

Occupy CU General Assembly Minutes

Friday, April 13, 2012
Champaign Public Library

NEXT MEETING: Friday, April 20, 2012, Champaign Library, Room B, 6 – 9 pm

In attendance: Sandra, Eleanor, Theresa, Michael, Jesse, Dada, Ya'aqov, Karen

LOGISTICS/AGENDA PROPOSAL

Theresa provided an agenda on the white board; it was amended, then approved. Theresa facilitated (along with Ya'aqov) and took notes.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

~ Michael reported on the two items that were placed on the agenda at Champaign and Urbana's town meetings this past week. We had very good success in Urbana, with both items passing unanimously. In Champaign, the Move to Amend initiative passed 23 votes to 10, but the leafleting item did not pass. There might be a chance based on a technicality (i.e. omitting the words "such as") that it will be brought up again but we will really need to get out more bodies to insure a success if so. Michael seemed to think there was a Tea Party faction that blocked the initiative. In the end, in Michael's words: 3 out of 4 ain't bad.

THERE ARE LOTS OF EVENTS THIS WEEK! CHOOSE WHAT YOU CAN DO!

~ There will be a union-sponsored protest against the Illinois regressive tax system on Tuesday, 4/17, at the Champaign Main Post Office at 2001 N. Mattis Street, from 4 to 6. Come out to lend your support and pass out fliers.

~ There will be a protest against Indiana governor Mitch Daniels on Thursday 4/19 from 4 to 7. People can assemble in the SW parking lot of Assembly Hall where speakers start between 4 and 5.15 (you can park in the north parking lot for free). Then people will march to the Hilton where there will be a demonstration from 5.30 to 7:15.

~ Rachel had previously announced the "Take Back the Night" event that is to be held on 4/19. People are to gather at Lincoln Square at around 6:30 p.m. and then people will march through town and ultimately end up on campus.

~ Jesse announced that this upcoming week is Palestine Awareness/Israeli Apartheid Week, sponsored by Students for Justice in Palestine. Jesse is helping to build a symbolic wall that will be situated on campus somewhere; it's 26 feet tall. They are looking for volunteers to guard the wall and dress up as Israeli soldiers with toy guns to make the wall a check point. Ya'aqov asked what the connection to Occupy is. Jesse said that Occupy Wall Street objects to colonialism, mass destruction, and violence and as such it is relevant to things in Palestine. Ya'aqov said that OWS has to do with taxation and since our money is being used for arming an army in Israel, it is definitely a cause for ocCUpy. Locally, we are supporting the occupation in Israel because Caterpillar, located in Decatur, is providing the bulldozers that raze the olive trees and developments in Palestine. Ya'aqov said that perhaps people

could make more ferocious demonstrations with regards to his issue. Eleanor is in favor of peaceful alternatives in all instances.

~ The County Board meeting for this week (the 3rd Thursday) is scheduled for 4/19. Check the board's website for times.

~ Rachel will be sharing her thoughts on nonprofits and nongovernmental agencies and how they are being used as surrogates to provide services when the government does not, but may be facilitating neoliberal aims at "The Nongovernmental Impulse Symposium" on 4-19 to 4/20 (see website for more info).

~ There will be an on-campus protest for Flex N' Gate and against Khan on 4/26 at the Khan Annex. More details forthcoming. Since Eleanor feels that Khan has done some good things in the town, Ya'aqov asked her if she was comfortable extending an invitation to Khan to come to Occupy or somewhere and interview him and get his perspective on things. Eleanor said she would think about it and then Ya'aqov said he might take the matter up himself.

~ On 5/11, CUCPJ will host a forum at 6 pm about the jail issue. In attendance will be Carol Ammens, community members, as well as citizens near Bloomington who have averted a jail expansion and want to give us information about how they were successful. There was a discussion about whether or not the GA could suspend its meeting for a week in order for people to attend the jail meeting. Theresa raised the concern that 5/11 was one week before the NATO protests and we might need the meeting in order to inform people about particulars of the protest. Most in attendance thought it was a fine idea but that we would have to notify people in the library in case a first-timer came to the GA that night. Ya'aqov felt that it was not accurate to state that we should move the meeting because the GA/ocUpy isn't doing much right now anyway because we are always discussing things.

~ Theresa announced the Weekly Street Corner Protest for Saturday, 4/14, 2 - 4 p.m. at Meadowbrook Park in Urbana.

~ There is a call for a General Strike on May 1st. The group discussed if we want to have a local protest that day.

NEW BUSINESS

Karen informed us that the News Gazette chose for its July 4th theme: Celebrating our Youth. As a result, AWARE chose as its theme: Celebrating the World's Youth to make it broader. Karen said that the group needs to come up with the design for the float as well as materials. She asked ocUpy to co-sponsor this with AWARE. Not sure what participation will look like as of now. They might have a car for some people to sit in while the rest march. They are in need of a flatbed of some sort. Please let Karen know if you could loan the group a pickup truck or a trailer to go on back. Eleanor mentioned holding a contest for the design of the float.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Outreach Committee: The group asked Pam to record some of her music and she agreed. Matt M. agreed to allow her to use some equipment from WEFT for recording. Additionally, Ya'aqov and Susan and others have pieces that could also be recorded for general use as well as for Occupy the Air programs. There was a

discussion about how Betz asked Michael to maybe run for the Urbana County Board. Everyone agreed that Michael would do a great job.

NATO/G8 Committee: Theresa reported on the NATO potluck from 4/11. Many interested parties attended the event to map out a plan for the next month to mobilize people to attend the event. In conjunction with the NATO march/rally, the Iraq Veterans Against the War will hold a fundraiser on Sunday, 4/29. Since they will be holding a rally and need to have a stage from which to speak on 5/20 in Chicago, they require funds. To that end, a few people will organize an event to raise funds. It may also involved poster making and the designing of creative protests.

Anti-Eviction Committee: Jesse reported that he keeps track of the court schedule for foreclosures and then attends court on that day (It is usually between 1:30 and 3:30 p.m. and he will email us whenever the court is in session). Once there, he hands out fliers. So far, he has gotten a good response from the people who are getting foreclosed upon. They take our fliers and they take our information, but no one comes to meetings, just Eleanor and Jesse. There is a timeline flier to tell people what to do first, then next. There is also a Do/Don't flier. They also tell people how to receive legal help. Eleanor will be at the food pantry at her church in the next week and she will pass out information there. She will also try to get more to the churches. Jesse said this is a very slow process trying to find people who want our help. The group is grateful for Jesse's and Eleanor's work. Remember, the subcommittee meets Wednesdays at the Urbana Free Library, 2nd floor.

PROPOSALS/OPEN DISCUSSION

1. Ya'aqov metnioend that he since we have a lot of people who are knowledgeable about jails and many people who are interested in the issue, perhaps we should explore the variety of materials and knowledge we have. He proposed having a teach in or something that lets people know what we have heard.
2. Karen reported that on Monday night, Ms. Busey gave a history of the ¼ cent tax. It is obvious that it has been abused. The county moved it from what it was supposed to be used for to an illegal use of funds. It was originally passed to be sunsetted, but then the following board overturned that decision. The group who said that they were interested in taking up Carol Ammen's charge for ocUpy to help with the ¼ cent tax should meet to investigate this abuse.

Check us out:

FACEBOOK <https://www.facebook.com/ OccupyChampaignUrbana>

OCCUPYCU.org <http://occupyCU.org>

OCCUPYthe AIR weft.org or occupytheair.blogspot.com OR

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Occupy-the-AIR-WEFT-901-FM>