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Subject: View from the vice chair -Minnesota State Central Convention -8/12/2023

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The View from the Vice chair.

The Minnesota Republican Executive Board of the State Central Committee held a convention this past Saturday August 12th in Elk River, MN. Because only 54% of the 349 elected delegates were present, alternate delegates present were seated and allowed to vote. This brought the total voting members present to 340.

Polk County was represented by our elected delegate Mickey Kyler and alternates Alex Preusser and myself.

What follows is a recap of the highlights of the meeting and some observations as I saw them.

The meeting was called to order at 11:00 am and we were treated to an address from State Representative Walter Hudson. He represents District 30A in the northwestern metro area which includes the cities of St. Michael, Otsego and Albertville and parts of Hennepin and Wright counties. In my opinion, Walter is a very well spoken, level headed, constitutional minded conservative. He does a weekly podcast <https://tunein.com/podcasts/News--Politics-Podcasts/Doom-Scroll-p1348639/?topicId=312762821> I highly recommend his show. It was my observation that Walter was the sole black man at the convention. I bring this to your attention because US Representative and House Majority Whip Tom Emmer also spoke, as did Deputy Chair Donna Bergstrom and national committeewoman Barb Sutter, on how we must unite as a party and work to get the vote of the moderate suburban soccer mom. The so-called independent or undecided voter in the middle. This they said was the key to victory in 2024. Maybe it is and maybe it isn't. What struck me was no one mentioned the elephant in the room or maybe more accurately the elephant NOT in the room. That is the inner metro block of voters. Where are the Hmong and why aren't there any black delegates at this convention? 2022 gubernatorial candidate Mike Murphy was the only Republican to get endorsed by the Hmong and he had Lacey Johnson as his running mate. He blatantly called out the MNGOP for not going into these inner-city areas. I cannot imagine the people in these areas like the rise in crime any more than the mythical moderate soccer mom in the suburbs. Seems like we should divert some effort towards these areas/groups.

The speakers were followed by the officer's reports. We learned that the MNGOP has \$196,000.00 in checking and liabilities of \$500,000.00

At this point former state representative Erik Mortenson (Shakopee) rose to the microphone and called for a vote to remove chairman Hann! Before discussion could ensue, the motion was ruled out of order. The vote to appeal the ruling of the chair failed 187 to 125.

Chairman Hann, in his report, stated how the monies raised from small donations was keeping the lights on at MNGOP headquarters. He related that as of yet, the large donors had not stepped up. Quite ironic news coming from a man who campaigned for the chair by bragging that he knew all the big donors by name and he was the guy that could bring in the big dough.

The meeting moved on to “other business” and Jesse Smith from SD40 rose to the microphone. Jesse proposed two resolutions. The first was that the State Central Committee issue a statement condemning the sham indictments of Pres. Donald J Trump. His resolution was very colorfully written. After amending it to be less controversial it was passed. We shall see if it is ever publicly released.

The second was to censure Dr. Scott Jenson for his recent statements to the Star Tribune on abortion. This motion was defeated. It does highlight an issue within the Republican party. That is : what is the official stance on many issues? Take abortion for example. Are we for banning abortion at conception? At six weeks? At first sign of a heart beat? 2nd trimester? Third? Partial birth? After? What is our official line in the sand as a party? Wendy Waahl of Pennington County addressed this when she moved to create a committee to hammer out just such questions and also to work on having simple talking points ready to disseminate when current events propel issues into the media.

Major Dave Hughes, of Kittson County, raised a point of inquiry regarding the removal from Minnesota Statute 202A paragraph 16 subsections 1,2 &3 during this last session, of rules defining who is eligible to attend and vote in precinct caucus’s. <https://www.revisor.mn.gov/statutes/cite/202A.16> Chairman Hann did not know of this but said he would look into it. There is talk amongst the party elite, to do away with the caucus system and go to a primary only. I suspect this may have something to do with that.

Amanda Hughes, also of Kittson, rose to the microphone and asked whether the MNGOP was involved with any litigation and if so what has it cost, so far. At first Chairman Hann demurred but pressured by murmurs from the gallery finally admitted that the former Chair Jennifer Carnahan was indeed suing the party and it has not been resolved. No one on the executive board, not even the treasurer, knew how much money had been spent on it. I observed a great deal of squirming from the dais.

A fellow from Cass County proposed a resolution to have Chairman Hann forfeit his salary until the \$16,000.00 owed to the Mayo Civic Center for last year's state endorsing convention was paid. Much debate ensued. In the end the motion failed by ten votes. A man of character would have stood up and said, “ You are right. I won’t take a draw until the outstanding bill is paid.” David Hann is not such a man. At one point he got up and conferred with two other board members only to sit back down, looking around nervously. \$196,000.00 in checking. He could have paid this on Monday and never missed a beat. Instead, he once again exhibits the characteristics of a weak spineless leader. If you think I am being too harsh with my words, there were some marines, that are delegates, in the room. They were much more colorful in their description.

Jon Ross

Vice chair,

Polk County Republican BPOU