

Cass Co GOP Executive meeting 4-23-2024

Mark Howie called to order 7:00 PM, James Lawrence led in prayer and Tom Langley the Pledge.

Roll Call: The following were present: Steve Carra, Jeff VanBelle, James Lawrence, Jeremiah Jones, Mary Howie, Rosann Marchetti, Wally Berndt, Dan Adams, Kim Adams, Jerry Duck, Mike Egan, Nate Wilder, Mark Howie, Rose Kelsheimer, Roger Boyer, Mike Grice, Lynn Schantz, Brian Woodburry and Tom Langley.

Not present: Brad Paquette, Johnathan Lindsey, Thomas Stephenson, Ryan Laylin, Joyce Sheteron-Locke, Samuel Barrera, RJ Lee, Kevin Kelsheimer and Debbie Burke.

Excused Absence: Hope Anderson, Monica McMichael, Rick Behnke, Victor Fitz, JD Glaser and Wendy Glaser.

Approval of the Agenda: Jerry Duck moved to approve the agenda seconded by Nate Wilder. The motion passed.

Secretaries Report: Wally Berndt – Dan Adams motioned to approve seconded by Roseann Marchetti. The motion passed.

Treasurer's Report: Kim Adams – Copies are on the table in the back. In the campaign account the balance is \$23,991.13. The admin account balance is \$141.28.

Presentation: Candidate for 36th district state representative.

My name is Frank Perez. I am currently the mayor of Sturgis Michigan. I came from a migrant family, travelling all over the mid-west. In 1989 we settled in Gobles, Michigan. My dad loved picking apples. I told him I did not like this work. My dad told me if you love what you do, it's never work. There is nothing wrong with hard work. If you don't like this then get back in school and suck it up. I went back to high school and graduated. Wanting to further education my parents could not help me out, so I joined the United States Army. I served 8 years. I moved to Sturgis in 1998 working for the Campbell Soup Company. I did 15 years in human resources. I was asked if I was interested in opening an insurance agency. I tried it and it worked out well for me. I now have 3 insurance agencies.

I have been asked to consider running for state representative numerous times.

- I have been in service since 1998
- I am on the Foundation Board
- On the Sturgis Youth Soccer organization for 17 years.
- Chamber of Commerce Board.
- Michigan Extension Board
- Accredited by the Dept of Education, I can now do student loans.

Committee Updates:

Special Events: Lisa Smith for Mary Howie – Our Silent Auction will be on-line. We have a goal of \$5,000 this year. We will be using the Give Butter Auction Platform. It is a sharable link. Pre-registration is key. I will give instructions on the website and our Facebook page. You will be paying on-line. There will be a processing cost of 2.9% plus 30 cents as your paying. If you are going to donate, I need you to take nice clear pictures taken from different angles.

We will start bidding at ¼ of the price. We will have a buy it now option which will be double the value of the item and removes from the bidding. Contact me and I will give you the details.

Our Lincoln Day Dinner will be at the Green Jacket, May 11th, starting at 6:00 PM. At 3:00 PM we could use help for set-up and tear down.

Issues Committee: Wally Berndt – We had 2 meetings since last month. Our active members are Brenda and Will Beadenkopf, Lisa Smith and myself. Let me know if you maybe interested in joining us. We are working on various items:

- A resolution to condemn the Trump Witch Hunts
- Project Mockingbird – regarding the media
- A prayer card for the Jan 6th prisoners held now for 3 years.
- **A Jan 6th Fact Sheet.** Currently reads as follows: There was no Riot. There was no Insurrection on Jan 6th 2021. No one has been charged for Insurrection. Deep State actors Breached the capital. No one there in Law enforcement Died that day. Trump Supporters did not storm the capital. President Trump did not Insite a riot. 20 thousand National Guard troops were denied. People were welcomed into the capital

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with the doors opened. 4 Trump Supporters were killed that day. Fake Bombs were planted at the RNC and DNC headquarters that was of no concern. Kamala Harris was at the DNC headquarters.

There is more that we will be adding. The back side of the Fact Sheet will include resources and references.

- Lisa is looking to hold monthly meeting on the 2030 Agenda.
- We are looking into actions we might be able to take that can help our Michigan Electors who were falsely charged and the Jan 6th prisoners.

County Committee: Roger Boyer – We had 27 at our last meeting. We had a presentation on Preparedness by John Nevi of the Michigan Home Guard. They provide community-based assistance in natural disasters and help with search, rescue, and recovery. They provide a wide range of training on many topics that include; rescue techniques, disaster preparedness, first aid, communication, survival skills, firearm safety, home canning and more. For more information go to <michiganhomeguard.org>

We reviewed our Precinct Delegate Recruitment Plan and some progress was made. An idea to erect 2-3 large roadside signs promoting the Cass County Republican Executive Committee and the Delegates Committee will be undertaken. A short-term committee to merge the various e-mail lists has begun.

The next meeting will be May 7th here at 7:00 PM. Every 1st Tuesday of each month.

Drain Commissioner: Jeff VanBelle – I recently met with a company out of Chicago that is doing a solar project in north Howard township, that is being pushed from the Federal level. When on-line there will be 24-7 monitoring from Chicago. The land is being leased from the land owners. This may move to be operated by AEP in the future. I wanted to meet to get an understanding on, set-backs, distances to structures, site grading, ingress and egress, and things of this nature. They answered every question I asked. Locally MEC is not treating the solar companies very well for now.

Sheriff: Clint Roach for Richard Behnke – We have 2 recruits getting out of school in 2 weeks. They will be in an FPO program for at least 90 days. There are 4 more starting at Lake Michigan College on May 9th and should be on the road in August. There are really good young people that are local.

I have created a hiring committee. We have been to SMC, Edwardsburg High School, Dowagiac High School, next Saturday we will be at the VFW in Edwardsburg for their Open House. We will have a booth at the Cass County Fair.

We had an advocacy program with Pastor volunteers for when we have bad situations where families needed comforting, or telling a family of a fatality or other situations. Last week the Sheriff and two others went to a class in Lansing to learn how to get this back up and running again. We are looking for people interested in helping.

Roger Boyer made a motion to provide \$1,000 for the purpose the purchase and erecting up to 3 signs that will promote the Cass County GOP and the Delegates Committee. Dan Adams seconded the motion. Jerry Duck amended the motion to have the content of the sign approved before printing the signs. Seconded by Nate Wilder. The motion and amended motion passed.

Mark Howie appointed a committee for the sign verbiage, with Roger Boyer and Dan Adams will chair.

2nd District: James Lawrence – I had open Heart surgery for a valve repair back in March. I had been out of it for a few months and now I'm getting back into it. I feel fine, the Surgeons did a really good job. I want to thank those who had me in their thoughts, who prayed for me, who sent cards, letters and it felt overwhelming.

I filed my paperwork to run again so I will be on the ballot. I would appreciate your vote in district 2. The Ambulance situation is progressing to a temporary solution for payment but we need to find a permanent solution. I will be meeting with the city manager Kevin Anderson to discuss things. I would like to see a county level solution.

4th District: Jeremiah Jones – One complaint I received that you should be aware off was from a man whose son had died. The Medical Examiner labeled the cause of death as indeterminant. This caused a problem with the insurance company. If it was called accidental, it would have paid twice as much.

5th District: Mary Howie – The numbers for the Lincoln Day Dinner is about 90 now. The Book has been closed today and is getting ready to be printed.

7th District: Roseann Marchetti – On April 24th (tomorrow) from 3 till 6 PM at the Cass County Road Commission on Okeefe Street by the Fair Grounds we will be having our Hazardous Waste, Tires and Electronics disposal Drop-Off.

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Senator Mark Howie reports for Johnathan Lyndsey – Thanks to many members of the Cass GOP who have attended his recent Town Halls or office hours. He continues to fight the worst Democrat ideas in Lansing while also advancing Conservative alternatives. If you have any outstanding issues, please e-mail or call the office.

36th District Representative: Steve Carra – I recap over the last 4 years. 5 days before the general election in 2020, I won an election law suit against the Secretary of State, Jocelyn Benson. The rules were being changed, including violating poll challenger's rights, saying they had to maintain 6 feet for social distancing. You cannot read a poll book or a computer screen from 6 feet away. I filed a law suit and won.

In 2021 we had Republican control of the House and the Senate so our leadership got to decide what came up for a vote. Even though we had the Speaker, the Republican leader of the house choose to bring up the most extreme left leaning bills to vote on. Our leadership was like the most left leaning Democrat. 90% of your elected officials in the Republican Party are failing you.

With Row vs Wade there was a challenge coming forward Dobbs case. I believed this case would take down Row vs Wade so I filed an Amicus Brief in support of the Dobbs case. It was the second largest Amicus Brief in the Nation. I played a bigger role than anybody else in our state. It was a honor to be a legislator and to be in a position to carry that torch for the pre-born.

5th Congressional District: Mark Howie for JD Glaser – We had a zoom meeting that was a full 5th District for everyone. An actual 5th District meeting will be coming up and Fund Raising for the district at the county level will be a topic. This will aid in district races and highly contested races. We need to get the majority back.

State Committee: Mary Howie – We have a meeting for this week-end at the casino in Mt Pleasant. I am on the Grass Roots Committee this time. It will be interesting under the new leadership. I have a lot of hope going forward.

Mark Howie: I am going to have all the candidates come forward. (minus delegates)

Frank Perez: Running for state representative in the 36th district. A small business owner, family person, involved in Sturgis since 1998. I don't want to be a long-term politician. I'm a laid-back guy, what you see is what you get.

Steve Carra: Running for state representative in the 36th district. At an elementary school where pronouns were being taught based on what you thought you were at a given moment; I challenged that notion. From the pressure I applied they changed and are no longer teaching pronouns.

Roseann Marchetti: 7th District Commissioner – To finish the court house and for the Planning Commission.

Jeff VanBelle: Drain Commissioner – Eagle EQ has turned far Left we need a good regulator.

Lynn Schantz: Commissioner – I'm driven by the School Boards, concerned about the solar panel plans.

Clint Roach: Sheriff – Life long resident, born and raised in Dowagiac, did some college, in my 35th year in Law Enforcement, 39th year in marriage. I have been Undersheriff for 8 years. I have learned a ton from Sheriff Joe Underwood and Rick Behnke. I am excited and looking forward to it.

Mike Grice: 5th District Commissioner – I retired from the Law Enforcement field and was a previous Commissioner for 2 terms.

Jim Lawrence: 2nd District Commissioner – The father of 2, I live in Wayne Township, one of the original Wayne Township fire fighters, on the fire board, attend Calvary Bible Church, I am a Deacon, Schooled in leadership skills. I am a tool and Die maker and a machine builder by trade. I teach life skills in the academy.

Tom Langley: 1st District Commissioner – Covering Silver creek, North Wayne and part of Pokagon Townships. My main goal now is for Law Enforcement and public safety. I would like to see the Sheriffs Department with more deputies on the road. I also attend Calvary Bible Church.

Mark Howie: 5th District Commissioner – I had not planned on running until I stopped working in December. My goal is to help Cass County keep our taxes low, keep Law Enforcement strong and keep the county with the people.

Jeremiah Jones: 4th District Commissioner – No big promises. We need to work as a team.

Tom Langley made a motion to adjourn seconded by Nate Wilder.

The motion passed unanimously. The meeting is Adjourned

Respectfully submitted by Wally Berndt.