



6 February 2025

Call to Order: 6:03pm, **Bill Marquardt**, President

Invocation: **Dcn Phil Czajkowski**

Pledge of Allegiance: **George Oedsma**

Reports: (approved & accepted)

Treasurer Report for November: **Astrid Levins** , submitted Report for Audit.(NA)

Approval of Minutes: **Jean Kimball** second **Christa Waite** Secretary
(Please Sign In) NA

Student Essay Contest **Jean Kimball**: ... Essays can now be uploaded directly to the essay website <https://essay.help4software.com/submitessay.php>

Summary: Our Feb 6, 2025 meeting included a "Meet & Greet" of Candidates Minutes were recorded and reproduced. They have been incorporated into these minutes below. They will be posted on our website.

The minutes of the previous meetings were approved as written posted on our website https://conservativesrc.com/documents_t.php

The constitutional essay contest is due on February 28, 2025. The team is hoping for a good turnout for the constitutional essay contest, as students typically submit their essays at the last minute. There is a concern regarding the low turnout of students submitting essays for the constitutional essay contest, as they typically wait until the last minute to submit.

Diane Warner Update

The mood in Tallahassee is so much better this year in regards to fixing our elections. Senator Garcia has even picked up 3 of our bills this week! In regards to the special session: I am on board with the Gov as far as not letting the Ag commissioner run the deportation efforts. That sure just seems like the fox in the hen house. It's extremely divided Tallahassee. But Please understand DeSantis is not helping the voting aspect of the citizenship issue at all with the bill he is pushing. If anyone wants to reach out or comment on social media, please encourage our DeGov to stop using the term "affirming citizenship". That is exactly what we have now that isn't working. Currently when registering to vote, anyone can check the box that asks if you're a citizen and our feds don't verify it. And our FL Sec of State Cord Byrd testified that the feds don't have a reliable data base for us to verify from. So apparently it sure looks like no one is verifying citizenship accurately in Florida. Just this week, DeSantis commented that we need to be proactive. He said once the illegals vote, we can't un ring that bell. So instead, we need DeSantis to write his bill to actually "Verify Citizenship" not just affirm it.

The good news is, Governor DeSantis may be picking up some of the language from our Citizenship bill thru Senator Gruters who is sponsoring our Citizenship bill. Please pray for that. And if you want to help, on social media or contacts that can reach DeSantis, please recommend DeSantis pick up the language from Gruters and the Defend Florida bill. Another issue we are addressing: We are currently asking the FSE (the 67 FL Supervisor's of elections) to start following Florida sunshine statute 119.01(3) that states if you take tax dollars (which our county sends to FSE...I have the proof of dues and travel for Tappie and team), then you must abide by the FL sunshine law. FSE refuses to. That is against the law! FSE just put David Ramba in charge of the FSE a few months ago. To tell you how problematic and a conflict of interest this is, FSE paid Ramba last year to lobby against our first amendment rights in the SOE harassment bill. That bill got huge blow back from concerned citizens and was dropped. That bill would have potentially gotten whistleblowers like myself, a felony if we "harassed" an election worker. With little to no definition of harassment. FSE is a non governmental organization. So now we have a paid lobbyist controlling our SOEs, our elections and get this: Ramba is also the boss to our FL RPOF Chair Evan Powers

Ramba Consulting LLC employs Evan Powers as a lobbyist. And if that isn't concerning enough - look who Ramba Consulting firm has lobbied for, (displayed on their website): FP&L, AT&T, FADA (Florida Automobile Dealers Ass) concrete product companies (construction) and medical associations. Lots of big business. How could our Florida elections office allow a paid lobbyist and a non governmental organization to control so much of our elections? One who still (with his other board members) seems to be pushing for another harassment bill to kill our first amendment rights.

Candidates running for State Rep 3 present this evening were Wade Merriitt, Joshua Sik, and Hayden Hudson.

✦ Highlights

- The constitutional essay contest is due by February 28th, with previous years seeing significant prize distributions.
- Wade Merritt, a candidate for the Okaloosa County Commissioner's seat, emphasized the importance of preserving agriculture and infrastructure in the district.
- He highlighted the diminishing agricultural land and the need for incentives to support local farmers.
- Merritt discussed the impact of tourism on local infrastructure and proposed legislation to allocate a portion of bed tax revenue for infrastructure improvements.
- He expressed concerns about affordable housing, stating that current government definitions do not reflect local realities.
- The meeting discussed the current state of insurance in Florida, highlighting that Citizens Insurance is becoming a primary choice rather than a last resort.
- There was a strong emphasis on the importance of Second Amendment rights and the need for due process in weapon confiscation cases.

Key Updates

- The candidates for House District 3 were introduced, emphasizing the importance of selecting viable candidates who support Governor Ron DeSantis.
- Merritt shared his personal background, including being a small business owner and a volunteer firefighter, which informs his commitment to the community.
- He acknowledged the challenges faced by young adults in affording housing and the need for reasonable rental prices.
- Joshua Sik shared personal experiences from military service and legal career, emphasizing a commitment to serve and protect citizens' rights.

- Speaker 4 raised concerns about recent legislative bills affecting immigration and insurance, noting potential issues with illegal alien releases and insurance availability.

Interactive Q&A

- A question was raised about approaching illegal immigration from a civil matter, to which candidate Hayden Hudson expressed full support for the idea and willingness to collaborate on related bills.
- An audience member questioned Merritt about his views on a fellow candidate, Nathan Boyles, expressing concerns about Boyles' integrity and political agenda.
- Merritt responded that while he previously supported Boyles, he believes Boyles is not the right fit for the district at this time.
- Another audience member inquired about Merritt's stance on red flag laws, to which he affirmed the need for mental health considerations while also supporting the Second Amendment.
- Employees questioned the legality and implications of red flag laws, with Joshua Sik advocating for due process before weapon confiscation.
- There was a discussion on the need for ICE representatives in local law enforcement to address undocumented individuals involved in crimes.

Recognition And Gratitude

- Acknowledgment was given to the community for their support in electing political outsiders to office, highlighting the achievement of electing a candidate with no prior political experience.
- Merritt expressed gratitude for the community's support and emphasized his commitment to serving the people of Santa Rosa and Okaloosa Counties.
- Joshua Sik acknowledged the contributions of non-commissioned officers during military service, highlighting the importance of teamwork and communication.

Future Projections

- Candidates discussed their commitment to addressing local issues such as immigration control, responsible development, and combating inflation through reduced regulations for small businesses.
- Merritt aims to advocate for agriculture, infrastructure, and affordable housing if elected, focusing on community needs and sustainable growth.
- The meeting indicated a push for legislative changes to strengthen Second Amendment rights and improve immigration enforcement.
- There was a call for community engagement to identify key issues that need addressing in future policies.

Decisions And Announcements

- The meeting included a call for loyalty to Governor Ron DeSantis from candidates, stressing the need for strong support against internal political conflicts in Tallahassee.
- Merritt announced his candidacy for the State District 3 seat and encouraged community support for his campaign.
- A commitment was made by candidates to support the leading individual in the upcoming election to avoid splitting the ticket.
- Hayden Hudson expressed intentions to advocate for the repeal of red flag laws and support for open carry legislation.

Wade Merritt announced his candidacy and requested support for the election scheduled for April 1, 2025. Wade Merritt expressed the intention to pursue legislation in Tallahassee to allocate a percentage of the bed tax collected from tourists towards infrastructure improvements. Wade Merritt emphasized the need to address affordable housing issues in the community, indicating a commitment to finding solutions. Wade Barrett stated his support for the red flag law, acknowledging the need for mental health considerations while also recognizing concerns regarding the Second Amendment. The issue of uncontrolled development in Santa Rosa County was highlighted, indicating that while growth is inevitable, it must be managed responsibly. There is a risk of losing agricultural land to developers, which could threaten the viability of farming in the region. A young adult making \$13 an hour would need to earn approximately \$3,400 a month to afford a reasonable house, while current rents are around \$1,800 a month. The speaker's mortgage is approximately \$1,800 a month, which is less than what young adults are currently facing in the housing market.

Joshua Sik also announced his candidacy and requested support for the election scheduled for April 1, 2025. Joshua Sik pledged to support Governor DeSantis in the immigration fight and criticized the current immigration bill for its inefficacy. Joshua Sik expressed his strong support for the Second Amendment and the importance of protecting citizens' rights to bear arms. The bill currently being discussed is Senate Bill SB2-B and House Bill 1-B, which includes provisions affecting illegal immigration and law enforcement. There are plans to add 149 new full-time law enforcement officers to the Agriculture Commissioner's office. The number of ICE holds has tripled since January 20th.

Hayden Hudson committed to being the most pro-Second Amendment legislator in Florida and to fight for the repeal of red flag laws, as well as advocating for open carry and concealed carry on college campuses. The discussion around red flag laws raises concerns about the infringement of Second Amendment rights, which could lead to public backlash and further polarization on gun control issues. Aggressive actions against insurance companies could lead to negative consequences similar to those seen in California, where companies left the state due to onerous laws. The potential for political backlash if the red flag laws are not repealed, as they are viewed as a violation of the Second Amendment. There is a risk of losing support from constituents if the current immigration policies are not effectively enforced, potentially leading to public outcry. The discussion highlighted a risk of contradicting federal immigration laws, which could lead to legal challenges and further complications in local law enforcement.

There is a risk of losing community integrity and trust if candidates prioritize personal political agendas over the needs of the constituents. The potential for division within the community regarding candidates and their integrity could impact voter turnout and trust in the electoral process.

The candidates present agreed to support the leading candidate in the upcoming election to avoid splitting the ticket in a race versus the “money candidate.”

Motion to Adjourn: **Christa Waite** second **George Oedsma**

Bill Marquardt keep up-to-date with events for this and other groups at the ConservativeSRC.com portal.

Next Meeting

Thursday, 6 March, 2025 at 6:00pm at The Hangar American Grill.

*Bill Marquardt,
Santa Rosa County Republican Club President*

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CEW/bm