



APRIL NEWSLETTER

Please join us on the evening of **Tuesday, April 15, 2025 at 7:00 p.m.** on Zoom for our monthly meeting! PLEASE make sure to read the important update about Zoom below.

Agenda:

1. Call to Order and Opening Remarks from President Darrel Menthe;
2. Approval of Minutes from January 21, 2025 & February 18, 2025 CCDU Meetings;
3. Report from Treasurer Judy Scott;
4. Report from VP of Membership Rafia Cooper;
5. Discussion of April 5, 2025 Rally;
6. DNC Member Update;
7. Announcements;
8. Items from the Floor;
9. Adjournment.

ZOOM UPDATE: At our Tuesday February 18, 2025 meeting, we received feedback that the Zoom registration reminder emails were confusing. As a result, we have decided to go back to individual registration for each Zoom meeting. While some of the meetings will likely be in-person, please register as if all 9 are taking place on Zoom.

What does this mean? Everyone needs to re-register for the remaining Zoom meetings of 2025. While this change may be temporarily inconvenient, it will allow folks to receive the reminder emails from Zoom BEFORE the meetings, and not just after registering, which should reduce potential confusion.

What do you need to do? When you click on the link below, you will see a dropdown menu with the option to choose between our remaining 9 meetings. Please select which meetings you will be registering for, and if you are registering for all 9, please select all 9 boxes.

To re-register, visit:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZMrfuyggqD4rE9zPFF3qBBXpP8qnnhQ2Alc3#/registration>

Once registered for your selected meetings, you will receive a confirmation email. On meeting nights at 5:30pm, registered folks for that specific date will receive a second reminder of their confirmation email from Zoom.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

3 PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

By President Darrel Menthe

4 ANNOUNCEMENTS &
UPCOMING EVENTS

5 HANDS OFF NATIONAL
MOBILIZATION DAY
RECAP

By Secretary Jamie Wallace

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

By President Darrel Menthe

Culver City voted to declare a fiscal emergency and will be likely seeking to raise the sales tax by a quarter cent to the maximum amount allowable by state law. I expect broad support for the tax increase, even from those who would normally oppose new taxes, because of a unique situation. If Culver City does not raise the sales tax by a quarter cent before 2026, the County will. We will then have the same maximum tax rate, but the money will not go to Culver City. All things being equal, I believe the money would be better spent locally. But the truth is that we do not always spend money wisely in this City.

Last month, City Council gave direction to spend \$16 million on a project of the Culver Palms United Methodist Church known as Jubilo Village. The funds were requested by the church and the developer to make up for a shortfall in the \$75 million budgeted for the project. As the City is in a structural deficit, that money will come out of the city's reserves. This will eat a substantial chunk of that away, with no hope of restoring it in the foreseeable future.

The \$16 million requested is called a "residual receipts" loan. While it may be formally styled a loan, there is little chance of repayment. The City will be repaid out of residual profits only after all other creditors and are paid in full. On what is already a non-profit subsidized affordable housing project, a financial windfall is not expected. Projections suggest that some money might be available in 40 to 55 years, but full repayment is unlikely even then. There is also no security for the loan. The land and building would continue to be owned by the church with no strings attached, and the city would have no lien. The City staff report indicated that under these circumstances, the \$16 million is effectively a gift.

For those unfamiliar with Jubilo Village, it consists of 93 units designed for very low income and preferably formerly homeless individuals, half of which are 1-bedroom units. There is no ability to restrict the units to Culver City residents, and most will be individuals rather than family units. This has already contributed \$4 million. This additional \$16 million will bring Culver city's contribution to \$20 million. To give some idea of what these figures mean for Culver City, the entire budgets for the Culver City

Police Department and the Culver City Fire Department are \$56 million and \$35 million respectively. Simply put, \$16 million is a very large number.

The Jubilo Village project sponsors indicated that an additional \$16 million is necessary to construct this affordable housing project. That is only partly true. The financials for the Jubilo Village include a \$3.5M developer fee above and beyond overhead and profit for the general contractor, as well as a direct payment of \$13.1M to Culver Palms United Methodist Church to build a new church sanctuary (from a loan against future rent payments). In sum, the bulk of the City's \$16 million contribution will be used by the church to build a new worship space. It is not a construction cost for the affordable housing units.

The church has options. The church may choose to accept less in payment, or it can negotiate a less onerous arrangement with Culver City that might ensure something is paid back sooner. Reducing the city's investment even by \$1million or \$2 million would make a substantial difference for the city budget.

I served on the governing board of my parish church for many years. I know that if my pastor confronted numbers like this, she would have told me that to do what is right, we would have to accept less money. I realize it is a lot to ask the church to take less for its land, but it is also a lot to ask citizens to foot the bill for a sanctuary. A compromise is a better option.

There are other ways to produce affordable housing. I now serve on the Planning Commission. Just two weeks ago we approved a project on the Culver City/Los Angeles border (near Costco) that will produce 17 very-low-income units at zero cost to the public. Hundreds of affordable housing units are in the pipeline. While public housing projects like Jubilo (100% affordable) are rare, affordable housing units are being produced by private developers due to the incentives created by state and local law.

As it stands, giving \$16 million to the Jubilo Village project is not a good public investment. If the council feels it cannot withdraw from this project, the City can and should enter into good faith negotiations with the church to ensure that the City's contribution is more reasonable and on a firmer financial footing.

Darrel Menthe
President
Culver City Democrats United

ANNOUNCEMENTS & EVENTS

DELEGATE COMMISSIONING CEREMONY

Sunday, April 27, 2025, at 4pm - 9635 Venice Blvd., Culver City, CA 90232

The Culver City Foshay Masonic Lodge has graciously agreed to host a Commissioning Ceremony for the fourteen newly-elected ADEMS Delegates from Assembly District 55 to the Democratic Party State Convention. We are expecting this to run about half an hour with brief remarks and recognitions of each of the 14 newly-elected delegates, as well as opportunities for photographs with other community leaders. This will be a moment for the community to come together for a moment of joy and grace as we commission these new delegates to represent us in convention in 2025 and 2026. All are welcome. This is not a ticketed event, but it would be helpful if people could RSVP by reserving a "ticket" through eventbrite. Please use this link to invite friends and family to the event. Thank you for coming out to support your delegates and your community!

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/commissioning-ceremony-ad-55-delegates-tickets-1299660452399?aff=oddtcreator>

CULVER CITY CAR SHOW BOOTH VOLUNTEERS

Saturday, May 10, 2025 from 9am to 3pm - Downtown Culver City, Culver Blvd.

Like last year, we will be participating in the Culver City Car Show again! If you are available to volunteer to work our booth, please sign up at the link below. In the form, please indicate your hours of availability, each volunteer will be assigned a 1 hour shift. The form also has an option to not volunteer, but contribute in some other way (tablecloths, handouts, etc).

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSciW0qbErKYNiXeNPpT3pboDdyYFOEk6nsxn8CEsh5SnYP5MQ/viewform?usp=header>

2025 MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

Your involvement is crucial as we continue our efforts to advocate for transformative policies and engage our community. By renewing your membership, you ensure that your voice remains part of the important conversations shaping our future. To renew your membership, please visit this link:

<https://secure.actblue.com/donate/ccdu2025members> and select your desired membership level. Remember, if you choose to become a Sustaining Member, simply check the "Make it monthly!" option and enter any amount of \$20 or more.

Hands Off National Mobilization Day Recap

By Secretary Jamie Wallace

A number of different groups including Indivisible, Hands Off 2025, Move On, Mobilize, and 50501 called for a national day of protest this past Saturday, April 5, 2025. Hands Off 2025 published a map that showed where Hands Off protests were being held, and a few weeks before April 5, I noticed that there were no rallies planned for the Westside of Los Angeles. There were rallies in Torrance, Malibu, Glendale, and Pico/Robertson, along with a huge rally planned for Pershing Square, in Downtown LA.

Listening to the daily barrage of executive orders, sweeps, budget cutting and irresponsible actions, I realized that there should be a protest in Culver City, so I signed up to be the host. Powered by Mobilize and Hands Off 2025, there were several hundred signups in a few days.

At the CCDU meeting at 33 Taps on March 18, 2025, I asked what people there thought of having a rally in Culver City. There was considerable interest. Phil Lelyveld suggested having a short, flash type rally, and I realized that was perfect for the situation with so little time to find or approach potential speakers. It seemed to me that the majority of people were feeling isolated, frustrated, and alone. A short “official” rally to get as many people together as possible was the best way to reassure people that they are not alone and that there is a huge community of people who wanted to express themselves.

I posted on my Facebook page, and got permission to post on the Unofficial Culver Page. I talked to Lt. Chris Caraballo (special projects) about what restraints and responsibilities I would have as the organizer. I contacted Shelly Wolfburg, Assistant City Manager, and asked about the rules for public protest. She sent me some forms which laid out the Culver City boundaries for public speech. I read and signed the forms.

As the days passed, 700, then 800 people signed up for the event. I gather that many of them found out about the rally from Hands Off 2025 and Mobilize. I send at least 3 notes to people who had signed up explaining that this would be a short rally lasting not more than half an hour. I was proved correct that the majority of people wanted to gather and wave their

signs at motorists. This is a wave and honk action. I invited Darrel Menthe to talk about the importance of voting.

I and a small group of helpers took care of all the rally prep, painting Hands Off signs, obtaining both a bullhorn and a PA system. I answered questions from participants. I sent out at least 3 emails to the participants reminding them that this was a non-violent protest and that people were to stay off the streets and not go up on the City Hall balconies. I also gave public parking garage addresses.

The day of the event, people started to gather starting at 11:15. More and more people showed up. We started the rally using a bull horn to do call and response chants for “Hands Off Medicare”, etc. and, “You’re fired,” for the current Cabinet. Many people gathered to listen, and even more were waving and getting honked at.

I ended the official rally at 12:30 and was amazed to see people spread on both sides of Culver Boulevard for 2 or more blocks in each direction. My husband reminded people to stay on the sidewalks, and they generally complied.

The protesters stayed on the sidewalks and waved for at least another hour. When we went for lunch we saw a number of people with signs eating at our restaurants. There was no trash to pick up.

The majority of getting the word out about the rally was through word of mouth, and many used the Hands Off 2025 map to choose Culver City as the rally site.

It was an amazing experience to see the estimated 1,200 to 2,000 people participating in a non-violent, but exuberant rally. For many this was their first rally, and felt Culver City would be a safe place to try it out.

As of this date, I have received no complaints from the CCPD or City Hall about the rally and the participants.