

**LAKE HIGHLANDS/WHITE ROCK DEMOCRATS
GENERAL MEETING
July 15, 2023**

The July meeting of the Lake Highlands/White Rock Democrats was held on July 15, 2023 at CC Young. President Charlie Gearing called the meeting to order at 10:10 am. He welcomed all participants and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Charlie recognized candidates/office-holders present:

- Cass Hernandez, candidate for House District 115 (Julie Johnson's seat). She is a Texas native, an immigration lawyer fighting for Medicaid expansion.
- Tracie Shelby, candidate for 162nd Court Judge. She has been very involved in helping people losing their homes to foreclosure.
- Elizabeth Ginsberg, former and future candidate for State Representative District 108. As an attorney, she represents small businesses and is opposed to Morgan Meyer's ideas on property tax reform, a path to destroy public schools.
- Callie Butcher, candidate for District 32. A 9th-generation Texas, she has experience with patent litigation and supports civil rights and positive LGBTQ legislation.

Charlie then introduced speakers from sibling organizations:

- Rachael Gearing, Lambda Legal. They are fighting the SB14 ban on trans medical care. Lambda Legal is sponsoring the 50th anniversary October 19 JJ Dinner.
- Carol Donovan, Founders Lions Club. She recommended anyone seeking office join Toastmasters to improve their public speaking, and the Lions Club to focus on education issues.
- Adam Lamont, Neighbors DTX. He and wife Ashley Flores work to make Dallas housing affordable.
- Susie Hess, Stonewall Dems. They screen candidates county wide. She urged us all to be kind and to use preferred pronouns.
- Chris Leal, Dallas County Young Democrats. They sponsor an August back-to-school event.

The Gearing's are co-leading plans for the JJ Dinner. (speakers Jasmine Flores and Somos Tejas). They have raised \$200,000 so far. The LHWR Democrats are co-sponsoring with District Attorney John Cruzot a Big Blue BBQ at Sokol Hall August 26, benefiting efforts to get out the senior vote.

Vice President Bruce Anton introduced our speakers, Rena Honea, President of Alliance AFT Dallas, who will update us on the legislative session with regard to education, and Shannon Trejo, DISD Chief Academic Officer, who will update us on DISD's latest efforts. Rena advised us on major issues:

- Teacher recruitment/retention: treat them as professionals, increase salary/benefits, reduce class size, increase participation in school board elections, curb the obsession with standardized tests, eliminate paperwork, improve working conditions, allow employee input on all these issues.
- Mental Health (student, parent, family, employee): address Fentanyl issues, encourage mindful moments, increase awareness of EAP (Employee Assistance Program).
- Funding: TEA didn't get any of the \$1.7 billion, so the district has to absorb the costs.

- Charter schools don't have to hire certified personnel, can say "no" to problem students, can cap attendance, don't have an elected school board, don't have to offer Special Education services, don't require approval for second or third campuses.
- Vouchers: If passed, they will be a third type of education supported in the state.

Dr. Trejo advised that DISD has:

- Purchased Amplify, Eureka, and Carnegie curriculum, to reduce the preparation time and paperwork requirements of teachers.
- Reduced K-8 assessments. This returns 18 days of instruction to the classroom.

Dr. Trejo encouraged volunteer programs such as Reading Partners, as well as signing up to be substitute teachers.

BUSINESS MEETING

PRESIDENT'S REPORT (Charlie Gearing)

Charlie had already covered his agenda items.

VICE PRESIDENT'S REPORT (Bruce Anton)

Bruce announced the following:

Aug 19	LHWR Democrats meeting.
Oct 22	LHWR Democrats Chili Supper fundraiser. Keynote speaker Eddie Bernice Johnson.

VICE PRESIDENT MEMBERSHIP'S REPORT (Judy Garrett)

Judy reported our membership is about 184 members..

VICE PRESIDENT EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES REPORT (Caren Cool)

Caren announced **Happy Hour, Tuesday, July 25, 5-7 pm at District 9**, Northcliff at Buckner.

TREASURER'S REPORT (Charlie Gearing in the absence of Tim Sexton)

Tim has filed the monthly Texas Ethics Commission Reports for June.

For June,	Income\$	39.00
	Expenses	1,076.85
	Balance	\$ 7,719.67

SECRETARY'S REPORT (Debbie Overby)

The minutes for June were approved with corrections..

Debbie thanked faithful White Rock Lake cleanup volunteers Caren Cool and Camille Morgan. The July cleanup will be **Saturday, Aug 12 at 9 am**, at our spot south of the Bath House Cultural Center.

PHONE COMMITTEE (Rhonda Green)

Rhonda thanked her committee and asked anyone interested in serving to let her know.

Charlie mentioned that we mourn the loss of Joan Covici, and asked if anyone would like to assume the duties of the Sunshine Committee to send cards for illness, surgery, sympathy.

The meeting adjourned at 11:30 am.

Respectively submitted,

Debbie Overby, Secretary