

**Mason County Republican Executive Committee Meeting Minutes
December 5, 2023**

Meeting was called to order at 6:30 pm.

Invocation – 101st. State Representative Joe Fox

Pledge – Ben Norton

Roll Call by Tina Shirshun – Present: State Representative Joe Fox, Sheriff Kim Cole, County Clerk Cheryl Kelly, Treasurer Andrew Kmetz IV, Commissioner Ron Bacon, Kirk Chavalia, Verna Chavalia, Bill Chye, Sheila Genter, Margaret Greiner, Cynthia Johnson, Eric Juers, Jason Kirkpatrick, Cindy Muzzo, Ben Norton, Charles Robinson, Rebecca Robinson, Tina Shirshun.

Excused Absences: Pastor Brian Ford, Duane Hobart, Nicole Norton.

Guests: Daniel Jensen, Frank VandeVoorde, Rick Knuth, Gary Anderson, Shaun Shoemate, Aldon Maleckas, Richard Boes, Miguel Pilar, Lyla McClelland, Tim Muldoon, Brittany Carsten, Aaron Carsten, Jim Bachelder, Elizabeth Morrison, Carole Johnson, Cathy Ingraham, Jason Miney, Shannon S.

Approval of November 7, 2023 Meeting Minutes

There were 2 corrections to the meeting minutes. One is the 2024 County General Fund Budget amount provided by Janet Anderson, Chair of the BOC, which was reported as 16,471,000. The second correction is in the Public Comments, from Carole Johnson, should have read “Freedom Pods,” which are conservative groups formed by local citizens to prevent the state from controlling government and local representatives.

***Motion** made by Bill Chye to approve the meeting minutes of November 7, 2023, with the above stated corrections. Seconded by Cynthia Johnson. No discussion. Motion carried.

Treasury Report –

Sheila reported the State Account end-of-month balance for October was \$4,740.78. Donations received during the month of November were \$568.00 from the Chili Cook-Off, \$2000 from an MCR member, and 1 new membership of \$25. The monthly expenses was the Quickbooks fee of \$42.50. The State Account end-of-month balance for November is \$7,291.28. The Admin Account end of October balance was 455.33. We donated \$200.00 to the Hospitality INC, Homeless Shelter so that leaves an end-of-November balance of \$253.33. These end-of-the-month November balances match with the November bank statements.

***Motion** made by Verna Chavalia to approve the financial report. Seconded by Ben Norton. No discussion. Motion carried.

Reports from Committee Members –

Unfinished Business:

1) Sheila talked about a new section in the rewritten By-Laws submitted by Cindy Muzzo’s By-Law Committee, regarding Conflict Resolution and that it was added to protect our County from State Party interference. Sheila provided some clarification and factual information as to why this section was in the By-Laws. Cheryl Kelly also pointed out a correction that is needed to page 12, Article VIII-1e where it states that County Commission are nonpartisan and that is incorrect.

***Motion** made by Jason Kirkpatrick to approve the rewritten By-Laws with the correction to remove County Commission from Article VIII-1e, on page 12, and to also waive another 30-day review period. Seconded by Bill Chye. No discussion. Members voted by a show of hands. Motion carried.

New Business:

1) Sheila reported the County Convention is scheduled for February 15, 2024, at 7:00 pm at the Ludington Senior Center. We will be voting on 9 delegates and 9 alternates to go to the District Convention in March in Detroit. State Representatives who reside within our County (Curt VanderWall) are also designated to attend. Call to Convention notices will be mailed out to statutory/at-large members and precinct delegates at least 30 days prior to the County Convention date.

2) Sheila reported the District Convention will be held on March 2, 2024, at 10:00 am at the Huntington Place in Detroit. We have 13 districts and each will hold their own Convention within the Huntington Place. Delegates will be voting for the Presidential Candidate. Delegates will be selecting 3 National Delegates and 3 Alternates from each Congressional District Delegation. All National Convention Delegate and Alternate candidates will commit during the District Convention prior to the Presidential vote to one of the Presidential Candidates receiving District Delegates. Each District shall select 3 delegates and 3 alternates to the National Republic Convention, as well as the election of 1 National Committeewoman and 1 National Committeeman.

3. Sheila reported that she attended the virtual State Committee meeting held on December 2nd. MIGOP Chair Kristina Karamo had called an in-person State Committee meeting which was going to be held at the Commonwealth Faith Church in Redford, Michigan. The Friday before the meeting, the church was contacted that there was going to be a pro-Palestine protest on Saturday and that it was going to take place right across the street from the church. The Pastor of the church canceled the meeting for Saturday over safety concerns, not knowing that this was a hoax. After District Chairs and SC members learned of the on-site cancellation, a few District Chairs found an alternate site and contacted Kristina and her staff and were told she wanted an online meeting. Chair Karamo did not authorize the on-site location and sent an email that the State Committee Meeting was going to be held virtually. The virtual meeting did not have a quorum, therefore, any matters requiring a vote by the State Committee members were not addressed. The majority of the State Committee members met at the onsite location, however, as I stated above, Chair Karamo did not authorize the meeting place and would not recognize any business that was conducted. During the virtual meeting, those present were provided a copy of the MIGOP financials which are attached. State Committee members are frustrated with the current MIGOP administration. State Committee members have indicated that they are not being provided with the necessary information they have requested to fulfill their position responsibilities. Sheila will continue to monitor and provide the Committee with updates. No action is recommended to be taken at this time.

4) The MIGOP is encouraging precinct delegates to join the "Good Neighbor Program." It is a data-based program that Sheila has been entering information into. A concern, however, is that MIGOP does not own the app, therefore, what guarantees that the information being entered doesn't end up in the wrong hands? The link where you can sign up is <https://migop.teamplaybookbuilder.app/signup>.

5) A District 2 County Needs Assessment form was distributed to committee members to review. It lists areas where we may be lacking information and would like some additional training. Please review and submit to Sheila so she can combine all requested areas on one form and submit it back to the contact person.

Guest Speaker Presentation –

Miguel Pilar, the West Michigan Field Representative for Turning Point Action, introduced himself and provided his background in politics since the age of 12. He is now with Turning Point Action which is a 501(c)(4) organization. Turning Point USA is our sister organization that works mainly with colleges and Turning Point Action works directly with the party. The main functions are to recruit and train precinct delegates and to support and endorse conservative candidates. We have our own app called the Turning Point Action app and it can be found on Google Play or the App Store. Several functions on the app are to knock on doors, sign up volunteers, make phone calls, send text messages, send postcards, lead your precinct, register to vote, check out the scorecard, and much more. Miguel will be in Arizona attending a conference and getting more information to bring back to everyone in the next weeks. Miguel spoke more on the 3 coalitions they are focusing on, Latino, Moms, and Faith. Also shared they have a transparent scorecard. Miguel then answered questions from committee members and guests which led to good discussion.

Reports from State Elected Officials –

-Sheila read a report from Congressman Moolenaar (see attached).

-State Representative Joe Fox passed out a sheet with the “November Legislative Update” (See attached). Rep Joe Fox shared he voted no on everything on the sheet (Reproductive Health Act). HB’s 4949, 4951-4946; SB 474-477, 593; “Green New Deal” HB’s 5120-5123; SB 271, 273, 502; and elected officials disclosing their financial dealings SB’s 613-616). He proceeded to go through each section sharing more detailed information on the bills. Representative Fox advised there is one error on the handout about the March for Life around the Capitol that being it states there were several hundred attendees but in reality, there were actually around 4 to 5 thousand attendees present with 88 buses there. Representative Fox also talked about (‘sine die’) meaning early end of the session and the reason why Democrats did that was because they needed 90 days without a session happening so that any bills were not given immediate passage by the Senate. The primary is in January and the election is in April and rumor has it we may not be back in session till April. Representative Fox also talked about a possible recall election that could happen in Traverse City in May and how you can get involved. He also talked about different ways he is connecting with people in groups like the Michigan for Vaccine Choice meetings, GOP meetings, prayer groups, the Michigan Fruit & Vegetable gathering, visiting schools, and then talked about Rebecca Berringer and the Biblical Citizenship in Modern America Course.

Reports from County Elected Officials –

-Sheila read a report from Janet Anderson (see attached).

-Andrew Kmetz IV reported the Mason County Land Bank Authority is working on a blight demolition and stabilization grant, they are working on identifying potential qualifying project sights. The grant provides up to \$500,000.00 to demolish or rehabilitate property for good use. The deadline for applying is March 31, 2024. We are gathering information on potential project sites at this time. We are also preparing for 2 foreclosure hearings coming up in January and February to provide extensions for individuals. We have between 20-30 extensions each year and we foreclose on approximately 15 parcels per year. Our goal is to have zero occupied homes that fall in foreclosure and last year we only had 1 occupied parcel, the majority were non-conforming vacant lots and homes that have been abandoned. As we prepare for our year-end we are working with our various offices to record any expected receivables and expenses for closing the books for 2023.

-Cheryl Kelly reported the City of Ludington posted the 9 days of early voting site. Very thankful that Debbie took the initiative to explore that option because it provided Lyla and Cynthia the ability to see what we get to do next year for the upcoming 3 elections. Our office is currently working on the February

Presidential Primary already, finishing off the November election, and working to close our year-end.

-Sheriff Kim Cole talked about his trip to McAllen, Texas, touring the border for 3 days with Sheriff Mast from Oceana County and Derek Wilson, our Under-Sheriff. Sheriff Cole talked about touring a ranch 70 miles north of the border and also the border at Rio Grande. Here locally, Neil Brooks from Brevard County Florida will be starting employment with us in another couple of weeks. He's got 9 years down there and is originally from Toronto, Canada. We also have a new deputy that we will be sending to the Academy and he will be with us in May. Sheriff Cole also talked about serving on the MSA Legislative Committee which consists of 7 Sheriffs, 4 Democrats, and 3 Republicans. Shared that next election there will be 4 Republicans and 3 Democrats because 1 Sheriff will be leaving the Democrat Party and running as a Republican. Sheriff Cole finalized by talking about Red Flag laws and the incident that happened at MSU. Sheriff Cole then answered questions from several Committee members which led to good discussion.

Announcements –

- Sheila reported the January 2nd and the February 6th executive committee meetings will be held at the Ludington Senior Center, at 308 S Rowe St, and the County Convention will also be held there.
- Mason County Board of Commissioners Meeting is December 12th at 7:00 pm at the Airport.
- District 2 Committee is having a Get Ugly Christmas event on Saturday, December 9th, 6-9 pm. Dinner, desserts, games and auctions, contact Rebecca Robinson for more info.
- The Ludington Area School Board meeting is Monday, December 11th at 6:00 pm at the Administration Office, 809 E Tinkham, Ludington.

Public Comments –

Aldon Maleckas provided printed material and talked about "Topical Analysis," "What Has Happened to Our Union," and "The US of A is a Union, Not a Nation-State, and Why it Matters"; Cathy Ingraham had questions for Representative Fox on petitions (part-time legislature, open/closed primaries, transparency, AxeMITax) that appear to be going around and nobody knows about them; Shaun Shoemate had a question for Representative Fox if Representatives were signing something in favor of Hamas; Rick Knuth introduced himself sharing he moved here 3 years ago; Daniel Jensen provided some binders of "The Spars Pandemic" and commented on another lockdown coming.

Adjournment –

***Motion** made by Jason Kirkpatrick to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Verna Chavalía. No discussion. Motion carried.

Next meeting is scheduled for January 2, 2024, at the Ludington Senior Center at 6:30 pm. Also meeting for February 6, 2024, will be held at the Ludington Senior Center at 6:30 pm.