

# Indiana Green Party

## MINUTES - MARCH 2002

### Indiana Green Party Special Congress and Regular Meeting

March 9, 2002, 2:30pm  
East Washington Street Library Branch  
2822 E. Washington St.  
Indianapolis, Indiana

Present:

Ed Grandstaff, Tom Brown, Jan Brown, Heather Drake, Peter Drake, Tracy Carson, Isabel Piedmont, Skywolf (Neil Smith), Jenett Tillotson (arrived at 4:00)

### PART ONE: SPECIAL CONGRESS

#### A. Question: Should the IGP affiliate with the Green Party of the US (GPUS)?

#### B. Determination of quorum: Do we count the person who just joined this week? yes

- So there are 23 IGP members.
- 16 members were represented at the Special Congress, as follows:
  - 10 from Monroe County
  - 2 from St. Joseph County
  - 3 from Marion County
  - 1 from the unaffiliated caucus

#### C. Discussion:

Skywolf presented a brief history of the two major national green groups: the Greens/GPUSA and the Green Party of the US. He also mentioned the new Green Alliance group, which he felt may just be splintering the movement further. He pointed out that GPUS is recognized by the Federal Election Commission and is working with green parties in other countries. He presented a handout describing his arguments in favor of affiliation with GPUS. He emphasized that he believed GPUS would help IGP with the petition drives for our two state candidates this year.

Tracy said that she didn't see the need to affiliate right now. She saw benefits in affiliation with GPUS, but she also saw possible benefits to joining the Greens/GPUSA. She saw no need to rush the decision, but rather did see a need for more time to study the issue and reflect on what affiliation would mean. She doubted that GPUS would be able to help much with the petition drive.

Heather asked some pointed questions to frame the debate:

- 1. Who has read charter and bylaws of GP of the US? Only 3 people raised their hands
- 2. Who has read their bylaws? 4-5 people said they had
- 3. Please explain the structure of GPUS? Skywolf responded that there was one delegate from each state, with each having a vote. There is also a national steering committee, with about 13 members, which are elected by the delegates from the states.

Heather thought that GPUS would help as much as they can with petitioning anyway, regardless of whether IGP

affiliates. But overall she thought that GPUS probably doesn't have enough manpower to help us, and that the petition drive ought to be grassroots, not top-down.

Heather felt that most of our members don't know enough to make an informed decision on affiliation at this point. She also pointed out that IGP has to have a state platform before we can affiliate. We don't have a platform, and she argued that we shouldn't just adopt the national GPUS platform as a default. In this context too, the party needs to be bottom-up, not top-down.

Tracy proposed to delay the vote on affiliation until the regularly scheduled IGP annual congress in July/August. In the meantime, she suggested that a link to the GPUS charter be placed on the IGP website so that member can become familiar with the national organization.

Isabel agreed with Tracy and Heather, emphasizing the need to work on our own state platform before we decide which national group to join.

Tom asked what our obligations would be to participate in the national level? We would have to send delegates to meetings, and we don't have enough people to do it (or money, for that matter). He wants to make sure we are not giving more than we are getting out of affiliation.

Peter agreed that IGP doesn't have enough people to send folks to national meetings. He also wanted to create a state platform both to prepare for eventual affiliation (perhaps) and to define what our goals are politically in the state. Heather agreed on the importance of developing a state platform, and then seeing whether our state goals are in line with the national platform.

Tom explained more about the Green Alliance, which is closely affiliated with IPPN (Independent Progressive Political Network). The GA is really trying to form a left/progressive coalition. It's a way for Greens to bring the broader left movement into the Green movement. IPPN is trans-party, including Greens, Democrats, Socialists, Communists, and other political groups.

Heather mentioned that one of our members, Jeff Sutter, would be willing to follow GPUS discussions on the Internet, but he is not interested in traveling to meetings. Skywolf said there are 5 meetings per year for state delegates to GPUS. Heather pointed out that we don't have anyone willing to take on the duties of GPUS delegate. Tom added his concern that only middle and upper class members could serve as delegates, because of the expense of traveling to meetings.

### **Vote on affiliation:**

- YES: 5
- NO: 11

Motion to affiliate does not pass.

## **PART TWO: REGULAR IGP MEETING**

Approval of minutes from February 9.

### **I. Reports**

#### **A. Secretary's Report (Isabel)**

Membership numbers: We have 23 members

T-shirts: The IGP T-shirts are available for sale. They cost \$15, and checks should be made out to Indiana Green Party.

#### **B. Treasurer's Report (Heather)**

Account balance: \$318.88

Heather filed the first campaign finance report for IGP.

## **C. Technology report**

### 1) Website

A new web master was selected: Jenett Tillotson from Kokomo.

The following ideas for the web site were proposed:

- link Marion County local directly to IGP page
- link campus green groups
- make the contact information more prominent
- make the 2002 candidates prominent
- add a calendar of events, including local meetings

Skywolf suggested we could get calendar listings from the Common Bonds calendar - [www.commonbonds.org](http://www.commonbonds.org)

Tom suggested we could also ask for calendar submissions from other progressive groups.

Eventually, make it so people can make their own calendar entries.

- add links to Green resources (other Green parties and related groups)
- offer T-shirts for sale (doesn't have to be by credit card)
- add a printable membership form
- put the local organizing kit on the web

Tom started working on converting this to html, but he didn't have time to finish

- add a donation page
- make sure the website is linked to search engines

Peter suggested that the following information should always be on the web site:

- Who are we?
- What are we doing?
- How do I get involved?

### 2) Email lists

Tom is still in charge of Ingreens, and he still has to approve new list members.

In November, we approved to change the system so that anyone can become a member without approval. Tom said he would take care of this.

Nick Hansen is still in charge of Ingreens-discuss: Tom will try to get control of this list, since Nick has been out of touch with IGP for many months.

## **II. New Business**

### **A. Take Back the Earth Day**

Skywolf asked whether IGP would like to join the Marion County greens in participating in "Take Back the Earth Day,"

April 21, 12 noon to sunset at Broadripple Park in Indy. This is an alternative event to “Earth Day Indiana”, which is corporate-sponsored. Heather thought this should be considered an event for the Marion County local. Then anyone who comes up to the table will sign up for Marcogreens, and IGP won't be competing for additions to the supporter lists. Skywolf said that in any case, he would be glad to try to sell IGP t-shirts at the event. Peter suggested that he could also get bumper stickers from [www.GoodsforGreens.com](http://www.GoodsforGreens.com). Skywolf invited Tom or any of the IGP coordinators to speak at the event, and Tracy volunteered to do so.

## **B. International Cannabis Liberation Day**

Skywolf proposed IGP participation in this event as well, which is sponsored by Indiana NORML and will be held in Indy May 4. He asked if someone from IGP would speak, and said the Libertarians would also have a speaker there. He himself will be emceeding and coordinating the event, so he won't be able to speak for the Greens. Peter said that this seemed like another task just for the Marion County local, but he suggested that the Marcogreens should focus on only a few events, not spread themselves too thin. Tracy agreed that it felt like Marcogreens and IGP is being stretched too thin. It was agreed by consensus that IGP will not commit to this event.

## **C. Butler Political Fair**

Finally, Skywolf proposed that IGP participate in the Butler campus political fair on April 3. Heather said there is a campus Greens group at Butler, and that they should represent the Greens at this event. Tracy said the Butler Greens had contacted her, and she had referred them to Marcogreens. There was general agreement that IGP would not participate at this event.

## **D. Roadless area conservation rule**

Peter presented a letter drafted by the organization American Lands and sent to us by Joshua Martin. The letter is addressed to the Indiana US Congressional delegation and urges them to uphold the roadless area conservation rule. This rule protects 58.5 million acres and is the result of much scientific study and public vetting. The rule ensures clean drinking water, habitat protection, and recreation opportunities. It allows certain roads for emergency vehicles, but otherwise preserves roadless areas. Resident Bush has pledged to uphold this rule in the past, but is now considering getting rid of it. In addition to the letter to congressional representatives, there is also a shorter letter to the President to urge him to uphold the rule. (See appendix of these minutes for the texts of the letters.)

Peter made a motion that IGP sign on to these two letters.

Heather said that she felt we should not sign on because we don't have a platform, and she doesn't want the same controversy to come up as over the press release about Sept. 11 after the February IGP meeting. Isabel said that this situation is quite different from the press release, because it's not a press release and it's clearly something our 10 key values support. Peter agreed that this is a lot different, not a press release from us, but rather signing on to something clearly Green. Skywolf also thought this was clearly a Green cause, and we should support it.

It was decided by consensus to sign onto the two letters.

## **E. Creation of a platform committee**

Peter proposed that we create a platform committee to work on the state platform. Tracy, Skywolf, Ed, and Peter all agreed to be on this committee. Peter suggested the committee be set up electronically so most of the work could be done via e-mail. Heather recommended that a call for further volunteers go out on Ingreens.

Heather also said that there should be a deadline when the platform should be finished. Ed pointed out that we need to coordinate this deadline with the vote on national affiliation. Skywolf felt that developing a platform is a continuous process. He reminded us that our current platform is simply the 10 key values, and he thought that we could have a viable draft by August.

Tracy disagreed with this timeline and said we need to have more time, at least until December. Peter suggested setting a deadline for an intermediate stage in the platform process, such as a list of issues the committee can agree on. This first draft could be due at the summer annual congress.

Heather suggested that the committee should look at national platforms and state platforms from other states as background research to determine structure as well as issues. The committee could solicit suggestions for issues using the Ingreens list. She thought the whole process would and should take time. Peter asked what the smallest piece of the process would be for which we could set a deadline. Ed stressed the importance of gathering new ideas.

Peter made a motion to direct the new platform committee as follows: At the convention the platform committee will give a report on other Green platforms from around the world and particularly in the US, and ideas for what the IGP should include in its platform. Heather suggested that this would be a good tool for people to understand what the Green Party does or intends to do. By setting a summer deadline for ideas, all Indiana Greens will know that they need to reflect now to provide the input. Peter added that, at the congress, members can decide how to advise the platform committee to proceed.

Peter's motion passed by consensus. He will establish a platform committee e-mail list.

## **F. Petition drives and campaign updates**

### 1) Jeff Melton

Peter reported that Jeff has an extensive website. He has mailed to various labor and social groups for support. He and supporters have collected some signatures, but he hasn't turned any in to county election boards yet.

### 2) Julie Roberts

Isabel reported on recent activities. There are two democrats in the primary, one environmentalist and one "new" Democrat. The primary will show who is in control of the Democratic party in Monroe County, which will be interesting for Green political strategy in that area.

### 3) Tom Brown

For personal reasons, Tom formally withdrew his candidacy for Secretary of State. Peter began the discussion about the implications of this decision. He pointed out that we got volunteers from across the state to be active in the petition drive, and he hopes we can get them involved in the new platform project.

Heather said that the first step must be to notify everyone who is involved in the petition drive, which would best be done with a letter from Tom. We also have a couple of campaign contributions. \$100 from Peter and Heather have already been spent, but we must refund the other donors, for which Tom should write a letter as well. Tom agreed to draft letter to send to volunteers. He will send it to the coordinators first, who will check it Sunday or first thing Monday morning. Once they approve it, it will go out on Ingreens and Btowingreens (the Monroe County list) and to the additional volunteers which are on Heather's list. Tracy said that we needed a notice for the website as well.

## **G. IGP Newsletter**

Tracy proposed an IGP newsletter as another project that volunteers could substitute for the petition drive. Isabel agreed that a newsletter was a great idea, and that it would give members and supporters more contact with IGP. Ed suggested that an on-line newsletter might be a better idea. There was general agreement that this should be an option if people prefer, but that a newsletter should be printed as well. Tracy, Ed, and Isabel volunteered to form a newsletter committee, and Ed volunteered to draw up a budget and process proposal for the newsletter to present at the next IGP meeting.

## **III. Reports from Locals**

## **A. Monroe**

Heather handed out the MCGP newsletter, a copy of the upcoming Social Justice forum program, and business cards advertising the next MCGP meeting. Peter reported on a possible sheriff candidate.

## **B. St. Joseph**

Tom reported that three Greens are working on finding businesses with green values, to invite them to participate in Earth Day. This is the first step in creating a sustainable business fair.

## **C. Marion**

Skywolf said that Marcogreens would be busy organizing to participate in the aforementioned events, and they are still working on their charter.

## **IV. Odds and Ends**

Ralph Nader is speaking at DePauw on March 13th

Jenett wanted to know who will give her web content. The IGP officers said they would do this.

The meeting adjourned at 4:45 pm.

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