



First Annual BOD Retreat Minutes
January 11, 2014; 1:00-5:00
BOD President's house

Retreat Objectives:

- Consider why each of us organized Coffee Party Austin →CG4Tx
- Celebrate what we accomplished in 2013 and enjoy some time together.
- Agree on our main goals for CG4Tx for 2014 and steps to reach those goals.

Retreat Agenda:

Welcome & Check-in (*over lunch*)

Ice breaker: Why each of us jumped into CP-A and CG4Tx.

Election of officers:

President – Joanne Richards

Vice President – Stewart Snider

Secretary – Dan Eckam: take and transcribe notes at BOD meetings; draft general meeting announcements

Treasurer and custodian of MailChimp and FB posts – Diane Owens

More formal part of the retreat

1. Celebrate Accomplishments (see January 4, 2014 general meeting minutes)
2. What are our strengths and weaknesses?
Strengths: collaborations we have entered into
Weaknesses: lack of diversity; lack of volunteers, and volunteer follow through from sign-in increase # of volunteers by announcing at the end of each general meeting our ongoing projects with their team leader(s). Ask people to volunteer to be on a project team. Mention what the time commitment is likely to be – these can be finite tasks.
3. CG4Tx issue focus (15 min) refer to our mission and values statement on the web
 - Money in Politics
 - Civil conversations across the political spectrum
 - * Election reforms
 - Engagement in the political process
 - Transparency
4. Goals for 2014 with whom and how we might achieve them?
 - **Collaborate** with other organizations to achieve our goals –*doing well*. TUTA; Fair Courts Network, LWV
 - **Attract** a more diverse demographic across the political spectrum; people with diverse views. Strategy- be on the lookout for Common Ground opportunities to collaborate even if only on ONE issue PLUS see community conversations. Teresa and Dave lead effort
 - **Communication:** Develop rack card: 4”x9” double sided; full color; with some blank space and a matte finish so it can be written on.
Global Printing Solutions \$200 for 1000. Stewart and Joanne will lead effort
Content should include who we are; our priorities and goals in general terms (no specific dates so the card can be used for an extended time). Expand content of our bookmark.
 - **Return** our attention to our core purpose of conversations across the political spectrum – see Living Room conversations. Mike and Joanne will lead effort with Dave and Rochelle's help.

Equal #s of R and D precinct chairs at the Nov 2, 2013 general meeting was successful because the equal #s people made for a less intimidating atmosphere. They wanted to work together on a common goal → questions for the LWV Voter Guide.

- Take our conversation to a broader audience – Lion’s Clubs; Rotary Clubs, locations outside of Austin. [Lago Vista, Georgetown; Dale; Cedar Park]
- To ensure conversations across the political spectrum ask every D to bring an R or I ask every R to bring a D or I; ask every I to bring a D or R *OR* reach out to an organization and develop a relationship to **co-host** a conversation. Commit to three meetings – if you can’t make one find a substitution – so there is some follow through and a chance for the conversation to continue without us.
- We can develop some of the “**Election Reform**” topics (see below).
Need a “policy paper” that explains the issue; alternatives to generate conversation and action (next) steps: Qs for candidates; city council resolutions, letters to the editor in local papers, etc.
- We have all the information that we need now to co-host a conversation about money in politics **using TUTA tools**. Raise awareness.

- Election reforms package – Dan took the lead (see blog post)

Three reforms we support and would like to develop for a community conversation – policy paper; alternatives to generate conversation and action (next) steps:

- Methods of drawing district without gerrymandering (by algorithm; by Independent Redistricting Commission, others.... Stewart will take the lead)
- Disclosure of BIG money political contributions and expenditures (see SB 346 that passed the Texas House and Senate but was vetoed by Governor) Joanne will take the lead.
- Explore Instant Run-off Voting (IRV) with other electoral systems like plurality voting; proportional voting, others... Dan will take the lead

Other reforms we would support and would like to develop for community conversations – policy paper; alternatives to generate conversation and action (next) steps:

- Encourage voter participation
- Consider reasonable requirements for ballot access
- Fair Elections initiatives see Grassroots Democracy Act. End dial for dollars.
- Judicial Reform – Select Interim Study Committee on judicial reform *policy paper; alternatives to generate conversation and action (next) steps are ready to roll.*

Promote transparent and verifiable voting systems – STAR system

Two areas that need further exploration:

- Due away with the Electoral College or allocate Presidential electors differently – winner take all vs proportionality
- Join the National Popular Vote Interstate Compact to due away with the Electoral College

- CG4Ts endorsement guidelines. Diane leads effort. Will draft and circulate

5. Choose our Top 3 goals for 2014

Develop top three election reforms for community conversations. If there is a delay host a CC on Money in Politics with TUTA information.

6. Fundraising needs

1000 rack cards = \$200

500 business cards = \$40

Duplication expenses for community conversations – estimate \$200.

If we can raise \$450 that would be FABULOUS