

09/10/07 minutes of NHLA meeting

BOD present: Denis Goddard, Carol McGuire, Dawn Lincoln, Jon Bender, Don Gorman

Absent: Suzanne Hudson, Shuvom Ghose.

Also present: Dan Itse

Meeting was called to order at 6:33 by Lincoln.

Secretary's Report:

MOTION made by McGuire to accept the minutes of 08-06-07. Seconded by Goddard. Motion carried.

Goddard passed along member concern of meeting in the Reagan Network HQ and that D's could be uncomfortable coming here. It is a free space for us in a convenient location with wireless. As a non-partisan organization, the board is amenable to another location of the same caliber and price.

Minutes and newsletters from past months need to be updated on website. Action item: LINCOLN.

Treasurer's Report:

MOTION made by Goddard to accept the treasurer's report of July 2007 and August 2007. Seconded by Gorman. Motion carried.

July total combined balance of \$7239.34. August of 7029.46.

More Liberty Ratings being printed this week for Apple Festival in Dover, Manchester straw poll and the Deerfield Fair.

Day at the Races:

We are signed up for 10 people on Saturday, 9/15. CNHT has a full staff on Sunday already. Need people for Friday parking 6 AM check-in, 7:30 check-in on Saturday.

Newsletter – racing day.

Chairman's Report:

Election for Director of Political Action to open on 9/15 – 9/29. Action item: GODDARD.

Membership Director:

Crazy records showing up in database again like last month. There were 33 bogus records.

Additionally, 16 of the most recent members have no join date on their record.

469 total, 340 active.

Gorman asks if they all have email addresses so we can contact them. Most do and they get our monthly newsletter.

Newsletter – put in request to members for Deerfield Fair, for example. Fun day for the family, only 3 hour shift, indoor.

Membership cards – do lifetime membership cards first. Can we get someone to make a logo for the membership card so Jon can print? Action item: GODDARD will get logo to Jon for cards.

New.nhliberty.org is 80% done. 10% not done is the look/feel. 10% is content. Bill review up and working. Voting code working. Hope to be done this weekend, before voting starts.

Civic Action:

No report.

Political Action:

One of the main reasons Gorman nominated Dan is 1) due to his voting record on the NHLA Liberty Rating being consistently in the A range and 2) that the NHLA needs a Dir of Pol Action with a direct link to the legislature.

As far as state house/legislative training goes, have probably gone past the curve. Now people know where the state house is and can testify and follow from year to year, etc. Happy with our success and proud that people have stepped up to the plate.

Gorman: Real estate group informal meeting: Brand new subgroup of the NH real estate investors association. They are politically ignorant and are aware of that now. A guy from Washington came up and told them that there are some bad things happening in other states and they need to watch what's going on. Other states never saw it coming and got sandbagged. They may come on board with us and may be in a position to donate substantial funds. They will also expect performance on our end. Will be meeting again this week. Gorman told them he'd be willing to do mock sessions with them to train them how to testify. Or could do sessions at the state house to show people around and sit in on public hearings.

We may want to look into finding other groups to help get politically trained also.

Goddard – DownsizeDC has a service where they tell you what your reps are doing and they send you a boilerplate email to your rep which you can edit. Seems like we could do something like that pretty easily. McGuire – topical (area of interest) alerts could be more important as a first step. These are currently on our website but have not yet been activated.

Cornerstone wants training too.

Itse: Need to teach testifiers to follow a lead. Sometimes tries to help people get their info out by questions but sometimes it is misinterpreted as a hostile question.

Need to train people on how to deal with questions. Discussion of how Seth Cohen likes to play the devil's advocate and how important that is. People need to be prepared for the tough questions.

Goddard – need to videotape these sessions. McGuire – do in November. Saturday 11/10, 1 – 4 PM. Dinner afterwards at Barley House or Capital Grill.

NCLB – Jim Forsythe will head up the effort to get a bill submitted to allow NH to opt out of NCLB. Gorman has NCLB as an agenda item at every Deerfield school board meeting. Gorman and Rich Kahn have offered to help on this bill with their experience.

Itse – when did Gorman get involved in politics? First state rep in 1972. In late 60's, state got rid of “obsolete sectarian references” including the word TOWN in section 6. How would we find out what people were thinking about removing towns from the educational equation at that time. Do we know anybody who was in legislature at that time? Could find out chair of committee and sponsor of bill. There is a lot of support for local control. Putting in a bill for this this year.

LSR filing period started today and ends next Friday. Should contact sponsors to offer assistance on any bills we've asked for.

Straight ticket voting has been eliminated and Seth Cohn has heard that SoS may just be putting names

on ballot in alpha order instead of column for R's and D's, with party label next to their name.

Research Director:

HB533 commission – charged to recommend program to increase use of seatbelts, Joel is on committee too, House chair may not be taking it very seriously but Burling is, National Motorists Association may come to next committee meeting, 3rd Th of month at 9 AM.

Itse: bill that will be great is opt out of North American Union. Good constitutional grounds for this.

Keene Pumpkin Festival – should we have a booth? October 20th. Action item: Goddard will look into getting one. Should make freedom pumpkins – NHLA, freedom, liberty, Live free or die, etc.

Minor mj decrim bill should go to criminal justice committee – sponsored by Jeffrey Fontas from Nashua. Argument against last year's bill was that there was no minimal amount and making a kid a felon for small amounts of mj. Gorman says to simplify amount from 1.5 oz to 1 oz. Want another bill from Senate too. College professor would not want to see student be felon for life. Don may make a call to a Senator to look for sponsor.

Itse: Decreased juvenile age to 17, but will make transporting drugs not certifiable for a certain amount. Finding the line for correct amount can be a challenge.

Sex offender law is making someone who had sex at 18 with a 16 year old continue to file as an offender now that constituent is in his 30's.

Itse: Redress of grievances mechanism to be reintroduced to legislature. Complaint against government should be given to general court. Lost in 1800's – prior if didn't like the court's decision, could petition general court. In 1925, methods for redress disappeared. In 1963, created Legislative services (reps used to do it themselves). Complaints that could be addressed to general court could be about bad court rulings, for one thing. Used to be used for things like when a law officer would hit someone's pig, general court would pay them for it.

Proper arbiter of the constitution is the general court not the judiciary, ratified by the people.

Itse: bill to require a state guard, now can make one but don't have to unless national guard out of state which is too late.

How to make NH a better gun law state: Could make concealed carry license optional to make gun laws better in NH. May not really be that important in the big picture, especially with the current makeup of the legislature. NH already has good gun right's laws.

Old Business:

Deerfield Fair – someone had asked about doing a raffle. No raffles allowed at fair.

New Business:

Goddard will write up bylaw change for membership fee.

Goddard gave Chris Lawless's email to Itse to invite NHCCS to Liberty Forum.

Next meeting: October 1, 6:30 PM.

McGuire made a motion to adjourn at 8:55 PM. Seconded by Goddard. Motion carried.