

Can Donald Trump and Paul Ryan Find Middle Ground?

With Speaker of the House Paul Ryan (R-Wis.) saying he couldn't see himself supporting Donald Trump as the Republican presidential nominee, and with the presumptive GOP nominee saying he could win in November without the speaker's help, Republican National Committee Chairman Reince Priebus put together a meeting Thursday.

And while no one expected that meeting to generate an immediate endorsement, it did however, result in some positive news for Republicans hoping to see the party unify after a particularly contentious nominating process. Priebus emerged from the meeting with the following message:

"The meeting was great. It was a very positive step toward party unity."

After the meeting between Trump, Ryan and Priebus, the presumptive presidential nominee and speaker attended a second meeting with congressional Republican leaders. Following that meeting, they issued a joint statement:

"The United States cannot afford another four years of the Obama White House, which is what Hillary Clinton represents. That is why it's critical that Republicans unite around our shared principles, advance a conservative agenda, and do all we can to win this fall."

"With that focus, we had a great conversation this morning. While we were honest about our few differences, we recognize that there are also many important areas of common ground. We will be having additional discussions, but remain confident there's a great opportunity to unify our party and win this fall, and we are totally committed to working together to achieve that goal."

"We are extremely proud of the fact that many millions of new voters have entered the primary system, far more than ever before in the Republican Party's history. This was our first meeting, but it was a very positive step toward unification."

Bringing Trump and Ryan together, however, is only the beginning. Deep divisions still exist, particularly between supporters of Trump and U.S. Sen. Ted Cruz. It is likely the fence-mending work will continue up to—and possibly even beyond—the Republican National Convention to be held in Cleveland in mid-July.