

## **Wilson County Democratic Party County Convention Minutes March 24, 2018**

The Wilson County Democratic Party held its annual county convention on Saturday, March 24, 2018, at the Wilson County Courthouse. Chair Linda Cooper-Suggs welcomed everyone, and called the meeting to order at 10:08 a.m. Dewey Sheffield served as Parliamentarian for the meeting.

Sheriff Calvin Woodard gave an Inspirational Thought and moment of silence, followed by Pledge of Allegiance led by Henry Lindsey. Chair Cooper-Suggs announced a change in the agenda, stating that the matter of filling the vacancy for Second Vice Chair would be referred to the next meeting of the Wilson County Executive Committee, in accordance with the Democratic Party Plan of Organization. She then introduced former Governor Jim Hunt, who introduced the guest speaker, North Carolina Supreme Court Candidate, Anita Earls.

Ms. Earls thanked Wilson Democrats and said, "Wilson County is a powerhouse." She spoke about challenges facing North Carolina, and how to overcome those challenges. She also spoke about using the court system to break down barriers, and how important it is to know who the judges are who are running: these candidates will not be on the ballot for the May Primary, but will be listed on the November general election ballot.

Candidate Anita Earls spoke emphasizing the importance of having a judicial system which follows the rules of law for all citizens. She asked for everyone's support during this fight for justice.

The next topic of discussion was the resignation of District 4 Senator Angela Bryant. Chair Cooper-Suggs briefly discussed the replacement process and introduced the newly Appointed District 4 Senator, Milton "Toby" Fitch, Jr., who will complete the remainder of the term.

Senator Fitch spoke about how important it is to vote for Anita Earls. He said "She makes the difference, and I urge you to support her." Senator Fitch also thanked the citizens of Wilson, and briefly spoke about how everyone is entitled to rights under the constitution, children and education, and how everyone has the right to be safe.

Next, George Leach spoke on behalf of District 24 Representative Jean Farmer-Butterfield. He spoke in reference to her being unable to attend the convention and identified issues she continues to fight for in the legislature. He encouraged everyone to support her in this Election.

Afterwards, all three Democratic Sheriff candidates, Chris Boykin, Dinise Williams, and incumbent Calvin Woodard, briefly spoke about their platforms and encouraged the delegation to vote for them.

Chair Cooper-Suggs read letters from Congressional District 1 Congressman G.K Butterfield in which he stated "our ultimate goal is to organize precincts, block by block." A letter was also shared from Clerk of Court Candidate Carolyn Quinn Farris. Then, Dr. Christine Finch was acknowledged and spoke about her running for re-election for the Wilson County School Board. Asa Gregory spoke on behalf of Wendy May who is running for Congressional District 2.

Next, Chair Cooper-Suggs thanked Andrew Whitley, and former Democratic Party Chair Betty McCain. McCain thanked Jim Hunt and his wife Carolyn. Chair Cooper-Suggs, then thanked Dewey Sheffield for serving as Parliamentarian, and she also thanked the officers. The Chair spoke on staying focused, highlighted that 21 of 24 precincts are organized, noted the up-coming informational breakfast session

with the State Democratic Party Chair Wayne Goodman, and also thanked Dr. Michael Bell for allowing the Wilson Democratic Party to use his facility for several of our meetings.

It was then noted that Wilson County is allotted 54 delegates for Congressional District 1 and 14 for Congressional District 2. May 5<sup>th</sup> is the district convention and the state convention will be in June. Chair Cooper-Suggs recommended using a process asking persons who desire to serve as a district and state delegate to write on the back of their delegate card either DC (District) and SD (State) and also for the district and state alternates. Motion was made by George Leach and seconded by A.P. Coleman to use the process recommended by the Chair. Motion carried.

Zette McArn and Randolph Sessoms were nominated to serve on the District 4 Senatorial Executive Committee. Moved by A.P. Coleman and seconded by Dr. Ronald Williams to accept these nominees. Motion carried.

Michele Okoh and Cassandra Darden were nominated to serve on the Prosecutorial District Executive Committee. Lori Oxendine moved to accept these nominations, and George Leach seconded. Motion carried.

Dr. Ronald Williams and Thomas Farmer were nominated to serve on the District 24 State House Executive Committee. Moved by Ann Barnes and seconded by Charles Jones. Motion carried.

**2017 Minutes:** Moved by A. P. Coleman and seconded by Dewey Sheffield that the minutes be approved. Motion carried.

**Treasurer Report:** Given by Tom Sallenger, Treasurer. Currently, there is a total of \$9,062.43 and all bills are up to date.

**Resolutions:**

1. George Leach made a resolution stating that the Democratic Party should work vigilantly to organize all 24 precincts. Michele Okoh moved and Dewey Sheffield seconded to accept the resolution. Motion carried.
2. Resolution read by Zette McArn stating the importance of targeting predominately African American precincts to organize and work to improve the voter turnout. Discussion ensued. Moved by Dr. Michael Bell and seconded by Brenda Avery that this resolution be referred to a committee. Motion carried.

The Chair reminded the group that all resolutions had to be submitted in writing to the secretary and asked for copies from George Leach and Zette McArn.

Congressional District 2 Candidate Linda Coleman spoke briefly on her platform which included better education, healthcare, jobs and wages.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

**Respectfully Submitted,  
Marvette Coley, Secretary**

