cause)
- b) Bengal Delegates Event – Elizabeth Ayoub

- i) The Bengal Delegates are hosting a law enforcement appreciation event on August 30, 2023 and have started a Facebook page “Protect and Restore”

13. **Next CCRP Executive Committee Meeting** - Thursday, September 21, 2023 – Clinton County Courthouse, St. Johns.

14. **Closing Prayer** – Phil Bareham

15. **Adjournment** – Motion to adjourn: Missy Porterfield; Second: Nancy Bareham. Approved. (Adjourned at 9:15 pm)

Submitted by Secretary Missy Porterfield