

**MINUTES  
STATE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL VIRTUAL MEETING**

**NORTH CAROLINA DEMOCRATIC PARTY 7:00PM, DECEMBER 14, 2022**

The meeting was called to order by State Party Chair Dr. Bobbie Richardson.

Political Director Lorenzo Pedro gave a list of instructions for the virtual meeting.

Our State Chair announced what type of behavior is expected of those participating in this meeting: work together, show respect, courtesy, follow the Code of Conduct, and stay on the subject.

Dr. Richardson led the Council in the Pledge of Allegiance.

She called for a Moment of Silence as Members thought about The 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Sandy Hook and the passing of Betty McCain.

Secretary Melvin Williams called the roll which showed the following Members were present:

Dr. Bobbie Richardson  
Floyd McKissick  
Matt Hughes  
Shannon Auer

Melvin Williams  
Anna Tilghman  
Anderson Clayton  
Everett Ward  
Wayne Goodwin  
Marilyn Carter

DD Adams  
John Verdejo  
Shelia Huggins  
Jennifer Marshall  
Henrietta Coursey  
Carl Newman  
Kennis Wilkins  
Pam McAfee  
Elke Weil-Millan  
Brandon Combs  
Angela Bridgman

Collette Alston  
Tina Rodriguez  
Elizabeth Goodwin  
Herb Harton

Tyler Beale  
Jarrett Patrick

Katherine Jeanes  
Clayton Brooks  
Chris Hardee  
Sharon Brown

Charlie Wallin  
Saletta Urena  
Sonya Bennetone  
Nigel Bristow  
Michael Colvin

Doug Auer  
Jennifer Floyd

Rhonda Bond  
Lisa Ellsworth  
Sybil Mann  
Kanwal Naiyar

2 The number of attendees needed to make a quorum was 22.

**42 of the 54 Members were present so a Quorum was established. DD Adams made a motion to approve the Agenda. Floyd**

**McKissick seconded her motion. Her motion was approved unanimously by a voice vote.**

**Chris Hardee made a motion to approve the Minutes of the last meeting. Jarrett Patrick seconded his motion. His motion was approved unanimously on a voice vote.**

**Dr. Sharon Brown asked a question about the Agenda. She said that during our last meeting in September someone asked about having a union representative at the next meeting. Dr. Brown asked if a union representative was present tonight? In reply it was stated that no union rep was present at this meeting.**

**Dr. Brown asked about the upcoming SEC meeting. Dr. Richardson replied that the SEC meeting will be covered later in tonight's meeting.**

**Dr. Richardson informed the Council that before the 2022 General Election, Executive Director Meredith Cuomo notified the Chair that she would be leaving the ED position on November 30, 2022. Our State Chair said that Lillian Badgett Taylor has been appointed as Interim Executive Director.**

**Dr. Richardson said that the vacant ED position had been posted on December 17.**

**It was announced that the Search Committee for a new ED would be composed of: NCDP Chair plus representatives of the following: the Governor, the Attorney General, the Secretary of State, the State Auditor, the NCDP House Caucus, and the NCDP Senate Caucus.**

**Applications for the ED position will close on February 15<sup>th</sup> – after the next SEC meeting.**

**The Search committee will conduct Zoom interviews first followed by live interviews with the top applicants.**

**Meredith Cuomo discussed the layoffs which were made after the General Election. She wanted to keep the organization alive. All organizers except Julia Buckner were laid off.**

**All staff members who were laid off received ten days advance notice and were given two full weeks of severance pay.**

**3 Meredith said fund raising was continuing and that NCDP tried to**

keep two to three months salaries in advance in the Party Treasury. John Verdejo asked how was Search Committee formed.

Meredith replied that this year's process was the same that was used in 2019.

Katherine Jeanes said it was disturbing that she was not informed of Meredith's removal. Dr. Richardson said she wanted to wait and give that news to the Executive Council at tonight's meeting.

Herb Harton asked why was a clarion call for money not made to avert these layoffs. Dr. Richardson replied that people can always donate money. She also stated that there were complaints from Democrats across the state about the fundraising emails that were sent out after the General Election.

Angela Bridgman asked what did the ED do to plan the election? Meredith replied that the ED sets the tone, meets with the Governor and meets with the Coordinated Campaign and others.

Kennis Wilkins said that a lot of money was raised and he asked if the employees who were laid off were still valuable?

Our State Chair stated that the party leader has to make decisions. She also pointed out that a lot of money was given to the union employees that was not authorized by the budget.

Dr. Richardson reported that most of the SEC Members did not donate any money to the Party in 2022. In fact only 118 of the approximately 600 SEC Members donated to NCDP in 2022. She said an email had specifically asked each SEC Member to donate at least \$100 during the year.

She also reported that the Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee did not send NCDP as much money as usual.

Meredith talked about fundraising in 2022. She said she did not want to lay any employees off after the General Election. She said that the statewide training that was started in 2022 will continue and that NCDP is still fundraising.

Meredith said that "If anyone says they were not asked for donations, they were not opening their emails." Many counties did not pay their full Sustaining Fund goals. She said that it is needed for everyone on this call to donate.

4 She discussed the fact that our US Senate race was not targeted

by the Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee.

Kennis Wilkins said Dr. Bobbie Richardson "has done a great

job.” He said we need to ask our winning candidates to help the Party financially. Dr. Richardson said NCDP has already started asking them to donate.

Dr. Richardson asked everyone on this call to donate NOW. She related that at a DNC meeting one State Chair said her state party emphasizes the importance of every SEC Member donating.

She related that the Sustaining Fund committee did great during the first half of the year.

Carl Newman made a motion to approve Lillian Taylor as our Interim Executive Director. Sybil said this was not necessary. Carl withdrew his motion.

Chris Hardee told the Council that in the past the Headquarters staff had been reduced more than it was reduced this year. He said the Party put all possible money on the Beasley campaign. He expressed kudos to those who made these reductions in staff.

First Vice Chair Floyd McKissick made a extensive statement expressing congratulations to everyone who worked on the 2022 campaign. He pointed out the vigorous fund raising and the strong organizing that was done in the 2022 campaign which resulted in electing seven Members of Congress. He said we should all be proud of this.

Floyd pointed out the fact that more than 80 million dollars of out of state independent money was spent on the Ted Budd campaign while only 36 million of out of state independent money was spent on the Cheri Beasley campaign. He also said that the national Democratic Party did not prioritize the Beasley campaign.

Floyd also said:

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When the Republicans took over the NC General Assembly they eliminated the Tax Checkoff Money thereby taking 1.5 million dollars from NCDP’s Annual Budget.

They ended public financing of statewide races. They required that the party label be on the ballot for every Statewide race because they felt this would help the Republican candidates.

**5 Floyd McKissick continued by saying “It is up to us.” He called on every SEC Member to contribute monthly to NCDP in amounts of \$100, \$50, \$10, or more.**

**He said we should support each other. He called on all Democrats saying “Don’t be divisive!”**

**Floyd reported that during the last ten days he and the State Chair have been busy raising money even though the election is over.**

**He thanked Meredith , Dr. Richardson, Lorenzo, and the entire campaign staff. He emphasized that we must keep working hard and we must pull together.**

**He reported that during the last 30 days of the campaign the GOP Supreme Court candidates received \$15,000,000.00 from outside the state.**

**Floyd said we should feel proud of our campaign even though we had mixed results. He pointed out that even after the staff layoffs, we still have one of the largest headquarters staffs in the nation.**

**He concluded by saying that “demographics are trending in our favor” and asked Dems not to be “devisive and negative.”**

**He added that Kennis Wilkins has been a \$5,000.00 Trustee for many years and that he (Floyd) has been a Trustee.**

**Tyler Beale said his concern was what he referred to as “lack of communication.” He requested that the State Chair and the new Executive Director “keep us informed.” He expressed appreciation for all that has been done.**

**Dr. Richardson stated that communication is a “two-way process.”**

**She reported that she did not receive a single phone call about the recent staff reductions. Instead the critics went to the statewide news media. Again, no one called her about this matter. This has led to people seeing our party as “not unified” because of the media stories.**

**Lisa Ellsworth called for a return to the order of the day. Sybil Mann said there was no need for a motion to ask the Chair to return the meeting to its approved agenda.**

**6 Interim Executive Director Lillian Taylor then presented a**

**48-page illustrated Report on NCDP's Strategic Plan and what the Party did to fulfill this Strategic Plan in 2022. Training and GOTV Director Julia Buckner helped present various parts of this report.**

**The information in their report is not for outside distribution.**

**This report presented Five Strategic Goals and what NCDP did in 2022 to Fulfill Them**

**1 – ENGAGING GRASSROOTS VOLUNTEER LEADERSHIP**

**1938 Events, 19,202 Unique Volunteers, 11, 880 Event Shifts Completed  
882 Training Sessions with 1,863 Training Attendees from 92 Counties Who Completed 7,301 Training Shifts**

**As a Result of These Trainings:**

**922,000 Doors Were Knocked**

**Made 2.1 Million Phone Calls**

**6.9 Million Texts**

**Signed Up For Over 92,000 Volunteer Shifts 1,663 New Action Teams Created**

**64.9% of SEC Members Completed Shifts**

**56.3% of Executive Council Members Completed Shifts**

**2 – ESTABLISH A PERMANENT VOTER PROTECTION PROGRAM**

**3 – LAUNCH A YEAR-ROUND ORGANIZATIONAL FIELD CAMPAIGN 4 – PROVIDE YEAR-ROUND TRAINING CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT 5 – IMPROVE COMMUNICATION**

**PLEASE NOTE THAT MEMBERS OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL RECEIVED A COPY OF LILLIAN'S PRESENTATION.**

**Pam McAfee said that the Party needs to reach out to past volunteers and get them active in the Party again.**

**Pam asked how do we keep in touch? Dr. Richardson replied that Mobilize is a valuable tool which enables us to stay in touch with Party activities. We keep a list of volunteers. This list will be given to the county parties.**

**Catherine Jeanes asked Julia Buckner what type of volunteers does this list include? Julia replied that it includes volunteers from the Coordinated Campaign, the state and local parties, volunteers for individual candidates, all volunteers who knocked doors, and volunteers from every other possible Democratic source.**

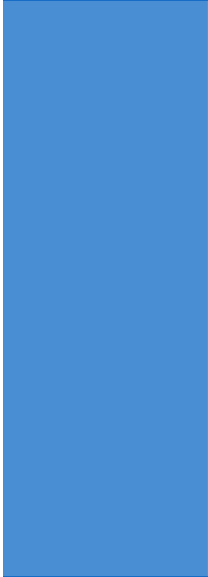
**Marilyn Carter thanked everyone who worked on the 2022 campaign. Then she asked what 2-3 accomplishments we were most proud of and what 2-3 challenges**

**we most need to address looking ahead? Fund raising and organizing were the replies she received.**

**Meredith Cuomo said that NCDP spent a lot of time and effort getting donations from donors who live outside the state because they gave more willingly and in larger amounts. She said these national donors gave a large amount of money in 2022.**

**Meredith discussed hurdles which the Party faced in the 2022 election cycle:**

- - Facebook changes and Facebook ad limits**
- - Negative talk among members of the Party**
- - So much infighting**





Henrietta Coursey received recognition. She thanked Dr. Richardson, Meredith Cuomo and many others for their work. She said we need to have a summary of the State Party's 2022 accomplishments.

Henrietta said "We don't need any naysayers." Instead we need to report on the positive things the Democratic Party has done.

Collette Alston said she was going to make a statement which will be "unpopular." She said if we are not held accountable, we will be in the same situation in future elections. She would like for protocols to be set in place.

Jarrett Patrick said he would echo what Henrietta and Collette said. He said we should applaud everyone who worked in the 2022 campaign.

He said we need positivity and that we need another meeting to recognize that "Everyone gave it their all." He said there is too much negativity from Democrats on social media and that we need to bring a much more positive attitude.

Dr. Richardson invited all NCDP Officers to give reports on their activities since the last Council meeting.

First Vice Floyd McKissick praised Dr. Richardson, Meredith Cuomo, Lillian Taylor, and Lorenzo Pedro. He reported: "Whatever they have asked me to do, I have done." He related that he has given statements to the press. He praised the county and precinct workers.

Floyd said: "I am optimistic." He pointed out that "Republicans salivate when they hear us quarrel."

Second Vice Chair Matt Hughes thanked the staff. He reported that since the last meeting he worked as a Staging Location Leader and as a poll observer. He said he will bring forward a list of Code of Conduct changes soon. He told the meeting that on the day before he, Tyler Beale, Judge Arrowood and others attended the bill signing for the "Respect For Marriage Act" at the White House.

Matt reported attending a Democratic meeting at Elon University and a Young Democrats of America meeting in Buffalo. Within the next

few days he will attend a DNC meeting which will vote on changing the presidential primary schedule for 2024.

9 Third Vice Chair Shannon Auer thanked Dr. Richardson, Meredith

Cuomo, the staff and our statewide volunteers.

Treasurer Anna Tilghman thanked Meredith Cuomo and the staff

who have done so much good work. She said the Finance Committee has convened and started to work on the 2023 Budget. She issued a clarion call for donations.

Anna said NCDP is in “good shape” but need donations to keep our 2023 commitments.

County Chair President Anderson Clayton said notices will be sent out today about a meeting on the following Saturday to select five members of the Affiliated Auxiliaries Committee.

Dr. Richardson asked exactly when will notices go out for Anderson’s meeting? Dr. Richardson reminded everyone that the POO requires two weeks notice. She asked Parliamentarian Sybil Mann for confirmation.

Sybil replied that “All committees must give 14-day notice before they can meet.” She said this rule can be found on page 71, Section 12.02 of the POO. Therefore, it would not be proper for the County Chair’s committee to meet on the following Saturday.

Anderson said “We will get back to you.” Dr. Richardson said: “We must follow the POO.” She said one county recently failed to give proper notice about a meeting and the results were “troubling and misguided.”

Chris Hardee asked for a clarification for the name of the meeting which Anderson is referencing. Anderson said the meeting is needed to nominate five members to the Affiliated Organizations Committee.

Pam McAfee said the Disability Issues Caucus calls for the next SEC meeting to be a hybrid meeting. She said she is preparing a poll about what is needed for the disabled at this SEC meeting.

Dr. Richardson said she has directed the Interim Executive Director to present the cost of a hybrid SEC meeting.

10 Meredith said it will cost between \$25,000 and \$35,00 which the Party can not afford to set up a hybrid SEC meeting. She said the SEC

meeting needs to be either “in person” or “virtual.”

Sybil Mann said the report of the Affiliation Organizations

Committee is not scheduled to be delivered until the Summer 2023 SEC meeting according to page 46 of the POO. Applications start in April, 2023 according to Section 11, Page 65 of the POO.

Jarrett Patrick made a motion to adjourn when appropriate.

**Dr. Richardson made the point that the February 11<sup>th</sup> SEC meeting will not be in conflict with HKonJ. She has talked with the head of HKonJ who told her they may not even have an HKonJ this year.**

**As she declared the meeting adjourned, Dr. Richardson let everyone know that the Headquarters staff will be working from home for the rest of the year to save on the utility bills.**

**The meeting was adjourned at 9:40PM.**

**Respectfully Submitted, Melvin Williams, State Secretary North Carolina  
Democratic Party**