**Saugerties Democratic Meeting Minutes**

**27 Febuary 2018**

**Attendees:** Bill Barr, Lanny Walter, John Schoonmaker, Connie Bailey, Kathy Gordon, Kathleen Gray, Mike Harkavy, Liz Bailey, Tim Scott, Marcus Arthur, Finley Schaef, Nancy Schaef, Mike Cimorelli, Rick Cousin, Christine Dinsmore, Elizabeth Murphy, John Remington, Judith Lechner, Katherine Holt, Chris Allen

**Approval of January 23 Minutes:** The Secretary moved to approve noting that a correction had been made by Kathy Gordon. Seconded by Kathy Gordon . Unanimously approved as amended.

**Treasurer’s Report:** The Chair presented the report summarized below, and made a motion for its approval.

Balance 23 January 2018 $ 3195.65

Collection +91

Check for Attorney -1050

Check for Town Rental -80

Balance 27 February 2018 $ 2156.65

The Chair moved to approve the report which was seconded by Rick Cousin and approved unanimously.

**Congressional Candidates, Antonio Delgado**

Introduced his in-laws and said he and his wife grew up an hour apart, he in Schenectady. He recounted his upbringing in a modest working class family. He said his parents bought into the idea that one could rise economically through hard work, something hard to believe now. He recounted his family’s values, values he took to Colgate as a student. He said our country shared these values, up until recent times. He was a Rhodes Scholar and studied at Oxford, then was accepted to Harvard Law School. Afterwards he worked on the West Coast forming a hip-hop record label to provide outreach to youth. He said politicians aren’t interested today in helping people, but are instead concerned only with maintaining power. He wants to have universal health care with an option to choose Medicare. Big corporations are soaking up opportunities at our expense. He said there is a $7 billion demand for organically grown food in New York that can’t be met. Changes he advocates can be paid for by revising the tax code. The floor was then open for questions and answers.

Asked how he can have an impact as a junior congressman. He said it depends on whether Democratss are in majority and that there would be an advantage to a candidate who raises a lot of funds.

What are his priorities? Universal health care, jobs (partly through infrastructure bill with real funding, and investing in renewable energy, workforce retraining and education.

What institutions are most regressive? Banks (reinstitute Glass-Stiegal)

Guns? Not here to take away guns, but to protect kids from gun violence. He would have CDC study gun violence, ensure universal background checks for gun owners, and control the sale of assault weapons. He would also support a rule that forbids a candidate who takes NRA money.

How can that be sold to non-progressives? He said he is a values-based person, values that most people can sign-on to. Coming from a working class background will give him more credibility. On the policy point, he is not dogmatically advocating just one solution.

**State Assembly Candidate, Aidin O’Connor**

He said he is a fourth generation Greene County resident. He wasn’t good at athletics so decided to become a paramedic. Became district corrdinator and went to DC to advocate for paramedic needs. He was a flight paramedic for five years, and was president of Greene County paramedics. He realized the power that county legislators had, so he ran and won. He is the Greene County minority leader, and as such, sits on every committee. He said that out of 150 districts, this district is 148th for broad band. He said he has the energy and enthusiasm of Pete Lopez. Issues: Communication—cell (lack of cell service is not only inconvenient but a health risk), Broadband, 911 towers; Healthcare (EMS—not adequately funded), Fiscal responsibility. Election is April 24.

Do you see a partnership between the 102nd assembly district and the Congressional Candidate? Yes. Also will work with NYS Senator for the area.

How would you vote for a carbon tax on fossil fuels? We need to do whatever we can to reduce our carbon footprint (drives an electric car, is a vegetarian). It is also an economy measure.

How many votes for Saugerties? 2200.

Nancy Schaef pointed out that Saugerties stands to make the biggest difference in the District as the largest township. Dorine Davis (Greene Cty Chair) agreed that if Aidin takes Saugerties and Greene Cty, he wins.

The Chair asked for a volunteer to take the lead for organizing a get-out-the-vote for Aidin. Nancy Schaef said she will work with someone but cannot take the lead. Christine is doing a postcard party for him this weekend. Kathleen Gray volunteered. Kathy Gordon said she will share a list from Dustin Reidy (Aidin’s campaign manager) on what is needed.

**Sheriff Candidate, Juan Figueroa**

Mr. Figueroa is from Ulster County, a Wallkill graduate, and a Marine Corps enlistee. He served four years active duty and eighteen years reserves. He was the operations, logistics officer of the unit. In the Marines, he saw that the poor and middle class fight our country’s battles. He became a trooper upon leaving the Marine Corps. He has patrolled Ulster County roads and knows them well. As an investigator, he focused on organized crime, identity theft, international crime, and drugs. As such he learned to work with other agencies. He retired at 48 yrs. oldand now works for fortune 500 companies as a security investigator. He is of Puerto Rican heritage. He said he has seen racism first-hand in our community and in the military witnessed how diversity benefits an organization. It makes us who we are, a nation of immigrants. His parents instilled the ethic of hard work. He has faith in humanity, that we can overcome differences we have.

Sanctuary City Movement: Must develop the wishes of the community he represents, within the limits of the law. We must keep the ability to communicate with immigrants.

Arming teachers: He is opposed. Even well-trained officers have trouble dealing with the chaos of a shoot-out.

Dealing with racism in the Police Department: Approach it head-on. Use communication and training.

Reducing recidivism: What can the Sheriff’s department do? Need education and reaching out to youth before they get in trouble. He said he will work with troubled youth and school systems. We need to begin when children are young.

**State Senate Candidate, Jeffrey Collins**

He briefly introduced himself. He said he will talk more next month about what is possible by flipping NYS Senate.

**Congressional Campaign Petitioning:** The Chair noted the petition period begins soon (it goes from March 6 – April 12) and will be very competitive. He noted that the BOE does not challenge petitions on its own, there must be a challenge. He then stated the rules regarding witnessing and signing petition sheets.

**Assignment of Districts to Committee Members**: The Chair moved to assign Christine Dinsmore to District 14. It was seconded by Chris Allen and passed unainimously.

**New Member:** Brigid Walsh said she is a 13 year resident of Saugerties. She has been an employee of Vogue for several years, but now is focused locally and wishes to become a member. Mike Harkavy moved to accept her, and it was seconded by Mike Cimorelli. The Chair said she will also be assigned to Election District 14.

The Chair reminded members that committee membership expires in November and the carrying of petitions will be required to get reassigned on the committee.

**Election Lessons Learned and formation of a subcommittee:** Kathy Gordon held a meeting to discuss lessons learned from the last election. The basic conclusion was that the planning and coordination could have been better. The Chair said that it may be necessary to form a sub-committee to address these sort of issues in subsequent elections and asked for volunteers. He added that we have a Caucus coming up this year. He moved that another standing committee be formed to coordinate with local campaigns. It was seconded by John Schoonmaker. Motion passed. John said he would be on the committee, as would Mike Cimorelli and Chris Allen as sub-committee chair.

**May 10 Congressional Candidate Forum:** We are trying to make it more interactive than other forums. The organizing group is holding a meeting at Nejla Liia’s house on March 12 for planning. Kathy Gordon said she wanted to discuss a budget for the Congressional Candidate forum saying that it may impact being able to contribute money to Aidin O’Connor’s campaign.

**Motion to Donate to Aidin O’Connor Campaign:** Kathy Gordon moved that we donate $1000 to his campaign; seconded by Mike Harkavy. Discussion: Chris Allen suggested it be put in perspective of contributions to local candidates. The Chair wondered if we need to hear from the campaign. Connie Bailey said the committee can help by sharing news of Aidin on social media. The Chair said he was uncomfortable with that amount of money, that we donate $500. That was accepted as an amendment. Motion passed.

**Elliot Auerbach contribution to Maloney campaign:** A letter was requested from the County Executive Committee which was agreed to by the Chair and is being considered.

**Standing Committees:**

 **Search Committee**: (Mike Cimorelli, Nejla Liias and Bill Barr. Still looking for couple of more people). The Chair is researching who will run for judge. Also the committee needs to look into who is planning to run against Mike MacIsaac’s for his position, if anyone. Mike expressed his intention to run for the Board seat.

 **Voter Outreach**: A letter is ready to be sent with a flier, and voter registration forms. We will have a letter folding party at Pam Ross’s house, March 8, at 7 PM. Connie and Liz Bailey agreed to help. We will have to wait for the planned outreach to houses without registered voters.

 **Fundraising Committee:** A lasagna dinner fundraiser will be held on April 19th. Children are free and there will be a children’s table with a magician. Music is also planned. There will be a Facebook page advertising the event and a digital invite that can be sent out.

 **Program Committee:** The Chair asked for a volunteer to take over this committee. Christine Dinsmore and Katy Holt signed up.

**School District Update—March 17 and 24 for gun safety**: Everybody is walking out of school on March 14th to protest gun violence in schools. There is also a social media announcement of a march in Washington and other cities, to include Poughkeepsie and Across the Hudson. Emails will be forthcoming. A show of support for the student walk-out was discussed

**Village Election**: No challenges.

**Bristol Beach:** Advisory Committee is trying to find a way to make the property accessible. Progressing, but slowly.

**County Issues:**

 **Website:** The Chair noted that it still needs updating.

 **Lincoln Park Peaker Power Plant**: Bill Barr provided a brief summary of plans to build a Peaker Power Plant in the Town of Ulster and explained the opposition to it. He noted that a good resource for information on it was Kingston Citizen and it was noted that Rebecca Martin, it’s organizer would be speaking to Saugerties Indivisible the following night. Bill said he would provide more information in an email.

**State Committee Meeting:** Nancy Schaef reported that the there is still a motion, largely brought by Kelleigh McKenzie to reform the bylaws and manner in which the State Committee functions. It centers on trying to get more representative leadership in the Executive Committee. Also there were some informative panels on how to campaign. The next meeting will be in the Spring. The Chair said the way the State Committee operates is pathetic. At one point during the meeting, the leadership was yelled down.

**Announcements:**

The Chair will be talking to the Chamber of Commerce about the new Paid Family Leave Act, at Legal Swine Barbeque in Barclay Heights on Feb 28.

John Schoonmaker recounted the recent Daily Freeman quotation of Chief Sinagra who supported arming teachers and noted that the Town Board declared it has no official stance on this matter.

**April Committee Meeting:** The April meeting will be on Monday, the 23d, to avoid conflict with the NYS Assembly election.

Submitted by Bill Barr, Secretary

Saugerties Democratic Committee