

Mark your calendar!

# Next Membership Meeting

Wednesday, July 28 • 6:30-8:30 p.m.

Middleton Fire District Building, 7600 University Ave Middleton

- Icebreaker and Introductions
- Take Back the Land Statement (VOTE)
- Staff Reports and Announcements
- Educational - County Budget
- Burning Issue - Racial Justice, Celia Jackson
- Announcements

Beer Caucus immediately following - Hody Bar & Grill, easy block and a half walk to 1914 Aurora St.

Chair: John Hendrick

If you need an interpreter, materials in alternative formats, or other accommodations, please contact the PD office at 257-4985 one week in advance of the meeting.



**VOLUNTEER NIGHT!**  
 Meet great people and help with labeling our newsletter and other easy tasks.  
 Tuesday, August 17 • 5:30pm  
 PD Office, 1202 Williamson Street  
 (Social Justice Center—conference room)  
 As always, refreshments are provided!

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- I support the principles and purpose of Progressive Dane. **Sign me up!**  
 **Please renew my membership** in Progressive Dane.

**Sustaining membership:** \$ \_\_\_\_\_ / month (minimum \$5) \$ \_\_\_\_\_ / quarter (minimum \$9) \$ \_\_\_\_\_ / year (minimum \$12)  
*To pay by bank draft, please attach a voided check; or first month's check payable to Progressive Dane.*

**Annual single membership:**  \$50 Regular  \$36 Basic  \$12 Low Income  
 \$250+ Benefactor  \$100 Supporting  \$75 Contributing

**Annual household membership:**  \$100 Contributing  \$75 Regular  \$50 Basic  
*More than two adults in the house? Sign them up for \$25 per person.* Number of additional memberships \_\_\_\_\_

Mail to: Progressive Dane, P.O. Box 1222, Madison, WI 53701 • For more information: (608) 257-4985

You can also join Progressive Dane at [www.prodane.org](http://www.prodane.org)!



# FORWARD!

VOLUME 18, NUMBER 7 • JULY 2010

Rebuilding Politics in Dane County from the Grassroots

## Summer County Board Update

by Kyle Richmond, Dane County Board Supervisor

AS SUMMER STEAMS ITS WAY INTO DANE County, PD's representatives on the County Board continue actively pushing a progressive agenda.

Board Vice Chair John Hendrick saw his resolution to place a referendum on the countywide November ballot concerning support for use of medical marijuana pass the Board unanimously on July 15. Supervisors of all political persuasions – as well as several county residents – spoke in favor of putting the issue to a public vote. Hendrick also asked that Dane County's referendum language be sent to the Wisconsin Counties Association so that other counties might have access to it.

Supervisor Barbara Vedder continues work on the Health & Human Needs (HHN) Committee, which is struggling with the implementation of the State of Wisconsin's "Family Care," a managed care program which may actually cost Dane County money and potentially reduce its level of client services. Vedder also saw her resolution to create an implementation team to carry out recommendations of the County's Racial Disparities Task Force pass the Board in May. That team has since been appointed and has started working on ways to carry out the important 80-some suggestions of the Task Force.

One of the most publicized proposals still before the Board (as PD's newsletter goes to print) is Supervisor Al Matano's resolution to create a Citizen Advisory Panel to study the ethics of the University of Wisconsin-Madison's research on non-human primates. The resolution passed the HHN Committee in June, but stalled before the Executive Committee a week later, where it faced redoubled opposition from University employees.

With backing from the local Alliance for Animals, the idea of publicly examining the use of thousands of monkeys at the UW has progressed further than ever before. Matano got 12 co-sponsors for the resolution, and

earlier in the year 20 supervisors signed a letter to the UW Chancellor that questioned the University's need for such an extensive program.

Matano also serves on the Zoning and Land Regulation Committee, which recently approved and sent to the Board a petition to create a 34-acre historic overlay district in the Town of Perry (far southwestern Dane County) to protect the view-shed of the Hauge (Norwegian Lutheran) Church, a County historic landmark constructed in 1852. Also on July 15, the Board endorsed the proposal over the objections of "individual land rights" activists who have fought the Town of Perry over the issue for 10 years.

Supervisor Kyle Richmond (see the above byline, progressive reader), Environment, Agriculture & Natural Resources (EANR) Committee chair, plans to introduce a resolution soon that would create an on-going pharmaceutical drop-off program for Dane County. Up to eight permanent drug drop-boxes will be placed in law enforcement offices around the county to collect unused medications if the resolution passes the Board. Richmond must still secure funding from the City of Madison and the County to pay for incineration of pharmaceuticals, which many people now simply flush down the toilet, polluting the water supply.

Please stayed tuned...other issues will face PD Supervisors as autumn approaches: a Sheriff's Department staffing study that could help trim that expensive budget, Hendrick's hydric soils ordinance amendment, implementation of Richmond's Sustainable Agriculture Agenda passed in April, and of course, the overall 2011 County budget, which could be even uglier than the 2010 budget.

## Last Month at the GMM

by Aaron Crandall

WE STARTED WITH AN "ICEBREAKER" question, as usual, and then moved on to hear the staff report from Dace Zeps. Dace passed around a sign-up sheet for tabling opportunities, gave a report on our Garden Party, and told us that the next two GMMs will be outside of Madison.

We next had an educational update from guest speaker Janet Parker with Madison Fruits and Nuts, a group advocating for the planting of fruit and nut trees in Madison parks.

The fruit and nut discussion lasted for a while, and Janet also brought snacks to share, demonstrating that Madison can grow some tasty stuff. The group learned a lot about what Madison Fruits and Nuts and other groups are doing here and elsewhere on the topic.

The discussion on immigration got postponed, along with the County report, and we did not have quorum to vote on the Take Back the Land proposal. There were a few general announcements, adjournment was called, and we proceeded to Beer Caucus at Nick's. That was last month at the GMM.



Become a fan of Progressive Dane on Facebook!

<http://www.facebook.com/home.php#/pages/Progressive-Dane/117607684897?ref=ts>



Forward! is the newsletter of Progressive Dane in Dane County, Wisconsin. Progressive Dane is affiliated with the Independent Progressive Politics Network.

Progressive Dane is a democratic, membership-run organization. The following committees and task forces meet in the main conference room at the Social Justice Center, 1202 Williamson Street, unless otherwise noted.

### August Meetings

**Steering Committee:** coordinates major activities, oversees the progress of other committees, sets the agenda for general membership meetings. Meetings open to all PD members.

Co-chairs: Jacque Pokorney, juju\_jacque@yahoo.com (608)843-9616  
TJ Mertz, tjmertz@sbcglobal.net (608)215-1942

Monday, August 9, 7pm

### Economic Issues Task Force

Contact: Rick Richards, syzygy1@charter.net (608)255-5023

Next meeting in September

### Education Task Force

Contact: TJ Mertz, tjmertz@sbcglobal.net (608)215-1942

Meeting announcements made on PDComm

### Elections Committee

Contact: Lukas Diaz, diaz\_luke@yahoo.com, (262)443-3136

Wednesday, August 4, 8:00pm

### General Membership Meeting

Contact: Staff, office@prodane.org  
Wednesday, August 25, 6:30pm  
Monona Community Center, 1011 Nichols Rd

### Housing Task Force

Contact: Jacque Pokorney, juju\_jacque@yahoo.com  
Meeting announcements made on PDComm

### Newsletter Consortium

Articles are always accepted from PD members.  
Contact: Dace Zeps, office@prodane.org (608)358-2940

### Outreach & Fundraising Committee

Contact: Dace Zeps, office@prodane.org (608)358-2940  
Next meeting in September

### Policy Committee

Contact: Brenda Konkel, brendakonkel@gmail.com  
Sunday, August 8, 7pm

### Transportation Task Force

Contact: Aaron Crandall, aaron.crandall@yahoo.com  
Meeting announcements made on PDComm

Production and Circulation Consortium:  
Lynn Alten, Mary Anglim, Erik Breilid, Dave Carrig, John Dupuis, Jamie Annear-Feyrer, Tom Kozlovsky, Norm Littlejohn, Jacque Pokorney, Richard Russell, Ralph Shively, Dace Zeps

This month's contributors: Kyle Richmond, Aaron Crandall, TJ Mertz

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Progressive Dane, P.O. Box 1222, Madison, WI 53701

Visit Progressive Dane on the web at [www.prodane.org](http://www.prodane.org)

Produced on recycled paper  
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(608) 257-4985  
office@prodane.org

## Progressive Dane Statement on "Take Back the Land"

PROGRESSIVE DANE AFFIRMS THAT HOUSING IS A FUNDAMENTAL HUMAN RIGHT. RECENT economic events have resulted in increasing numbers of people who are without homes and increasing numbers of homes sitting emptied by foreclosures or abandoned by those who are unable to pay their mortgages.

Progressive Dane supports efforts to remove the barriers that result in people-less homes and homeless people. Remedies include, but are not limited to, affordable housing, living wage jobs, combating the criminalization of poverty, community land trusts, affordable housing trusts, and legal reforms.

Recently, Operation Welcome Home and Take Back the Land have called attention to these issues in Dane County. Progressive Dane applauds their work in focusing attention where it is needed.

Progressive Dane supports Take Back the Land and what it stands for and its proposed policy changes. We will work to advance the policies through the appropriate local government bodies.

## Volunteer Opportunities

PROGRESSIVE DANE ONLY WORKS WHEN its members take an active role in making things happen. Progressive Dane is looking for people to fill a couple of key volunteer roles. We currently seeking a Newsletter Coordinator and a Web Coordinator. Descriptions of these and other volunteer opportunities can be found at [http://www.prodane.org/get\\_involved/volunteer/](http://www.prodane.org/get_involved/volunteer/). Please contact Dace at [office@prodane.org](mailto:office@prodane.org) or 608-358-2940 to express interest in either of these volunteer positions.

## People's Affordable Housing Vision

THE PD STEERING COMMITTEE RECENTLY signed on to the People's Affordable Housing Vision.

The Vision includes twelve proposals to expand low income housing opportunities, ensure dignity and a path to stable housing for the homeless, provide greater accountability for violations of local housing laws, and increase local government resources to support housing programs. It seeks to advance many objectives in PD's City and County platforms in the areas of affordable housing, human services, tenant rights, and public health.

Read and sign on to the full Vision at <http://bit.ly/pplshsng>, e-mail [peopleshousingvision@gmail.com](mailto:peopleshousingvision@gmail.com), or join the Facebook group Petition to Support the People's Affordable Housing Vision to have your name included on the letters to be sent to the Mayor and County Executive.

## Racial Disparities in Criminal Justice

CELIA JACKSON, CHAIR OF THE RECENTLY appointed Dane County Racial Disparities in the Criminal Justice System Implementation Team, will be informing the July 28 GMM about the important work of the Team.

The Team was formed by the County Board and Executive in response to the Report issued last year by the Racial Disparities Task Force. This report extensively documents the "tragic numbers" of minority arrests, indictments, convictions, and sentencing in Dane County, where African Americans are 30 times more likely than whites to be arrested for some drug offenses, and fully one half of young African American men are in prison, on probation/parole, or in extended supervision. More importantly, the report offers wide-ranging and well-researched recommendations that—if implemented—could transform Dane County from one of the worst places in the nation by these measures to a leader in criminal justice equity.

The Team is charged with making this happen. They are all volunteers and at this time have no budget. Community support is essential.

This is where Progressive Dane can help. PD has led the fight against related inequities with things like the Madison Loitering Ordinance and the Sheriff's treatment of immigrants; we need to be part of this too.

In the coming weeks the Team will be setting their priorities, including budget requests. Join us at the GMM to hear about what the Implementation Team is doing and begin the conversation about how we will be part of it.

To learn more about the Team, visit: [http://www.countyofdane.com/oeo/disparities\\_team.aspx](http://www.countyofdane.com/oeo/disparities_team.aspx).

## The Edgewater: It Isn't Over Yet

by TJ Mertz, Progressive Dane Steering Committee Co-Chair

DESPITE CLAIMS OF VICTORY BY THOSE pushing the Edgewater development project, there are still some important steps before the over \$16 million in Tax Incremental Finance (TIF) is granted. There are multiple Common Council and Committee approvals still needed as well as a pending lawsuit. The decision of the Joint Review Board is perhaps the most important of these and will play out in the next 2 or 3 months. The Board's next meeting will be August 12th and Public Testimony is on the agenda (look for details on this and other meetings at [www.forwardlookout.com](http://www.forwardlookout.com)).

The Board consists of representatives from all affected taxing bodies—the City, Madison Metropolitan School District, Madison Area Technical College, and Dane County—and one public member (Gary Poulson). Approval of any new Tax Incremental District (TID) or amendment of an existing TID by a majority of the Board is required by state statutes.

The Edgewater development financial projections indicated that the project did not meet the requirements for a stand alone TID, so the proposal is to annex it to the existing TID 32, anchored by University Square. Under this plan, taxes on six years worth of the increased property value of the University Square development and other portions of the TID – totaling millions of dollars – will be used to finance the Edgewater instead of easing the tax burden for the rest of us. The current version with updated financial information should be on the July 26 agenda for the Plan Commission.

All the local taxing bodies have been

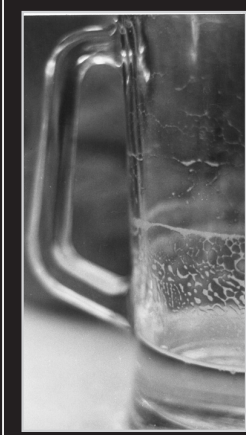
struggling to adequately fund programs and services essential to our community with diminishing state support while respecting the burden that property tax increases create. Giving the OK to the Edgewater TIF will mean temporarily forgoing millions in potential revenue, resulting in either more cuts or higher taxes for this period.

The Board is charged with considering the following criteria:

- whether the development expected in the TID would occur without the use of TIF
- whether the economic benefits of the TID, as measured by increased employment, business and personal income, and property value, are insufficient to compensate for the cost of the improvements
- whether the benefits of the proposal outweigh the anticipated tax increases to be paid by the owners of property in the overlying taxing districts.

To put it another way, they have to decide if building a luxury hotel plaza is worth the cuts and tax increases that will come if TID 32 is expanded.

If you don't think it is, the Board needs to hear from you. Testify at their meetings; contact the Board of Education, the MATC Board, and County officials; and get involved in organizing to stop the use of TIF for this by contacting me ([tjmertz@sbcglobal.net](mailto:tjmertz@sbcglobal.net)) or coming to Progressive Dane Policy Committee meetings.



**BEER Caucus**  
Wednesday  
July 28  
8:30 pm  
(following the GMM)  
**Hody Bar & Grill**  
1914 Aurora St  
...there's always so much to talk about

## Garden Party 2010

