

**February, 2013
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DAVIS DEMOCRATIC CLUB

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“I’m very happy to be a Democrat now,” says council member Lucas Frerichs.

By Tim Fenton



When I met with City Council member Lucas Frerichs in mid-January, he described the prior six months of council business as “packed with hard issues,” noting the Woodland-Davis surface water project and contract negotiations with the city’s seven employee unions as examples. He applauded the collegiality council members have achieved in tackling these issues. In his first months of service, Frerichs said he’d learned that “council membership is by no means a part-time job!”

All seven of the employee contracts expired in June, so contract negotiations took on major importance. Frerichs said five of the seven unions representing 70 percent of city workers have agreed to contracts with agreements with the firefighters and the Davis City Employees Association yet to be finalized. The city employed a labor negotiation firm this year that Frerichs feels improved the process. He said that city labor costs have been reduced from 20 percent of budget to 16 percent, a significant reduction, and are expected to increase in the future at a slower rate.

Frerichs cited pension reforms that have been achieved at the state level have helped correct some “drastic increases” in the city’s unfunded liabilities, but he noted that there is still work to be done perhaps by some stepped approach to modifying contract benefits or setting aside money in a reserve fund for future liabilities.

Our conversation then flowed to the Woodland-Davis surface water project which goes to a referendum mail-ballot vote starting February 5 and completing on the official March 5 election day. Frerichs says the council “feels pretty confident that voters understand that we have to improve the city’s water supply.” He said having diverse sources – both ground and surface water – is good for Davis. The unknown is how many of what he called the “no on anything” voter cohort will turn out.

Davis’s water treatment system needs upgrading but Frerichs said the water projects improvement in water quality would ease that somewhat. The improvement will also eliminate the need for the water softeners in about a third of Davis homes thereby saving homeowners the \$25 or so a month that running a softener costs. That in turn will greatly reduce the amount of salt in the water the treatment plant must deal with now. On the bright side, Frerichs noted that the city has been putting aside approximately \$30 million for funding water treatment upgrades. He added that federal funds would kick in some 25 percent of the upgrade costs.

Summing up on water, Frerichs warned that the city has no choice but to complete the surface water and wastewater treatment projects because new state water quality standards require it and major fines would result if Davis fails to act. Frerichs indicated that the Cannery housing and business park project is moving along and working through negotiations with various city departments. Design work continues, and he said he expects the developers to bring a revised proposal to the city council by spring.

Innovation was a topic the council member clearly wanted to talk about. He said Davis, his life long home, has always been a leader in innovation citing its pioneering of bike paths, curbside recycling and its creation of Central Park in the heart of the city instead of a proposed mall. He was excited to talk about the new nonprofit, Davis Roots, that the city and UC Davis have established at the Hunter Boyer Mansion downtown as a business incubator. Frerichs said that UC Davis researchers spin off many new businesses, and the challenge is to keep them in Davis. Davis Roots is one example of how the City Council is committed to building the UC Davis relationship.

Switching from his council role to his role as a Davis Democratic Club and Yolo County Democratic Central Committee member, Lucas Frerichs commented on the gratifying outcome of the 2012 election and that he is quite happy to be a Democrat these days. Lucas, the Davis Democrats are happy and proud in turn to call you one of our own.

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Calendar of Events & Campaign Activities

Tues., Feb. 5, 7:00-9:00 pm, regular DDC Board business meeting. Club members and the public are welcome: Pres. Sen and Secretary Yamagata draft the agenda. Davis Library on 14th Street.

Tues. Feb. 12, 6:00-9:00 pm. Love Your Electeds Annual Valentine Party and featuring Pres. Obama's State of the Union address. Potluck dinner (bring your favorite dish), beverage, meet and greet local leaders at the International House in Davis.

DDC Board Organizes the Club's 2013 Program

The first 2013 DDC Board Meeting was attended by Pres. Arun Sen, Vice Pres. Mike Syvanen, Recording Sec'y Richard Yamagata, Publicity Chair Tim Fenton, Membership Chair Carl Schmid and Board Members Bob Bockwinkel, Brandon Craig, Rick Gonzales and Kelsey McQuaid. Ameer Alsawaf, a certified CPA, was elected to the Board and volunteered to serve as DDC Treasurer, thereby, providing critical skills to the Club's administration. (Thank you, Ameer.)

Ameer will continue to work closely with our professional consulting service to file periodic required financial reports to federal and state agencies giving good assurance that our records will be in full compliance with their requirements. In addition, Ameer plans to modernize our bookkeeping methods and our procedures for alerting you, the membership, when your Club dues have expired.

Board meetings are open to all interested Democrats; Lucas Frerichs, Elly Fairclough and Craig Cheslog joined our discussions. (You are invited to attend the next Board Meeting scheduled for 7:00 pm, Feb. 5.) During the coming year, the Club will hold four events (the Valentine Party, Champagne Brunch, Fall BBQ and Holiday Party), will participate in two activities organized by the County Party (the County Fair booth and Bean Feed) and will host an information booth at the July 4th celebration in Community Park. During the recent campaign, our outreach program at Davis Farmers Market was highly successful. Therefore, upon occasion, we will host an information table at the Davis Farmers Market to advertise upcoming events and to highlight Democratic views and values on topical issues, such as gun control. Please join in helping with one or more of these activities and consider joining the Board .



Front row (l-r): Lucas Ferrichs, Craig Cheslog, Rick Gonzales, Ameer Alsawaf, Mike Syvanen, Back row: Elly Fairclough, Arun Sen, Brandon Craig, Richard Yamagata, Carl Schmid, Bob Bockwinkel, Tim Fenton, Kelsey McQuaid

Unanimous Resolution of the Yolo County Democratic Central Committee

PASSPORT (\$50)

Continued p. 2

SPONSOR (\$100)

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(continued on right)

WHEREAS, from Stockton to San Francisco to Los Angeles to Aurora to Tucson to Oak Creek to Sandy Hook -- from our schools to our places of worship to our inner city streets -- too many people have died from gun violence and we cannot honestly say that we have done all we could to protect our people; while our hearts are broken but our spirits are not, we are ready to act on gun violence prevention; and

WHEREAS, the vast majority of the American people, including a majority of gun owners, support both the Second Amendment and common sense gun violence prevention measures including background checks and restrictions on dangerous and unusual weapons; and

WHEREAS, Vice President Joe Biden has been tasked by President Barack Obama to integrate ideas from law enforcement, educators, mental health professionals, gun owners and victims' families in order to change our policies; and just as Biden's 1994 Crime Bill put more cops on the beat and took illegal guns off the street, our 2013 mission requires an all of the above strategy for gun violence prevention; and

WHEREAS, California Congressman Mike Thompson was recently named to chair a Congressional task force on reducing and preventing gun violence; and

WHEREAS, parents, educators and law enforcement must work together to keep our children safe and, while we don't have the resources to afford a school police substation and community health center in every school, prioritizing community policing and mental health treatment for our students on campus and in community centers will increase safety and mitigate danger; and

WHEREAS, President Obama has called on Congress to take up and pass common-sense legislation that has the support of the majority of the American people, including banning the sale of military-style assault weapons and high-capacity ammunition clips, and making sure criminals can't take advantage of legal loopholes to get their hands on a gun; Senator Dianne Feinstein's Assault Weapons Ban would ban the sale, transfer and importation of assault weapons, and Congresswomen Carolyn McCarthy and Diana DeGette's high-capacity magazine ban are examples of legislation that are central to this debate; and

WHEREAS, we must evaluate Internet sales of guns and ammunition, require background checks on every gun purchaser including at gun shows, keep guns out of the hands of children, the mentally ill, those convicted of crimes and those on the terrorist watch list; and

WHEREAS, we must reauthorize the Violence Against Women Act and its tough penalties for using guns against intimate partners and its resources for inputting restraining orders into the national crime database so batterers can't buy guns; and

WHEREAS, we must work to de-stigmatize mental health and strike a better balance between reporting threats and waiting until a troubled person commits a crime for a "paper trail" to begin before we suffer domestic violence murders, mass shootings and suicides. We must fund the mental health services within the Affordable Care Act, the various department budgets and community health centers vital to assisting Americans in need of treatment; and

WHEREAS, President Barack Obama has called us all to service, saying "Ultimately if this effort is to succeed it's going to require the help of the American people -- it's going to require all of you. If we're going to change things, it's going to take a wave of Americans -- mothers and fathers, daughters and sons, pastors, law enforcement, mental health professionals -- and, yes, gun owners -- standing up and saying 'enough' on behalf of our kids;"

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Yolo County Democratic Party extends sincere condolences to all the families and friends of those whose lives were needlessly cut short by gun violence; extends prayers, well wishes, thoughts and positive energy, to all those who are still recovering physically and emotionally; commend the courageous efforts of the First Responders, whose quick and noble actions keep us safer; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Yolo County Democratic Party supports common sense measures to reduce gun violence, such as the Feinstein assault weapons ban and proposals from the Thompson and Biden task forces.

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**See Pres.
Obama,
Valentine Party
Tues., Feb. 12**

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