

**The S.C. REPUBLICAN PARTY STATE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
FIRST QUARTER MEETING
JANUARY 24, 2015
COLUMBIA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
COLUMBIA, SC**

Chairman Matt Moore called the First Quarter Executive Committee meeting to order on Saturday, January 24, 2015 at 10:03 A.M.

Cindy Costa, National Committeewoman from Charleston County, gave the invocation and Nse Ekpo, State 2nd Vice Chairman, led the Pledge of Allegiance. Cindy Risher, 1st Vice Chairman of Clarendon County, led the Republican Creed.

Recognition of Dignitaries and Guests

Chairman Moore recognized dignitaries and special guests: his wife Meg and State Representative Todd Atwater of Lexington County.

On a point of personal privilege, Chairman Moore recognized Representative Atwater who spoke on H. 3006. The bill says that any state regulation passed would automatically expire or “sunset” after five years. This would help ensure we only keep regulations on the books that are necessary and truly working for the people of South Carolina.

Roll Call

Reading Secretary Nikki Trawick from Richland County reported that the body had achieved a quorum, with 37 voting members present.

Approval of Agenda and Minutes

On a motion by Brenda Bedenbaugh, Executive Committeeman from Saluda County, and seconded by Mrs. Costa, the meeting agenda was approved without objection. On a motion by Earl Capps, Executive Committeeman from Lancaster County, and seconded by Sandy McGarry, Chairman of Lancaster County, the minutes from the December 15, 2014 meeting were approved without objection.

Chairman’s Report

Chairman Moore reported that the State Party had a very successful 2014 election cycle. He stated it was, in terms of election victories, the State Party’s most successful election cycle in history. The Chairman reported that he, along with Cindy Costa, the National Committeewoman from Charleston County, and Glenn McCall, the National Committeeman from York County, attended the Republican National Committee meeting in San Diego the previous week. Chairman Moore announced that the South Carolina Republican Party would host a Presidential Primary Debate in February 2016 one week before the state’s Presidential Primary.

Chairman Moore shared some important, tentative 2016 dates: the Iowa Caucuses will be held on February 2nd, the New Hampshire Primary will be held on February 9th, the South Carolina Primary will be held on February 20th, and the Nevada Caucuses will be February 23rd. South Carolina will have eleven “open” days before the primary to allow candidates to campaign.

Chairman Moore spoke on his involvement in politics growing up and then shared the party's specific successes in the 2014 election cycle: Ballots cast for Governor Haley and the Republican ticket were up, 25,000 absentee ballots were processed, tens of thousands doors were knocked on, three million voter contacts were made online, and the party helped to pass Amendment Two, which allows the Adjutant General to be appointed. Chairman Moore stated that the South Carolina Republican Party has one of the best and most advanced campaign infrastructures in the nation. In closing, Chairman Moore announced his intentions to seek re-election as Chairman.

National Committeewoman's Report

Chairman Moore then recognized Cindy Costa, Republican National Committeewoman from Charleston County. Mrs. Costa thanked Chairman Moore for his leadership. Mrs. Costa then shared how South Carolina's National Committee members have fought to keep South Carolina's Presidential Primary at the front of the pack over the years - and how South Carolina's Presidential Primary date is now codified in the RNC Rules. Mrs. Costa then encouraged people to get involved and talk with neighbors about getting involved - all while keeping a positive message. Mrs. Costa then gave a summary of the speakers they heard at the recent RNC meeting in San Diego: Dr. Ben Carson, Wisconsin Governor Scott Walker, Texas Governor Rick Perry, Former Massachusetts Governor Mitt Romney, Oklahoma Governor Mary Fallin and San Diego Mayor Kevin Faulconer. Mrs. Costa then reflected on how well many cities are doing with Republican Mayors and how well many states are doing with Republican Governors who have implemented Republican policies. She stated that is the message we should be sharing with other people. She said President Obama's taxing and spending continue to fail and his policies need to be defeated in the next election. She stated Republicans will need to talk about tax cuts and across the board spending cuts. She also said Republicans need to get behind the most conservative candidate who can win the general election. Mrs. Costa then stated that National Committeeman Glenn was not present due to a family illness. Mr. McCall sent a message asking everyone to keep praying for each other, our nation and leaders. Chairman Moore added that the Republican National Convention will be held July 18 - 21, 2016 in Cleveland, Ohio.

Resolutions Committee Report

Chairman Moore then recognized Terry Hardesty, Executive Committeeman from Berkeley County and Chairman of the Resolutions Committee, for his committee's report. Mr. Hardesty stated that the Resolutions Committee had met on January 22nd. Mr. Hardesty took a point of personal privilege to apologize that he had inadvertently left Moye Graham's name off of the committee list and therefore Mr. Graham, 6th District Chairman and Chairman of Clarendon County, was not on the conference call. Mr. Hardesty stated that the committee passed six resolutions. Mr. Hardesty then asked that the resolution "Honoring Governor James B. Edwards" and the resolution "Remembering Fallen Law Enforcement Officers and Honoring Those Who Serve in the Line of Duty" be passed unanimously without debate. Without objection, both resolutions passed unanimously.

Mr. Hardesty then presented the resolution "Regarding the Local Government Fund." Without objection, the resolution passed unanimously.

Mr. Hardesty then presented the resolution "Supporting Governor Haley's Tax Reform Plan." The floor was opened for discussion: Mr. Higgins moved to amend the resolution to insert under RESOLVED "complete" before tax reform plan and "as presented" after "tax reform plan" so it would read "the South Carolina Republican State Executive Committee calls on the General Assembly to work in a spirit of cooperation with Governor Nikki Haley and pass the Governor's complete tax reform plan as presented,

without changes.” The amendment passed. There was one no vote by John Steinberger, Chairman of Charleston County. Phillip Bowers, Chairman of Pickens County, expressed concerned with how Governor’s Haley’s Tax Reform Plan would affect people living on fixed income. Chairman Moore stated that some research showed a \$2,500 to \$100,000 tax cut depending on income.

Jim Lee, Executive Committeeman from Greenville County, expressed concern about the resolution and moved to table the resolution. Mr. Steinberger seconded the motion. The motion to table the resolution failed. Mr. Steinberger then discussed the impact of Bush tax cuts in 2001 and 2003 and recommended that the committee look at the Fair Tax bill. Mr. Hardesty then stated that the tax reform plan was nearly a thirty percent income tax decrease. Steven Blanton, Chairman of Cherokee County, wanted to know if any of the money would go to towards the local government fund. Jim Ulmer, Chairman of Orangeburg County, shared his experience with the lack of current road repairs and said he had heard that there was \$800 million set aside for road repair projects and encouraged everyone to call Senator Hugh Leatherman’s office. Vic Terrana, Executive Committeeman from Newberry County, shared that raising the gas tax is one of the few ways to get out-of-state visitors to help with revenue. Bob Carrison, Executive Committeeman from Fairfield County, felt that raising the gas tax is not going to fix the roads because it is not enough money. Dan Harvell, Chairman of Anderson County, shared his concern that there is a large number of fixed income retirees who don’t pay income tax, but who would be burdened in paying the raised gas tax if they drove. The resolution supporting Governor Haley’s “Tax Reform Plan” passed on a voice vote with Mr. Steinberger noting his strong opposition.

Mr. Hardesty then presented a resolution “Regarding Article V Convention of States.” The floor was opened for discussion: Mr. Carrison had concerns that the convention would not just be limited to discussions of amendments. Mr. Steinberger stated the U.S. Constitution says that two-thirds of the states can already propose amendments to the Constitution. David Duncan, Executive Committeeman from York County, stated that Congress and the President don’t even abide by the Constitution we already have. Roy Lindsey, Executive Committeeman from Orangeburg County, expressed concerned that “if we open the can of worms, can we put the worms back in”? Mr. Lee stated that it was no different from Congress and what they could propose. He said anything that comes out of the Article V convention must then be ratified by three-fourths of the states, and that he is in favor of the resolution. The resolution passed on a voice vote.

Mr. Hardesty then presented the resolution “Supporting Closed Primaries.” The floor was opened for discussion: Sandra Stroman, Executive Committeeman from Chester County, was concerned that smaller counties have many elected officials who are Democrats. However, Chester County just went red in this past election. She said smaller counties would not benefit from closed primaries. Mrs. Stroman said it limits the numbers who would vote Republican and there could be ten or twelve legislators from the small counties who might lose if we had closed primaries. Shery Smith, Chairman of Sumter County, voiced concerns about smaller and rural counties that are predominantly Democrat like Sumter County. She said sometimes there is no Republican primary because most of the local officials running are Democrats due to demographics of the area and therefore many people want to have an influence in the election of the local Democrat candidates. Mrs. Smith said she would be in favor of a closed primary for statewide and national elections. Eric Fry, Chairman of Marion County, agreed with Mrs. Stroman and Mrs. Smith because if Mr. Fry wanted to have a say in local government elections, he would have to switch to Democrat to vote and then switch back to Republican after the primary. Mr. Lindsey stated that Orangeburg County is probably the most Democratic County in the state and he is in support of closed primaries to keep the three, four or five percent of the Democrats who vote in the Republican primary out because that could make a difference. Duane Swygert, Chairman of Jasper County, stated it would increase the opportunity to have Republican primaries. Mr. Lee said closed primaries are a plank of the Republican platform and larger counties lose their voice because non-Republicans are potentially voting

in the Republican primary. He said with the State Party's "Red to the Roots" campaign, it would be an opportunity for the Party to grow because we would be focused on recruiting more Republicans and encouraging local candidates to support their values and become Republicans. Mr. Ulmer shared that his uncle ran as a Democrat because that was his only choice for many years. Mr. Ulmer then stated that closed primaries might get rid of elected officials who vote against the Republican platform. Mr. Ulmer said closed primaries are an opportunity to build the party.

Mrs. Stroman then asked how had the party expanded the number Congressional offices and statewide constitutional offices held without closed primaries? Mrs. Stroman then asked if the party is willing to lose Republican elected officials who are from traditionally Democrat areas. Mr. Graham stated that he has always been in favor of closed primaries and registration by party. Mr. Graham then shared his experience that when he became Chairman of Clarendon County there was only one Republican, Representative Murrell Smith, who represented a portion of the county until redistricting. He said the percentage of Republicans voting in the primary was formerly in the teens and when Jim DeMint ran for Senate in 2010, he won Clarendon County. Mr. Graham said now the percentage of Republicans is forty-four to forty-nine percent and that was accomplished with hard work. He said if we don't have registration by party, then 100 years from now your children will be complaining about the same thing. He said we should implement registration by party as soon as possible. Eaddy Roe Willard, Chairman of Richland County, then shared that ten years ago Richland County was having this same discussion and we need to take a stand on it now. Larry Jordan, Chairman of Calhoun County, then stated we should look at closed primaries at the national level to keep Democrats out. Mr. Capps then stated that North Carolina holds a Republican legislation super majority with registration by party. Mr. Capps then stated how many times have you seen a good ole' boy Democrat appeal to Republicans to save their tail in elections? He said you're back to where you started ten years ago, as Mr. Graham stated. Mrs. Costa said that when the party was small, it helped South Carolina Republicans to have open primaries to attract the conservative Democrats who have almost disappeared. She said now open primaries don't help as much. The resolution passed on a voice vote.

Old Business

State Director Hope Walker then gave an update on 2015 precinct re-organization. Miss Walker stated there were 2,199 precinct packets available at the back of the room to take back home when members leave. She said each county chairman received a packet when they arrived today. Miss Walker said all of the information given today would also be sent electronically to each County Chairman and Executive Committeeman. Miss Walker asked that official dates of precinct re-organization, makeup dates and county convention be submitted no later than Monday, February 2nd so the dates can be shared with elected officials and to ensure dates are within party rules and state law. She said some counties have already submitted their dates.

Miss Walker then spoke about delegates to county convention and state convention. She said every county's packet reflected the number of delegates allowed to county convention and to state convention. The number of delegates for county convention is based on state law of one delegate per twenty-five votes in each precinct based on the 2014 primary. The 870 delegates allowed to state convention did not change from 2013. The 870 delegates number is derived from one delegate per six thousand residents in the county based on the last census, as per state law.

Miss Walker then went over a Power Point presentation on precinct re-organization that was also included in the packets. She said the purpose of precinct re-organization is to build the party from the precinct level to the statewide level. She said each county's Master P1 list is not distributed unless the county chairman grants permission. Miss Walker then went through the contents of the Precinct Re-organization packet.

Miss Walker reminded members that advertising for precinct re-organization does not fall under state laws, but advertising for county convention does fall under state law. Mr. Steinberger then asked if newspapers will publish a free convention notice, then does the county have to buy an ad? Miss Walker said no, as long as the newspaper is generally circulated within the county. Mr. Ulmer asked if there was any reimbursement from the Election Commission for placing county convention ads and Miss Walker said no. Chairman Moore stated that if a county needed help in paying for the required ad that the State Party would work with them. Duane Naquin, Executive Committeeman from Lexington County, asked if the party had considered making automated calls. Miss Walker said that was a great idea and if the county had the money for doing the automated calls then they should. Miss Walker recognized Bill Conley with Spartanburg County for the hard work he did in getting the county's precincts organized. Miss Walker encouraged members to be familiar with State Party rules, especially Rules Four and Five. Miss Walker reminded members that Silver Elephant Dinner is on Friday, June 1st and the State Convention is on Saturday June 2nd. Mrs. McGarry asked about speakers for County Convention. Miss Walker stated that is why she must receive county convention dates as soon as possible so she can help county chairmen with speakers. Miss Walker reminded members that April 18th is the last date allowed for county conventions. Mr. Ulmer asked what the registration fee would be for State Convention. Chairman Moore said he expects the cost to be no more than \$35. Bill Rentiers, Chairman of Lexington County, asked Chairman Moore if State Convention Resolutions would be available online before State Convention. Chairman Moore said he expected resolutions to be available online a week before the convention and in order for a resolution to be presented at the State Convention, it must be approved by the State Executive Committee, the State Resolutions Committee, or by a County Convention.

Budget

Chairman Moore stated the staff had put together a conservative 2015 SCGOP budget. He presented the budget to members. Chairman Moore then gave a brief overview of last year's successful fundraising events: the Silver Elephant Dinner, membership mailings and the annual legislative reception. A 2015 topline budget was presented to members. He said the presidential primary filing period will open around May 1st and the State Party sets the fee. Last election cycle, the presidential filing fee was set at \$25,000 and if filed after May 4, 2011 it was \$35,000. Chairman Moore said the State Party owes the State Election Commission a minimum of \$20,000 for each filed candidate and the filing fee for this 2016 primary election has not yet been set.

On a motion by Phil Soper, Executive Committeeman from Oconee County, and seconded by David Duncan, Executive Committeeman from York County, the 2015 SCGOP budget passed as presented without objection.

New Business

Chairman Moore then briefly talked about the presidential primary and said many cities would be considered for the February 2016 presidential debate. Mr. Naquin asked how to get a resolution presented at the State Convention. Chairman Moore stated that first the resolution must be approved by the State Executive Committee or must be passed by the county convention and submitted no later than April 10th for consideration by the State Resolutions Committee.

Chairman Moore reminded County Chairmen to be mindful of setting dates for their County Convention if they expect big-name speakers to attend. He said counties in close proximity should coordinate to have their conventions on the same date to maximize getting the best speakers.

Announcements

Brandon Newton, 5th District Chairman, asked all Chairmen in the 5th District meet upon adjournment.

Mr. Ulmer asked that Calhoun, Clarendon and Williamsburg Counties hold a caucus upon adjournment.

Mr. Naquin asked if there was any consideration to form a committee within the Executive Committee to help with the planning of the presidential debate. Chairman Moore replied yes, it has been considered as several people have asked to be on the committee. If anyone is interested in being on the debate planning committee then let Chairman Moore know.

Mr. Graham announced that Cindy Risher, 1st Vice Chairman of Clarendon County, was elected to the county's school board and was sworn in by State Treasurer Curtis Loftis a couple of weeks ago. She had run for school board before and this was an area that she had no reason to win in, but it goes to show how hard work pays off.

Mrs. Stroman announced that she was elected to Chester County school board.

Chairman Moore also congratulated Mr. Bowers for being elected to Pickens County school board.

Mr. Naquin asked about the "Red to the Roots" campaign and wanted to know if there was any follow-up. Chairman Moore then called on Mr. Capps to share the success of Lancaster County in electing more local Republicans. Mr. Capps stated that the county has not had a Republican solicitor in eighteen years. But in November 2014, they elected a Republican solicitor. It was the highest office in South Carolina to switch party control in 2014.

Mr. Capps stated that he, Mrs. McGarry and Mr. Newton worked very hard to make sure Chester County also went red.

Suzette Jordan, 4th District Chairman, said the Greenville County GOP is hosting a breakfast Wednesday, February 18th at 7:30 a.m. with Congressman Gowdy, Congressman Duncan and Congressman Mulvaney.

Bill Conley announced that he is running for Chairman of Spartanburg County.

On a motion by Mr. Capps and seconded by Mr. Graham the meeting was adjourned at 12: 22 P.M. without objection.

Respectfully submitted,

Sandra Bryan, Recording Secretary
South Carolina Republican Party

Approved by the South Carolina Republican Party State Executive Committee – June 30, 2015