



# El Cerrito Democratic Club

## Newsletter – April 2023

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ECDC  
PO Box 192  
El Cerrito CA 94530

Newsletter Editor: William Ktsanes

# 1. El Cerrito Democratic Club General Information

The El Cerrito Democratic Club (“ECDC”) provides a forum for area residents to discuss and take action on issues and campaigns of local, national, and international importance. Our General Membership Meetings are open to all and held on the fourth Tuesday of each month except October and December, when we typically have our annual dinner and holiday party.

Our monthly General Membership Meetings are in a hybrid format accessible both in-person at Hana Gardens Senior Apartments (10860 San Pablo Ave, next to El Cerrito City Hall) and remotely via Zoom. For those of us who’ve been able to come to Hana Gardens, it’s been wonderful to be in community and gather in person.

Our next monthly General Membership Meeting will be at 6:30 pm on Tuesday, April 25th. We encourage you to come to Hana Gardens or join the Zoom call a few minutes early to mix-and-mingle with fellow ECDC members.

The El Cerrito Democratic Club and its activities are supported by volunteers and the annual dues of its members. Please see the “Membership Renewal Reminder and Instructions” section towards the end of this newsletter for directions on how to join the ECDC or renew your membership.

Officer elections for the El Cerrito Democratic Club occur annually and were last held during the General Membership Meeting in January. Special thanks to our volunteer officers:

## El Cerrito Democratic Club Officers (2023)

- |  |                                      |
|--|--------------------------------------|
| ● President – Champagne Brown                    | ● VP Membership – Neil Tsutsui       |
| ● Past President – Greg Lyman                    | ● VP Programs – <b><i>vacant</i></b> |
| ● Executive Vice President –<br>Carolyn Wysinger | ● VP Publications – William Ktsanes  |
| ● VP Media – Madeline Kronenberg                 | ● VP Records – Leslie Reckler        |
|  | ● VP Treasurer – Ed Crowley          |

The specific duties of officer positions are described in section “VII. Officers” of the Bylaws posted on the ECDC website at <https://ecdclub.org/club-documents/>.

If you’re interested in participating more actively in the ECDC, please consider volunteering with the Club. **The ECDC Executive Board has an opening for a Vice President of Programs to help arrange guest presentations for our monthly membership meetings.** Please reach out to Champagne Brown or Carolyn Wysinger if you’re interested in joining. We also need volunteers for tasks and projects that arise throughout the year. *Help is always greatly appreciated!*

- William Ktsanes, VP Publications

## 2. Information and Zoom Link for the General Membership Meeting on Tuesday, April 25<sup>th</sup> – *In-Person and on Zoom!*

Our General Membership Meetings are held in a hybrid format, accessible both in-person at Hana Gardens Senior Apartments (10860 San Pablo Ave, next to El Cerrito City Hall) and via Zoom.

Zoom Link to Join the ECDC Meeting: <http://tiny.cc/ECDCmemberMtg>

(<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87570578180?pwd=MWN0T2hVY0VXeEhubHN0aE9xZGpKUT09>)

Zoom Meeting ID: 875 7057 8180; Zoom Passcode: c5fQKR

Dial in by phone: +1 669 900 6833 or +1 408 638 0968

Meeting ID: 875 7057 8180; Phone Passcode: 468602

Please note that the Passcode is different if you dial in by phone rather than join the meeting through the Zoom link.

### Agenda (Tentative)

6:20 pm – Assemble and Mingle

6:30 pm – Call to Order

6:35 pm – Approve Minutes from the March 2023 Meeting (**Action Item**)

6:39 pm – Officer Reports: Treasurer, Membership, Programs, Publications, Media, Records

6:45 pm – Democratic Party of Contra Costa County (DPCCC) Report

6:50 pm – Program: El Cerrito Mayor Lisa Motoyama Presents “The State of the City”  
(25-Minute Presentation Followed by a 15-Minute Q&A Session)

7:30 pm – ECDC Support of DPCCC’s Resolution Requesting President Biden to Take Actions  
Required to Ratify the Equal Rights Amendment (**Action Item**)

7:35 pm – Announcements (Please Limit Announcements to One Minute Each)

7:40 pm – Good of the Order

7:45 pm – Adjourn

*\* Please send calendar events to the Executive Board in advance for discussion at the General Membership Meeting and publication in the newsletter.*

- Champagne Brown, ECDC President

### 3. Minutes from the March 28<sup>th</sup> General Membership Meeting

El Cerrito Democratic Club  
General Membership Meeting

March 28, 2023

MINUTES

Via Zoom and In-Person at Hana Gardens Senior Center,  
10860 San Pablo Ave, El Cerrito, CA 94530

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#### **Call to Order**

President Brown called the meeting to order at 6:31 p.m.

#### **Approve Minutes from the February 2023 Meeting (Action Item)**

On the motion of Kronenberg and the second of Quinto, the February 2023 minutes are approved with no abstentions or nays.

#### **Confirmation of ECDC Officers and Signing Authorities (Action Item)**

On the motion of Lyman and the second of Quinto, Champagne Brown, Edgar J. Crowley Jr. and Gregory B. Lyman are approved as the new bank signers on the club's bank account with no abstentions or nays.

#### **Officer Reports: Treasurer, Membership, Programs, Publications, Media, Records**

Treasurer (Ed Crowley) - Absent, no report

Membership (NeilTsutsui) - 129 current members. Thanks to those who have renewed. Please renew because it determines the number of delegates allocated to the club for pre-endorsement.

Programs (Champagne Brown) - The year's programs were published in the March newsletter. Next month Mayor Motoyama will report on the State of the City.

Publications (William Ktsanes) - Absent, no report. William extends an ongoing invitation for members and supporters to submit articles, pictures and event announcements for inclusion in the newsletter. Please email your submissions to [wktsanes@gmail.com](mailto:wktsanes@gmail.com).

Media (Madeline Kronenberg) - Nothing to report.

Records (Leslie Reckler) - Nothing to report.

### **Democratic Party of Contra Costa County (DPCCC) Report** (Champagne Brown)

Very talented new appointments taking leadership roles. Training: Cheryl Sudduth training for recruitment. Working to build a training infrastructure. Goal is to work with all three clubs (ECDC, West County Dems and DPCCC). All clubs can work together on training needs. Recruiting Volunteers Important to ask. Many times not asked. (Reported by Nye)

The Labor Council's "Labor-to-Labor" dinner will be held in August again at St. Mary's. President Brown suggests advertising the event in the newsletter to notify members. (Reported by Nye)

A new AdHoc committee was formed called, "Equity, Anti-Blackness and Justice Committee." The second meeting was held on Monday, March 27, 2023. The group will train the executive board first and then train general membership. Developing training materials that have substance and will stick. (Reported by Brown)

DPCCC's proposed budget for this year beefs up some committee budgets including training. Training is to concentrate on how to be a candidate and then on governing, which are two different skill sets. The Roosevelt Dinner is to be held in August. Biggest fundraiser for the year. Details to come. (Reported by Brown)

Approved the consent calendar including the following resolutions:

- Supporting the 2023 Women's History Month
- Stop the Privatization of Medicare through the ACOH/REACH program

### **ECDC Diversity Committee Report** (Y'Anad Burrell)

No Report

### **March Program: Congressman John R. Garamendi, US House of Representative**

#### Opening

The 2020 Election was the most significant election in recent memory, and this administration has passed the most important legislation perhaps since Roosevelt.

- **The American Rescue Plan** unfortunately was not made permanent, but helped the American people immensely in support - stimulus checks, unemployment insurance, health insurance.

- **The Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act** will make a world of difference in sanitation, water, transportation and more.
- **CHIPS Act** - integrated circuits and silicon chips. Biggest investment in research - medical, energy. This will play out in a huge and significant way with our local universities.
- **Inflation Reduction Act** - Energy costs, Going Green, investments in batteries, energy solar, wind and the like.
- **Gun Violence and Prevention Act** - First piece of legislation passed in decades, but does not go nearly far enough.

Garamendi states that CA-8 District is one of the most challenging and interesting districts that he could ever hope to represent. Environment, energy, transportation issues.

#### Brief Summary of Questions Asked by Members

*Weaponization Subcommittee* - Doesn't know the subject matter. There is a hearing on Thursday. Jordan faces relevance issues and has not found a relevant path forward.

*Recent Spate of Bank Failures* - Bad management. Regulatory system modified in 2018. Left banks with a lot of running room. Biden took swift and immediate actions. Will not let bank failures collapse the system. Believes legislation will be introduced in both the senate and house. Don't bet on anything coming from it. Lots of opposition - even from Democrats.

*Donald Trump's Legal Pathway* - Trump has serious criminal issues that will play out over the next 3 months. The least serious charge is Stormy Daniels. Thinks very serious charges will come out of Georgia. There are political questions about Trump's nomination. The theory is that a solid 30% of Republican voters will support him.

*Addressing Climate Change, Nationally and Locally* - Legislation is key. The CHIPS act addresses it, but also needs to ensure the dollars don't disappear and are directed properly. Asking, "Who are the implementers?" Zero emission standard, green energy sources. Deep incentives 30% tax credit + 25% for doing even more. Batteries and systems. Projects start locally and at state level.

*Debt Ceiling Showdown* - Showdown potentially of national and international consequences. Garamendi believes the Republicans are in a precarious situation. McCarthy has no unanimity amongst his Republicans of what to do about the debt limit/debt ceiling. McCarthy's leadership is in the hands of the most extreme members of his party. He may not be able to articulate a rational policy. Garamendi believes we will march up to the edge of the cliff sometime this summer. Anticipates a new coalition of moderate Dems and Repubs will form to try to reach an agreement.

## In Closing

New industry of Biotech and the ability to understand the genome will grow significantly in coming years. This industry, and its related research is centered in the Bay Area and amazing things are going to happen. I-80 is now a Bio-Ag Research and Manufacturing Corridor. Genentech in Vacaville off I-80, UC Davis/Medical School. Berkeley, UCSF, Stanford and state universities. This research is leading to new businesses in pharmaceuticals, fuels, non-petroleum-based plastics. Biomanufacturing and refineries have many similarities. Biotech will be built out using skills/techniques from the manufacturing, specifically refineries. Significant jobs in the future. Potentially will move refineries away from petroleum to other fuel sources.

## **Pre-Endorsement Conference Proposed Bylaw Changes (Action Item)**

(Lyman) The El Cerrito Democratic Club's Executive Board is requesting two changes to the Bylaws, including 1) changing a word in Section XI for clarity, and 2) introducing a new Section XIII regarding submission of rosters to California Democratic Party for Pre-Endorsement Delegates. The addition of the new article 13 brings the club into compliance and with a clear timeline with the CA Democratic Party as to when the rosters are to be submitted CA Democratic Committee for pre-endorsement delegates. If passed the club does not have to change the bylaws every time the Democratic Party changes its date.

(For a complete discussion and the new bylaw, Please see pages 8 and 11 of the [March Newsletter](#) on the ECDC website, linked.)

On the motion of Merrill and the second of Kronenberg both amendments to the bylaws were approved with no abstentions or nays.

## **Good of the Order**

East Bay Municipal Utility District (EBMUD) is holding its centennial! Sunday May 21, 2023. 10-3 Please come. Specialty beer made by Drake's. Looking for volunteers. Details to be announced.

## **Adjournment**

President Brown Adjourned the meeting at 7:44 p.m.

— Leslie Reckler, VP Records

#### 4. April Program: Lisa Motoyama, Mayor of El Cerrito

Please join us in welcoming El Cerrito Mayor Lisa Motoyama, our guest and program speaker at the April 25<sup>th</sup> El Cerrito Democratic Club General Membership Meeting.

Lisa Motoyama started her term on the El Cerrito City Council in December of 2020 and is El Cerrito's first mayor and city council member of Japanese American descent. Now that the fund balance has been restored to a healthy level, she has been focusing on improving council processes, supporting the creation of a new library, and supporting the City's housing efforts. A resident since 2005, Lisa, her husband, their two children, two cats and their golden retriever have been enjoying the family friendly programs, services and community events in El Cerrito.



Lisa is the Council liaison to the Arts and Culture Commission and the Environmental Quality Commission. Also as part of her City Council work, she serves on the California League of Cities Housing, Community and Economic Development, and the Revenue and Taxation Policy Committees, as well as serving as the Contra Costa County Mayors' Conference representative to the East Bay Economic Development Alliance Executive Committee and serving as an alternate to the ABAG Executive Committee.

Lisa's professional background is affordable housing. Currently, she focuses her expertise on affordable housing financing and training for a nonprofit technical assistance consultancy. Previously, she worked for the public sector at the San Francisco Mayor's Office of Housing and Community Development and in the private sector for a regional nonprofit affordable housing developer.

She has served on the El Cerrito Planning Commission, the Contra Costa County Affordable Housing Finance Committee, and the Oversight Board of the San Francisco Office of Community Investment and Infrastructure, and is currently the Treasurer of the Housing CA Board of Directors, among her many volunteer positions. She has a master's degree in City and Regional Planning from UC Berkeley and a bachelor's of arts degree in History and Art History from UCLA.

- Greg Lyman, ECDC Past President

## 5. Follow Up to Last Month's Visit from Congressman John Garamendi

For members who had questions for our congressman and didn't get a chance to ask, please feel free to reach out to his district director:

District Director Debbi Gibbs - [Debbi.gibbs@mail.house.gov](mailto:Debbi.gibbs@mail.house.gov)

You may also visit Rep. Garamendi's Richmond District Office:

440 Civic Center Plaza, 2nd Floor

Richmond CA 94804

Phone: (707) 438-1822

Fax: (707) 438-0523

Alternatively, you may submit questions/comments online:

[https://garamendi.house.gov/address\\_authentication?form=/contact](https://garamendi.house.gov/address_authentication?form=/contact)

- Champagne Brown, ECDC President

## 6. California Democratic Party's Re-Organizing State Convention: Don't Agonize, ORGANIZE!

This year's re-organizing convention will be hosted in Los Angeles at the Los Angeles Convention Center. The convention which will be held May 26th-29th; will honor the legacy of Speaker Emerita Nancy Pelosi, who after 20 years stepped down from House Leadership to help usher in the new era of Democratic Leadership. The convention will also bring Democrats from across the state to attend various trainings, caucus meetings, and participate in officer (Secretary & Controller) and regional director elections.

For more information on this year's Re-Organizing State Convention; please visit <https://cdpconvention.org/>



- Champagne Brown, ECDC President

## 7. Regions 5 and 6 Joint Regional Meeting

Join Regional Directors Hene Kelly and Rocky Fernandez for the Region 5 and 6 joint regional meeting on April 25th at 6:30 pm.

Agenda: Welcome Special Guests/Officers, Convention Preview, Candidates for CDP Controller/Secretary, Pre-Endorsement Overview, DNC Report and Resolutions Legislation.

To register for this meeting, please visit <https://www.mobilize.us/cadems/event/559570/>

- Champagne Brown, ECDC President

## 8. El Cerrito Democratic Club Monthly Programs

Below is a list of remaining programs tentatively scheduled for the El Cerrito Democratic Club's remaining 2023 monthly general membership meetings. Thank you to all our members who provided input and suggestions. *We have exciting months ahead with many interesting and informative programs planned!*

April:	Mayor's Presentation on the "State of El Cerrito"
May:	Transit (AC Transit & BART)
June:	Gun Violence Awareness Month
July:	Affordable Housing in El Cerrito
August:	Development and the Proposed Library at the El Cerrito Plaza BART Station
September:	Business Roundtable (with discussion of an expected 2024 ballot measure sponsored by various Chambers of Commerce and corporations seeking to make it more difficult for California cities and school districts to pass bond measures)
October:	Annual ECDC Dinner
November:	Election Outlook (in advance of the March 2024 Primary)
December:	Annual ECDC Holiday Celebration

- Champagne Brown, ECDC President; and William Ktsanes, VP Publications

## 9. Future Events – *Mark Your Calendar!*

**Earth Day** – Saturday, April 15th – Volunteer work parties 9:00 am-12:00 pm followed by an appreciation lunch at the El Cerrito Community Center from 12:00 to 1:30 pm; to organize

a work party, sign up for a work party, or to get involved in planning the event, please reach out to [earthday@ci.el-cerrito.ca.us](mailto:earthday@ci.el-cerrito.ca.us); for more information visit [www.el-cerrito.org/EarthDay](http://www.el-cerrito.org/EarthDay).

**ECDC April General Membership Meeting** – 6:30 pm, Tuesday, April 25<sup>th</sup>

(4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday of the month); hybrid format, in-person at Hana Gardens Senior Apartments (10860 San Pablo Avenue, next to El Cerrito City Hall) and remote via Zoom link  
<http://tiny.cc/ECDCmemberMtg>

**ECDC May General Membership Meeting** – 6:30 pm, Tuesday, May 23<sup>rd</sup>

(4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday of the month); hybrid format, in-person at Hana Gardens Senior Apartments (10860 San Pablo Avenue, next to El Cerrito City Hall) and remote via Zoom link  
<http://tiny.cc/ECDCmemberMtg>

**ECDC June General Membership Meeting** – 6:30 pm, Tuesday, June 27<sup>th</sup>

(4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday of the month); hybrid format, in-person at Hana Gardens Senior Apartments (10860 San Pablo Avenue, next to El Cerrito City Hall) and remote via Zoom link  
<http://tiny.cc/ECDCmemberMtg>

**City of El Cerrito WorldOne 4th of July Festival** – 11:00 am to 5:00 pm, Tuesday, July 4<sup>th</sup>

Cerrito Vista Park, 950 Pomona Avenue, El Cerrito; ECDC needs volunteers to help staff over booth over four shifts: 10 am-12 pm (set up); 12 pm-2pm; 2 pm-4 pm; and 4 pm-6 pm (tear down); please consider volunteering

- William Ktsanes, VP Publications

## 10. Membership Renewal Reminder and Instructions

Big thanks to all who have renewed their membership this year. If you have not yet done so, then your membership lapsed on December 31, 2022.

Now is a great time to renew online at: <https://ecdclub.org/join/>

Or by mailing a check to:

ECDC Membership  
PO Box 192  
El Cerrito, CA 94530

Please note that our new dues are \$5 for students, \$15 for individual members, and \$23 for two adults at the same address. The added cost for a printed hard-copy newsletter is \$18 (in addition to dues). Please make checks payable to “El Cerrito Democratic Club” and provide an email address for all individual members. If you have questions, please email Neil Tsutsui at [membership.ecdc@gmail.com](mailto:membership.ecdc@gmail.com).

Thank you!

- Neil Tsutsui, VP Membership

## **11. Call for Newsletter Submissions**

The El Cerrito Democratic Club Newsletter is published monthly in advance of the General Membership meetings. ECDC members, friends and supporters are invited to submit articles and announcements regarding local issues and events of interest. Submissions should be emailed to William Ktsanes at [wktsanes@gmail.com](mailto:wktsanes@gmail.com) for review and editing.

## **12. Link to the ECDC Website and Bylaws**

Periodically the Club updates our Bylaws. The bylaws were changed in October 2018 to meet DPCCC requirements; revisions were proposed and adopted during the January 2021, August 2022 and March 2023 ECDC meetings. The ECDC Bylaws are posted on the ECDC website at <https://ecdclub.org/club-documents/>.

## Appendix A -

El Cerrito Student Activity Fund and El Cerrito PTSA Present....



Fundraiser for El Cerrito High's

[James Morehouse Project \(JMP\)](#)

Student Wellness Center

Saturday, May 6th, 6-10pm, [Kensington Community Center](#)

Enjoy an evening of local food, live music & Community  
Music by ECHS' Jazz Band & Student DJ - Performance by ECHS' Gaucho Dance  
Company - "Taste of El Cerrito" Signature Dishes - Beautiful Student Art - Great  
Auction Items & Parties

**Early bird tickets (by April 14) \$75.00 (April 15-May 5 - \$85.00/At the Door \$95.00)**

For over 20 years, the JMP has provided tens of thousands of students with health services, counseling, youth development programming, and school-wide mental- and physical health initiatives. Now it's our turn to show some support for Jenn Radar and her amazing team so we can ensure this work continues on. Our goal is to raise \$25,000!!

Purchase your tickets here: <https://tinyurl.com/3n5p7uxy>

Can you donate a service or gift certificate? <https://forms.gle/RqiPgnRyqe69gVxCA>

Questions? Want to Volunteer? Contact Tammy Garretson, [jamjmpdonations@gmail.com](mailto:jamjmpdonations@gmail.com)

## Appendix B - Call to Join the WCCUSD Citizens' Bond Oversight Committee



### **Citizens' Bond Oversight Committee (CBOC), West Contra Costa Unified School District**

The Citizens Bond Oversight Committee provides independent oversight of the school district's construction bond program, which is used to rebuild and remodel schools. The Committee actively reviews and reports on the proper expenditure of taxpayers' money for school construction. The Committee publishes an annual report of its findings.

There are a couple of openings on the committee, but by law, a seat on the committee is reserved for a local business representative, and filling this vacancy is the immediate priority for the committee.

The committee meets once a month, and is composed of a diverse group of shareholders - from beginner to extremely experienced. Talents related to construction, audits, accounting, project management, architecture and contracts are great, but are not required. What is required is to be open to learning. This is a great opportunity to meet others in the community and to learn something new.

#### **MEETINGS**

Meetings are held in-person once a month for approximately two hours.

**The 2023 Meeting Schedule:** Mondays at 6:00 p.m. April 10, May 8, June 12, July 10, August 14, September 11, October 9, November 13, December 11.

**Location:** West Contra Costa Facilities Operations Center, 1400 Marina Way S, Richmond, CA 94804  
The meetings are open to the public. You are welcome to observe either by Zoom or in-person.

#### **LEARN MORE**

**Click on this link:** [www.wccusd.net](http://www.wccusd.net). You'll find information, resources, the application to join the committee and more!

**Please contact Committee Chair,** Lorraine Humes [lorrainehumes@comcast.net](mailto:lorrainehumes@comcast.net) **for more information.**

**Board of Education Liaison,** Leslie Reckler, Trustee, Area #5: [leslie.reckler@wccusd.net](mailto:leslie.reckler@wccusd.net)

*We'd love to have you!*