**Saugerties Democratic Committee**

**26 March 2019 Meeting Minutes**

Song by John Hall, “Saugerties”

**ROLL CALL**

**SDC Members Present:** Constance Bailey, Elizabeth Bailey, Kathryn Gordon, Mike Cimorelli, Pamela Ross, Bill Barr, John Schoonmaker, Kathleen Gray, Skip Arthur, Mike Harkavy, Judith Lechner, Tim Scott, John Remington, Nancy Schaef, Finley Schaef, Brigid Walsh, Cara Stammler, Chris Allen, Margo McGilvrey, Rick Cousin, Katherine Smith, Susan Breen, Nejla Liias, Lanny Walter, Aaron Levine

**1. Approve minutes from February 18, 2019 meeting:** Motion seconded by Finley Schaef and unanimously approved.

**2. Treasurer’s Report:** $1,760.30 balance. The Treasurer moved to approve the report. The motion was seconded by Pamela Ross, and approved unanimously.

**3. Guest presenters:**

**Cheryl Roberts, Esq., Candidate for Supreme Court Judge, 3rd Judicial District:** Single mom for 20 years. Endorsed by WFP, Ulster Dems and Ulster Women Democrats. She worked on D.C. Capitol Hill for John Chafee and on industrial waste law. Knows how laws are made. Was a local Judge for 8 years in Austerlitz. Started Columbia County Bail Fund to help indigent people. Now Exec Dir. for Greenberger ? for Social and Criminal Justice. Did litigation for 7 years. Would be first Columbia County Supreme Court Justice. Three Justices up this year, two from Albany. Thinks third should be from Columbia County. We will vote for Judicial Delegates who will vote for candidates to be on the ballot in November.

The Chair added that it looks like the Ulster County Chair favors Cochrane from Albany.

**Dave Clegg, Candidate for Ulster County District Attorney:** The DA is the most powerful position in our county re the criminal justice system. Presently, the DA, in Republican control since 1850 (John Van Buren). Policy has been “tough on crime” which amounts to mass incarceration, which costs 7 x treatment. War on drugs has been an abysmal failure. This DA’s office has not addressed the opioid addiction problem. Practicing law for 40 years. Clerked for NAACP Legal Defense Fund attacking capital punishment. Became Civil Rights lawyer with Lakota Sioux in Nebraska a few years after Wounded Knee. Public Defender for 9 years in Kingston where 80% of defendants had addiction problems and he had trouble arguing for treatment. He said that is still the case in Ulster County today.

**Pat Ryan, Candidate for County Executive:** Special Election April 30. Grew up in Kingston and fifth generation Ulster County resident. County Executive is an amazing job, covers all Social Services, infrastructure development and maintenance. Priorities are Environmental Justice, Social Justice and Economic Justice. In good shape because Democrats are in the majority. Challenge is making sure people know about the special election and show up for it. The Chair announced Amy Fradon’s phonebanking event on March 30 and every Thursday at Ryan HQ in Kingston.

**4. Petitioning.** The Chair reported that we collected 369 signatures for Town (needed 200) and for County Candidates, 372 signatures (need 1000 county wide). In all, it was a great success.

**4. Application by Candidates who are non-enrolled Democrats to run on the**

**Democratic Party line determined by majority weighted vote:**

The Chair began by a call for unity, regardless of outcomes and praising those who aspire to higher office. He then explained the rules from granting permission for a non-Democrat to run on Democratic Line (Wilson Pakula) and noted that we will vote on whether to grant it to Fred Costello and Leeanne Thornton (who had previously been told it would be provided. He then opened the floor for nominations.

**Town Supervisor:** Mike Harkavy nominated Fred Costello for Saugerties Town Supervisor citing his record (solar array in Saugerties, electric vehicles, one of the first Climate Smart towns in the state, Bristol Beach). Also cited his budgetary success, and other work. Nomination was seconded by Nancy Schaef who noted that Fred shares our Democratic values. The Committee voted unanimous approval (2680 votes)

**Town Board:** Skip Arthur nominated Leeanne Thornton. He related her activity on the Town Board and the Esopus Conservation Commission. Also liaison to the Conservation Advisory Committee and said she was a very positive presence in that role. The nomination was seconded by Margo McGilvrey, who also cited her tireless work on behalf of the community and her support of our values. The Committee voted unanimously to grant a Wilson Pakula (2649 points).

Fred and Leeanne expressed their appreciation for the vote and continued support from the Committee.

**5. Planning for Coordinated Campaign-campaign headquarters:** Looking for a HQ (Shout Out office on Partition St. and Chamber of Commerce office). Cost $1000/month. Nejla Liias briefly discussed progress so far. Need to rev up the engine for 2019. Having a space is very desirable. She asked for volunteers to help.

**6. Neighbor to Neighbor-schedule presentation:** This initiative was spearheaded by Amy Fradon and she would like to present to us a concept of neighbor visitation and familiarity. The Chair said he had invited them to come next month at 6:30 to make a presentation so that we can listen and decided whether it is something the Committee wishes to pursue. Rick Cousin seconded and it unanimously passed.

**7. Standing Committees**

**Local Campaign Coordinating Committee-plan:** The coordinated campaign plan will be distributed by email. The Chair encouraged members to look at it and make any recommendations to Barbara Boyce.

**Fundraising Committee-May 9:** Event scheduled for May 9 at the Senior Center. Margo McGilvrey said it is now time for the Committee to step up and relieve much of the burden that has been heretofore borne by Connie Bailey and her staff. She passed a sign -up sheet for members. Volunteers for setting up should be here by 4:30.

**Program Committee-April 24th environmental issues confronting our community:** Margo McGilvrey presented in Christine Dinsmore’s absence. The next one will be Wednesday, April 24th . Presentations by Laura Hartmann and Sue Rosenberg.

**8. School District Update:** Positive news has been relayed about the new School Superintendent.

**9. Town issues:** Leeanne Thornton said the Saugerties PD has received funding to improve enforcement. Will focus on speeding on Rte 32 and Main and Market Streets for pedestrian safety. Some members expressed their feelings that the latter is an abuse of power and harassment of citizens. Brigid Walsh asked about the failure of cameras in town to operate as planned. Fred Costello said measures are being taken to correct this by removing obstructions and improving signal transmission.

**10. County issues:** Aaron Levine asked whether the Committee will endorse Pat Ryan. Nancy Schaef moved that we endorse Pat Ryan; seconded by Mike Harkavy seconded and it passed with one nay.

**11. State issues**

**12. Federal issues**

**13. Business issues:** Rick Cousin said he will meet with Liz Bailey to improve the Committee website.

**14.** **Announcements-Election Inspectors**: Lanny Walter and Margo McGilvrey have signed up to be poll inspectors and encourages others to do so. **; Zoning Board of Appeals Public Hearing April 1 at 7 pm at Senior Center re: Demolition Debris disposal along Route 212:** Zoning board will have a meeting here to discuss the dumping situation on Rte 212. Construction debris from Suffolk and Sullivan Counties is being dumped on private property. An email will be forthcoming outlining details of the issue.

**15. Adjournment:** Motion to adjourn made by Rick Cousin; seconded by Pamela Ross and unanimously approved.

Submitted by Bill Barr, Secretary