

**District 11 Democratic Party Annual Convention**  
**Saturday, May 21, 2022 - 11:00 A.M.**  
**Tuscola High School, Waynesville NC**

**Minutes**

**Welcome and Call to Order 11:09 am**

Matt

Ballance, Chair

Matt Balance called the convention to order and welcome everyone. Matt and the Exec committee were pleased to welcome all of the delegates and attendees. There will be a microphone at each of the aisles for participation. We will break for lunch. You can eat at the tables inside and outside.

**NCDP Statement of Inclusion: 11:11am.**

Matt Ballance,

Chair

“All public meetings at all levels of the North Carolina Democratic

Party shall be open to all members of the Democratic Party regardless of race, sex, age, color, creed, national origin, religion, ethnic identity, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, economic status, or disability. In order that the Democratic Party at all levels be an open Party, which includes rather than excludes people from participation, a program of effective affirmative action has been adopted by the North Carolina Democratic Party. Discrimination on the basis of ‘status’ in the conduct of North Carolina Democratic Party affairs is prohibited.”

**Pledge of Allegiance:** Matt lead the group in the Pledge of Allegiance. 11:11am.

**Moment of Silence:** Matt asked that we all remember the victims of the 2021 Floods in 11<sup>th</sup> district and also those who have been lost to Covid and their families. Let us also remember those facing the war in Ukraine, opioid epidemic and increasing gun violence.

**Establishment of Quorum:** 14/14 counties are present. Quorum has been achieved.

**11:14am**

Denise Marecki, in  
absence of Lorna

Barnette, Secretary

**Approval of Agenda**

Matt Ballance, Chair

Besty Wall of Haywood moved to approve, Michelle Price, of McDowell County, second it. Motion carries.

**Approval of Convention Rules**

Matt Balance, Chair

A motion was made by Sam Edney, Transylvania County to approve the rules, seconded by unknown delegate, Yancy County. Rules are accepted without objection.

Julia Kennerly, Transylvania asked to amend Rule #5. Jeff Rose, Buncombe, seconded. Rule #5 needs to be amended. Soren Pederson, Buncombe County stated that the total time 5 minutes total to discuss an amendment is too short with multiple speakers. Nina Tovish, Buncombe Count, seconded it. Motion passed to allow 5 minutes per side. 10 minutes total. Rules, as amended, are approved. 11:22.

**Sybil Mann** introduced. She reviewed Robert’s rules. Need motion. Then discussion, and debate.

## **Approval of 2021 Minutes**

Matt Ballance ,

Chair

Steve Wall, Haywood moved to approve the 2021 Convention minutes. Lindsey Prather. Buncombe seconded. Minutes approved. 11:25am.

**Justice Sam Erwin, Associate Justice NC Supreme Court** will now speak. Justice Erwin said he is the most western justice elected to the NC Supreme Court. All the Democratic justices send greetings. Judge Lucy Inman, NC Court of Appeals, is also running for the NC Supreme Court, but Justice Erwin and Judge Inman are not running against each other. Remember to support Judge Darren Jackson, Judge Gale Adams, Judge Carolyn Thompson and Brad Salmon, who are running for NC Court of Appeals. Judges decisions are based on facts, laws underlying the case and equal treatment, not on political, ideological, or personal agendas. Peoples rights need to be protected as based on the perception of the law. We need to preserve a court system not governed by politics. Remember what judges do and what judges don't do. Please support us.

Check the NC Dems 11 website for more info on judges. <https://www.nc11democrats.org/>

**Jasmine Beach-Ferrara, winner of D-11 Congressional Primary.** Jasmine said she is honored to be the nominee. Jasmine thanked Bo Hess, Katie Dean and Jay Carey for their great campaigns and contributions. We are united as Democrats and the goal is to flip NC-11. We have to fight extremism. Substance in Edwards campaign is similar to that of Cawthorn's. They promote politics of division and self-importance. We must focus on issues are importance. Jasmine stated that she has lots of experience, is an LBTQ, minister. What we bring is a clear-sighted vision of what is as stake and caring and showing up each and every day. "Tough race? Yes. Winnable? Yes". We are up for it. Join us June 18 for 1<sup>st</sup> day of organizing. Our campaign is all in. Join us. Website: <https://www.jasmineforcongress.com/>

Matt Introduced candidates and elected officials.

Luke Hyde, Former District 11 Chair.

Zeb Smathers, Mayor of Canton, NC

Kim Poteet. Clerk of Court, Jackson County.

Courtesy Booth, District Attorney for Buncombe County candidate

Michelle Price School Board, McDowell Candidate

Chuck Dickson, Alderman, Waynesville

Katie Dean, D- 11 Congressional Candidate

Lindsey Prather, Candidate for District 115 NC House

Justice Sam Erwin, NC Supreme Court

Josh Remillard, Candidate State House 118

Nina Tovish, Candidate, Asheville City Council

Rep. Caleb Rudow, Candidate, NC House 116

Billy Martin, Candidate, NC Senate 46

Michael O'Shea, Candidate, NC House 117

Jasmine Beach-Ferrara, Democratic nominee for NC-11 Congress

Karen Burnette McCracken, Candidate, NC Senate 50,

Bo Hess, D-11 Congressional Candidate

**Finance Report** Julie Montanea, Treasurer

Julie announced that there are QR codes that you use with your phone to make a donation by scanning or taking a photo to NC 11 Democrats via Act Blue. There are also envelopes available.

Other highlights of the Treasurer's Report

Beginning Cash Balance as of 5/1/21. \$6,062.42

Receipts \$5958.54 as of 5/1/21

Expenditures \$4,708.03 as of 5/1/21  
Ending Cash Balance \$7311.92 as of 4/30/22

Updated for 5/17/22  
Balance is \$9878.34

### **District Officers Reports**

**Matt Ballance, Chair:** This has been an interesting time since Sept 1, when I was elected to Chair of the district, learning on my feet. Thank you to the Executive committee and all of you. Since coming on board, I have brought info from NCDP and Build Blue programs to the counties. Redistricting. I attended the one and only redistricting meeting in WNC. There was standing room only. WNC has as many as they did in Durham. Thank you for doing it. In Feb, new maps, the primary was pushed back to May.

In the new year, Gayle Wayne, stepped back as Treasurer. We appreciate and acknowledge her service. Julie Montanea, was selected as Treasurer and there were no speed bumps in the transition.

We are also putting together a Fundraising committee. Sam Edney, Transylvania, will chair this committee.

We also had an active recruitment effort for state house and state senate candidates. We will be able to find great candidates. Please support these candidates.

Going forward. This was a big week. On Tuesday, it was determined Madison Cawthorn will no longer represent the district at the end of this year. Chuck Edwards won the Republican primary and is just as dangerous or more so, as he can legislate. We need to focus on beating Edwards. Double focus on getting Jasmine Beach-Ferrara elected. Also remember that local races are very important. School board, county commissioners and others are the future for us. Get behind them. Those elected in local can move forward to get experience going forward.

How are we working? How are we talking to people? Talk to people. Then LISTEN. We want them to be heard and cared for. "What's bothering you, what's keeping you at night?". Use something in our platform that connects with them. No extremism or fear mongering in our party. Keep the faith. Feels uphill, but what you are doing is important! You are playing the long game. How many of you Love WNC? Love NC? Love US? WARROOM scene, Carvel says, "the most sacred thing you can give is your labor". Labor and love makes for quite a merger.

**Take those things you love and give your labor.**

**Jennifer Floyd, 1<sup>st</sup> Vice-Chair:** Jenny has been focusing preparing for this convention and assisting with day-to-day operations.

**Denise Marecki 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice-Chair:** Denise reminded everyone to check out the District's YouTube Channel, which has several trainings and trainings will be added as we go along.

I am also excited to announce this training by Chelsea White-Hoglen, MSW and Rural Community Organizing expert

**Event Title - *Changing Voter Behavior: Building Relationships and Transforming Western NC with Evidence-Based Practices***

**Date/Venue:** Saturday, June 25, 11:30am-1:30pm. Haywood County Democratic Party Headquarters

**Event Longer Description** - Are you tired of knocking on doors during election season and walking away feeling disappointed after arguing to no avail with voters who don't plan on voting or who won't vote for our candidates? Do you feel like the scripts you've been handed with facts, figures, and talking points just aren't doing the trick? Are you exhausted from engaging in debates and feeling like you're not making any progress with the people you're talking to? Do you

want to see an actual shift in voter turnout and voter behavior? Then this is the training for you: we will do a deep dive into Motivational Interviewing, Strategic Questioning, and Transformative Dialogue that is rooted in evidence-based practices for changing human behavior and building deep relationships. Learn how to engage in conversations that allow you to walk away from conversations with voters feeling like both you and the voter have been transformed as a result of your exchange.

### **What You Will Learn -**

- How to model vulnerability to foster the rapport, trust, and connection that result in behavioral changes during conversations with voters
- How to assess voters for their "Readiness to Act" in regards to voting for Democrats and to meet them "where they are" by using evidence-based skills that are appropriate for their stage of readiness
- How to be aware of trauma responses as they come up during political dialogue, and how to use trauma-Informed language within Motivational Interviewing and Strategic Questioning to gain clarity of voters' lived experiences and challenges and to provide them with a space that is safe for them to step out of the state of trauma response and overcome cognitive dissonance so that they can act in ways that are more aligned with their values.

Please go to the District 11-Dems website and go to the calendar for the posting and link to sign up. <https://www.nc11democrats.org/event>

### **Karen Smith, 3<sup>rd</sup> Vice-Chair:**

This year we have sent monthly newsletters, at least 25 alerts, and a handful of chair's messages. Our open rate in Mailchimp is consistently above 30% which is phenomenal. Please continue to read our communications. Please continue to send your county news to us the third Friday of each month (150-200 words, one pix). We have completed interviews with all the counties to update information, confirm technology needs and provide communications protocols. We are in need of a social media support volunteer but beyond that we have posted regularly in all our social media. We are working with an IT volunteer who has built a landing page which will be connected to FB ads to drive people to our newsletter signup. We launched a new website and invite you to visit [nc11democrats.org](http://nc11democrats.org) and check your county listing for accuracy. I am sharing a reminder to everyone to make sure your email address and contact information is accurate in Votebuilder. Many delegates did not receive their convention packages because their county chairs or Votebuilder did not either have an email for the delegate or Votebuilder did not list an email address. Due to costs, mailing convention documents and printing as well are not feasible.

Thank you for your involvement with the district this year. I am looking forward to continuing our work going forward.

**Lorna Barnett, Secretary:** Unable to attend, sends her regrets.

**Julie Montanea, Treasurer:** I was appointed Treasurer, comfortable with work as treasurer, and now I am part of a team. She may have meeting with county chairs. Please call with questions. She will also work with the fundraising team.

### **Introduction of Keynote Speaker 12:12pm**

Zeb Smathers, Mayor of Canton,

Thanks to Matt, Democratic leaders, party leaders, Haywood Dems, Myrna Campbell and all the workhorses. Smathers called to Democrats for a revival of purpose. We have to see we can make change happen. We have to rebuild these small towns and union towns. Some say Canton's days or the Democrats' days are behind us. Yes, Canton is blue collar and mill town, and we are proud about that. Regarding the Floods of 2021. Thank You for your support! 16 people lost. Hundreds of homes, businesses, firehall, town hall, police station were lost. We came together as a community. And there was George Floyd. We all struggled to comprehend the madness.

We do not have to settle the toxicity. Don't settle for anything less. Don't let those people divide and separate you. Have faith and remember Republicans are disconnected. They say to me, "You are just a Democrat because your granddaddy was. Damn right". Granddad was a WW2 veteran and had sincere faith. It is hard to be a Dem. We need a revival of our purpose and avoid the toxicity and politics of division. It is not about being a Democrat or Republican. BE a big tent. Ask questions and LISTEN. We need to come together and find practical solutions.

## **Elections**

- CD State Convention Credentials & Appeals Committee Member: Carolyn Cagle, Jackson, nominated Sybil Mann, Haywood. Sybil declined. Jeff Rose, Buncombe, nominated Kathie Kline of Buncombe. Kathie was elected by acclamation.
- CD Council of Review Committee Member: Jeff Rose, Buncombe, nominated Beth Ostgaard, Buncombe. Beth was elected by acclamation.
- CD Platform & Resolutions Committee Member: Beth Ostgaard, Buncombe nominated Jeff Rose, Buncombe. Jeff was elected by acclamation.
- CD Plan of Organization Committee Member: Beth Ostgaard nominated Sybil Mann, Haywood. Sybil was elected by acclamation.

## **Election of District 11 2022-2023 Officers**

Officers have to be re-elected due to redistricting of District 11.

Chair Matt Balance: Julia Kennerly, Transylvania nominated Matt. Elected by acclamation. (Denise Marecki, presiding).

Jennifer Floyd, 1<sup>st</sup> Vice Chair: Cindy Ellis, Hendersonville, nominated Jenny. Elected by acclamation. (Matt Balance, presiding).

Denise Marecki: 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice Chair. Jeff Rose, Buncombe nominated Denise. Elected by acclamation. (Matt Balance, presiding).

Karen Smith, 3<sup>rd</sup> Vice Chair: Jean Wright, Macon nominated Karen. Elected by acclamation. (Matt Balance, presiding).

Lorna Barnett, Secretary: Denise Marecki, Buncombe nominated Lorna. Elected by acclamation. (Matt Balance, presiding).

Suspended for lunch 12:48

## **Convention resumed at 1:44pm**

### **Resolutions Report Member**

**Jeff Rose, Resolutions Committee**

26 resolutions presented in bulk

Resolutions will go to NCDP once passed here.

Pulled means: pull for debate or amendment.

We will vote on bulk that is not pulled. Then addressed pulled resolutions.

Steve Wall, Haywood pulls #25

Julia Kennerly Transylvania, pulls #12

The body voted to approve the bulk of all resolutions with the exception 12 & 25. 1:51pm

Resolution # 12

Julia Kennerly wants to remove the 3<sup>rd</sup> clause. David Gribble, Clay 2nds

*RESOLVED, that the Democratic Party vows to fight current and future efforts to prevent transgender athletes from participating in sports in alignment with their gender identity; and be it further.*

Garret Williams, Swain, spoke against removing the clause.

Jeff Rose, Buncombe, spoke in favor of retaining the resolve clause. Transgender people face a lot of difficulty and discrimination.

David Gribble, Clay, taught schools for 40 years. Transgender girls have no place competing against girls. Jesse Ross, Haywood, I believe we need to protect those who are targeted.

The body voted. Resolution #12 as is passed without objection.

Resolution # 25

Steve Wall, Haywood, moved to postpone Resolution #25 indefinitely. Can be debated at a later time. Bill Banks, Haywood seconded the motion.

Debate: Steve Wall, Haywood, my family is in favor of Palestine rights and Israel. This resolution is very complicated. This not the best place to debate this issue.

Soren Pederson, Buncombe said this resolution does not deserve our time or discussion. I have researched this and we need to speak out against the human rights violations. Four international Human Rights organizations have also addressed these human rights violations.

Lindsay Furst Buncombe, gave a "point of order" that we only have 10 minute to debate a resolution.

Motion to postpone fails. 2:09

The body passed Resolution #25 passes as is. 2:09.

## **Closing Remarks and Announcements**

Chair Matt Ballance

NCDP SEC is on Sat June 18 as is the State Convention and the NCDP Unity Dinner, in Durham, at NCCU, more info at a later date.

Early Voting Begins in October, 2022

Election Day is on Nov 8, 2022.

Myrna Campbell, Joe Sam Queen will host an event at his house in Waynesville for Cheri Beasley US Senate nominee on June 15 at 5pm. Go to [haywooddemocrats.com](http://haywooddemocrats.com) for more information.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:13pm.

Minutes submitted by Denise Marecki 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice-Chair, (sitting in for Secretary Lorna Barnett) for Chair, Matt Ballance.