

43rd District Democrats General Membership Meeting November 17th, 7 p.m.

(All times approximate. This meeting will be run via webex, please register [here](#))

6:30 p.m. Meeting Opens - Join early for tech and voting help!

7:00 p.m. Call to order and welcome

Present: Scott Alspach, chair; Annabelle Backman, tech; Ellen Eades, secretary; Morgan McMurray, meetings/events; Tara Gallagher, vice chair; Sam McVeety, elections; Maddy Vonhoff, KC Democrats representative; Amy Madden, WA state representative

Also present: Tina Podlowski, WA State Democrats chair; Frank Chopp; Nicole Macri; Jamie Pedersen; Rod Dembowski

Approval of agenda

Approved without objection 7:03 p.m.

Approval of minutes from [October](#) meeting

Approved without objection 7:04 p.m.

7:05 p.m. Guest Speakers:

Tina Podlowski, Chair, WA State Democrats

Thank you for your efforts -- you hit 90% turnout in the 43rd District. Close to 85% turnout around the state, 4.1M people voted. Campaign made 3.5M phone calls, sent 600K texts. In the 18-25 bracket, turnout was 74% which is far higher than previously; in diverse communities, Native American community (29 different tribes plus urban Indians) went up almost 45% in the state of Washington. Our goal is to make sure we listen to those voices.

Who we elected - polling up for all Democrats. There was also an unprecedented turnout of low-propensity Republicans, we think drawn out by Trumpism. We're taking this very seriously in the state party. We expect these voters to be around for a long time.

5th leg, 30th leg, 47th leg are solidly blue moving forward; getting close on the 28th district as well. We elected the most diverse legislature in the history of the state, including the first legislator with a history of being incarcerated, Tara Simmons.

Moving forward, focusing on county prosecutors, school board members, county commissioners. Here in Seattle we will have a battle royal for mayor, and two city councilmember seats are up as well.

Nationally, if he wants it Jamie Harrison from SC will be the new head of the DNC taking over from Tom Perez. We also want to go deeper into various communities, for example going into the AAPI community in Tagalog, Mandarin, etc., as well as the Latinx community which we also know is not monolithic.

Thank you to all our incredibly dedicated volunteers!

(Scott) Field update: we made over 50,000 calls in the 43rd district, thanks to everyone who made calls and helped organize.

Arshia from Rep Adam Smith's campaign

I am Cong. Adam Smith's political director. Thanks for all the work you did on the campaign, Adam is grateful to have been reelected.

Adam is back in DC now, he has dropped a couple new pieces of legislation, 911 diversion to unarmed personnel act -- funds to give 911 calls to specialized service providers instead of law enforcement

Provide funding to states for dislocated workers affected by the pandemic

Town Hall with Indivisible has been pushed back to December

7: 10 p.m. Breakout discussion on election results and Building the 43rd Democrats

7: 40 p.m. Update on King County and 43rd Reorganization Meetings Maddy Vonhoff, Tara Gallagher

(Maddy) KC reorg: one of the PCO's duties is selecting leaders to represent us at the county level and the district level. Our reorg meeting is where we elect new officers. We'll be reorganizing virtually at 12 PM, Saturday December 5th.

Physical letters went out Thursday with your precinct number, your leg district and your personal credential code. The code will get you registered into the event to participate and vote.

You must preregister for the event using your credential code.

Events leading up to it: Saturday, Nov 21st is the filing deadline for candidates interested in a KC Dems officer position. Saturday, Nov 28th is the filing deadline for the virtual candidate forum and the first of two virtual trainings will be on Dec 1st. The next virtual training is right before the reorg starts, 10-12 pm on Dec 5th. The reorg can go anywhere from 1-6 hours, so be prepared. On Sat Dec 12th 1-3 pm there will be a training on how to run a virtual meeting.

(Tara) The 43rd reorg will be January 19th, Tuesday. Only PCOs vote for the chair, vice chair, representatives to the state committee, and representatives to King County. The membership as a whole votes for treasurer, secretary, and all the committee heads. We will do bylaws at the first meeting *after* the reorg, in February.

If you're interested in a board position, you can go to 43rddemocrats.org and click on any position and get an overview of each position. There is also a form on the front page of the website; if you're interested in running, please fill out that form. Also feel free to contact any of the current officers to talk about the position.

We'll be publishing candidate statements in January. We will also take nominations from the floor for last-minute candidates.

If you're interested in joining the bylaws committee, email bylaws@43rddemocrats.org

(Question) there's been a history in the Dem party in WA of paying attention to the dates we have our meetings; Saturday meetings are not possible for many Jews to make until after dark on Saturday. I would like that issue raised at the county/state level as we go forward.

(Question) I was surprised that non-PCO people can endorse candidates. Is that in our bylaws or statewide?

(A) PCOs have the statutory authority to elect our chair, vice chair, and representatives, and also vote on the bylaws. Historically our organization would be much smaller if we didn't allow other members to have a say in making other endorsements, so our bylaws grants members the right to do this.

(Question) Maddy, where can folks go to find that information about dates, etc?

(A) all our elected PCOs have received an email with this information and you will also receive paper mail, also it will be available at KCDems.org/reorganization.

8:00 p.m. Election recap and legislative preview with our 43rd Representatives

Frank Chopp: We want to better fund childcare and early learning; second area is healthcare & housing. We're linking those issues together. Nicole & I got the county to raise \$400M in bond under the theme of health through housing. We will have 2000 new units of supportive housing from this. Third is climate action, there will be another meeting next week. Fourth is higher education. We passed the Workforce Education Assessment, raising taxes on services and providing free college tuition for low-income students, which has been declared the best in the nation for equity.

Nicole Macri: we have a big, big agenda. Frank, Jamie and I have strong alignment on our values and priorities. I want to talk about a few areas I've been working on: top

issue is the budget. Because of the economic downturn of COVID the state is facing revenue shortfalls. We're in a very uncertain time. We have a 3-pronged problem: protect state services and avoid austerity cuts to the most vulnerable because they don't help us build back the economy. In addition racial and economic equity in our state - Frank touched on childcare and housing - we know 100s of 1000s of people haven't been able to meet their rent payments and we know we'll need to do work to provide continued protections and rent assistance for people. We have many people in our state who are ineligible for unemployment and we need to make sure we're taking care of them. Thirdly we're taking steps to make our tax code more progressive and move away from the upside-down code we have that disproportionately harms our lowest-income residents. We think momentum is building around the capital-gains tax and people are seeing wealth inequality is harming low-income people. There's also a conversation about carbon pricing policies. I'll be bringing back a bill around moving away from fossil fuel vehicles in our state.

Jamie Pedersen: I'm delighted at the election of T'wina Nobles, the first Democrat from the 28th since the 1960s and the first African-American to serve in the Senate in a decade. We have an opportunity to enact a lot of progressive legislation this session. I'm cautiously optimistic about that. It's also a year where we can make a real difference on climate. The governor is excited about moving that agenda forward. This year the police accountability work is taking center stage, and that's one of the most important policy priorities going forward. I'm working with my vice chair, Sen. Manka Dhingra, and the co-leads of the House caucus doing this work. I've been working on a bill that is about state oversight and accountability in law enforcement. We've been having problems with the police unions in enforcing accountability, so this legislation establishes that the state, in giving someone a gun and a badge, will enforce a high degree of accountability on those people and will change the criminal justice training commission to a majority community-led organization. It would allow the CJTC to take action without waiting for action at the local level, and provides intermediate sanctions as well, and creates transparency with public websites. We've been working with communities of color and the tribes and the Coalition for Police Accountability.

(Question): about women's reproductive rights, 50% of hospitals in WA state are run by the Catholic Church, and Virginia Mason may be taken over by the Church as well. Women can be refused care under some circumstances, what can we do to ensure they can get the care they need?

(A - Macri): I've been actively engaged with VM and share those concerns. I don't know if there's anything we can do to stop the merger, but I've been meeting with VM senior staff to express concerns. The lack of access to the full range of care is def problematic. I think these issues will be more higher profile this session.

(A - Pedersen): Nicole has gathered a bunch of signatures to VM. The ACLU is working on a bill that will give the AG the power to stop mergers where the AG finds the merger will compromise patient access to important services. We may be too late to stop the VM transaction but this will help slow down or stop future transactions.

(Question) who/what are the opponents to cap gains tax?

(A - Pedersen) we've had a change in the Senate that is moving us closer to 25 votes for cap gains tax. We have substantial interest in it, but need to work out what the rates would be, what the use of the proceeds would be.

(A - Chopp) we all support cap gains tax for sure. What's important is to emphasize what we're investing in instead of talking about taxes, taxes.

(A - Macri) we need the federal government to provide resources for the enormous needs we have, in addition to rent assistance and protecting state services for vulnerable Washingtonians. We're looking at packaging childcare, rent assistance, public health assistance. The cap gains tax has the most momentum.

(Question) a lot of ppl were upset with Dems because of the perceived idea of defunding the police. But I believe Americans are united around criminal justice reform. How are you trying to find bipartisan support for the ideals of justice and fairness to gain that support?

(A - Pedersen) the work on police reform may have to go forward without R support. I've been trying hard to reach out to R colleagues, and although they might be open to some issues (like neck restraints) most of the things the community has asked for do not have bipartisan support. It will be challenging and time consuming to pass controversial bills, but I think police reform is THE issue (and climate) where we're hoping to muscle through without bipartisan support, although it pains me.

(Question) why don't you consider value-added taxes?

(A - Macri) The value-added tax is not as popular as some of the other options, but we're still doing modeling on that and it's good tax policy.

(Question) Sen. Pedersen, will changes to qualified immunity be included in police reform? And will there be anything accelerating the transition to electric cars?

(A - Pedersen) there are 2 proposals around immunity. We have a bad statute passed called the Felony Bar, which says if a person is involved in the commission of a felony they can't recover damages. This has been relied on by police officers as a shield against claims. Qualified immunity is a federal principle, so we're looking at getting rid of the Felony Bar and creating a state civil action that allows victims of the police to sue the officers and their employers. The counties and city governments are likely to be the ones stuck with the bills, so they are powerful groups in terms of their lobbying ability and I'm not sure where the proposal will come out at the end of session.

(A - Macri) I had introduced a bill to phase in electric cars starting in 2030. Gov. Newsome in California is phasing in electric cars by executive order starting in 2035. We're looking at how to align with the California mandate. We fall under the Clean Air Act exemption so we should be empowered under current statutes to impose a 2035 order, but we can also push for earlier start.

(Chopp) I'll be a cosponsor to Nicole's bill. Half of carbon emissions are from tailpipes. We're also looking at how to finance a transportation package to provide electric charging stations around the state.

(Question) As energy efficiency has been shown to be a huge job creator, how can funding energy efficiency help in job recovery?

(A - Pedersen) we've consistently made investments in the capital budget and have good statutes that incentivize those improvements in buildings. The giant variable we have is what help might be forthcoming from the federal government, and who controls that is still up in the air; please engage in those two Senate races in Georgia because that will make a profound difference.

(Question) in a time of recession you want to increase spending and increase budget deficits; is the legislature not allowed to budget? Could the legislature ask to divert money from the prison system or the military?

(A - Pedersen) first of all, we're not allowed to spend in deficit because there are constitutional limits in WA. We borrow to fund investments in the capital budget which we then pay off. We're also required to balance our budget over four years, although we may suspend this in dire cases such as we may be facing right now. We do have the ability with simple majorities to approve tax increases, though, unlike ten years ago during the recession when Tim Eyman's initiatives made our actions more limited. About voting rights for felons, that is in our state constitution and will take more time to change but we will continue to push for it.

8:40 p.m. Committee Reports

Bylaws & rules committee

(Annabelle) we'll have a separate webinar on the bylaws and rules committee work and we're looking forward to getting people's input on that.

(Amy) thank you for all your working on the coordinated campaign, everyone. KC Dems put a lot of work into infrastructure building, supporting LDs, and getting folks elected.

(Morgan) thanks to everyone who made it to our election night party! It was nice to see everyone there. We'll be doing a holiday party virtually in mid-December so keep an eye out for that.

(Cody) thanks to all the PCOs who turned out their precincts; we had 49% turnout in 2016 and came close to doubling that number this year thanks to everyone's hard work.

9:06 p.m. Good of the Order

KC Dems: we're lucky Shasti Conrad is running again. We expanded PCO recruitment by 17%. We fully staffed the election observer program and reached many different communities in different languages. New website, kcdforward.org, for Shasti and her team.

Garrett Moore: diverse organizers across the state organizing for progressive campaigns, we need to sign on to the Campaign Workers' Coalition (link in the Facebook group) who are calling for one day a week off, basic healthcare and more.

Andrea Borning: Reclaim Our Vote in Georgia is an org to encourage voters of color, we are

writing postcards, phoning and texting. The black vote was below obama's margin in the past except for Georgia so we have to thank Stacey Abrams and Fair Fight for an amazing job. andreaborning@gmail.com or Reclaim Our Vote if you are interested.

Eric Smiley: I don't have Facebook, what's available without Facebook?

(A) we do our best to send everything out on email and put it on our website.

Scott: thank you to the executive board for the last two years, we didn't expect 2020 would go this way but everyone has really helped us with making this organization run smoothly.

9:15 p.m. Adjourn