**Saugerties Democratic Meeting Minutes**

**23 January 2018**

**Attendees:** Bill Barr, Lanny Walter, Connie Bailey, Rick Cousin, Liz Bailey, Mike Harkavy, Margo McGilvrey, Pamela Ross, Skip Athur, Nejla Liias, Nancy Schaef, Finley Schaef, John Schoonmaker, Mike Cimorelli, Barbara Boyce, Luz Mooney, Rob Gelbach, Christine Dinsmore, Kathy Gordon

**Approval of November 28 Minutes:** The Secretary moved to approve. Kathy Gordon seconded, on the condition that her name be added to the attendance list. Unanimously approved as amended.

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

Balance 28 November 2017 $3,284.40

Collected at meeting +86.00

Check for Maurice Hinchey Flowers -199.75

Balance 23 January 2018 $3,195.65

The motion was seconded by Barbara and approved unanimously.

**Congressional Candidates:**

**Jeff Beals**

Beals stressed the importance of convincing independent and swing voters. He recounted his family past and his current activity in the community. He said he was inspired by Bill Clinton’s inaugural address to Build a Bridge to the Millenium, and wanted to work in foreign policy, which led to job as CIA analyst. He then accepted a position as Foreign Service Officer with Department of State and worked to build a government in Iraq. He held a Swing Left event which surpassed expectations and led to encouragement for him to run for Congress. He said he is running because of students, for retirement age citizens who can’t afford to retire, for opioid victims who are pray of big pharma, for Hudson Valley farmers, for families drowning in medical debt, for women, and for himself—part of a generation that will not do as well as his/her parents. He stressed importance of people power over corporate power, and said that Faso represents corporate power. Concepts that he supports include Medicare for All, a Green New Deal (that would get the country off of fossil fuel by 2035), and investment in economic infrastructure. He feels we will usher in new era in CD19 and provide a blue print for how Democratic party can take back power in US. He then responded to questions from those present.

**Pat Ryan**

Born and raised in Kingston. His family has been here for 5 generations. He said his grandfather lied about age to enlist after Pearl Harbor and thinks he may have felt the same as a Sophomore at West Pt on 9/11/01. And now, Trump’s inauguration has added another call to serve. He said the district needs leaders who have proven record of putting community and country ahead of own interests. Faso not one of them. We deserve a leader with integrity, who will put forth real plan for future: Fundamental investment in infrastructure (rail line on W. side of Hudson), move away from fossil fuel economy, fixing education and training system. In District, 70% don’t graduate from College—he proposes a 2 yr. national service that would be answered by government paying for higher education. CD19 includes 11 counties and many are not Blue, so the successful candidate needs to “reach across the aisle”. He thinks he can do that because of his military and business experience. Being straight-forward about who you are will win over others. He said he is not the candidate to just tell people what they want to hear, but what he feels they need. He then responded to questions.

**Gareth Rhodes**

Rhodes noted that there were a lot Faso signs at various women’s marches, which is encouraging. He was born and raised in Esopus/Kingston. Raised in Bruderhof community. He worked locally as a well-digger, and served with the Marlborough FD. Shared values and upbringing are very important. He has government experience with NYS. He feels he can win because of his unique campaign (personally visiting every town in CD19), because of age and appeal to 18-34. He said he will advocate for Federal investment in improving infrastructure such as roads and bridges. This will lower taxes because municipalities will not be required to pay for their repair. Need to improve trust in government. There is a need to go to schools and get young people excited about government, about teaching, to counter Trump’s attack on government. He will promote the message of all the good government can do. As an example, he said he would not be here tonight if it were not for Federal Pell Grants for higher education. As did the others, he responded to questions.

**Candidate’s Forum:** Scheduled for evening of May 10. Nejla Liias—It will be at Saugerties High School (seating 600). Doors open at 6 and the forum begins at 6:30. Since it will follow petitioning, there may be fewer candidates. We want debate style highlighting Faso issues. She said she can use more help; we need someone to do Faso research, and will use that to formulate questions. We would also like suggestions from members. The group will meet on February 12 to discuss the way ahead. They are looking for a prominent name to moderate and will reach out to candidates as well as take suggestions from members. The school requires insurance, which will cost $176 for one night. Luz Mooney made a motion to pay it. Seconded by Christie. Kathy Gordon wanted to amend it to allocate other resources to committee for this, and suggested $300. Lanny suggested developing a budget first and that it be considered next month. Agreeing with that, Luz Mooney withdrew her motion.

**Executive Committee Members**: Nancy Schaef, First Vice-Chair is stepping down. Luz expressed interest in stepping up from Second Vice-Chair. Margot seconded the motion. The Chair asked for volunteers for the now vacant position of Second Vice-Chair. The Chair discussed other duties, which were primarily deciding meeting agenda. Connie nominated Christine Dinsmore who thought she may be too new. Finley Schaef nominated Barbara Boyce who said she is very interested in putting her enthusiasm into the position. Christine voiced her support for Barbara and seconded her nomination. It was unanimously approved to appoint Luz Mooney to First Vice-Chair and Barbara Boyce to Second Vice-Chair.

**More Democratic voters in Saugerties:**Kathy Gordon used Dustin Reidy’s (NY19) research on Democrats who own second homes here but are registered at their first home. They have found 259 residences that meet criteria and will use that. The team will meet Friday. She has been using the Parcel Lot database and comparing it to voter rolls to find houses with no registered voter. The plan is to visit them and keep knocking on the door until you reach the resident. If they wish to vote Democratic, we will try to register them and help them to the polls. Rick Cousin said that, based on Gareth Rhodes’ statement about 15-34 year-olds, we should also focus on them. Brigid Walsh added that she knows a lot of NYers who have homes here and is willing to help.

**Helping to Defer Legal Fees for Paper Ballot Canvass**. The attorney attended absentee ballot count for our candidates has billed the County and the County has asked the SDC to pick up $1,050 of it (out of the total charge of over $4,000). The Chair moved that we pay it, seconded by Mike Cimorelli. Discussion: Nancy Schaef said she thought this was an Ulster County responsibility and would prefer waiting until we see how others contributed. Others pointed out that the money the Committee currently has was largely raised to support the election. The motion passed, with Nancy and Finley Schaef voting against.

**Mary Ann Wrolsen Removal:** The Chair said he had again asked Mary Ann to resign, which she did not do. The matter is now in the hands of the County Committee. Frank Cardinale said he would again write to ask for her resignation. If she does not, there will be a hearing to determine the merits of our Committee’s recommendation.

**Response to Elliot Auerbach Contribution to Joe Maloney Campaign:**  The Chair said the County Committee is not sure what to do about it and noted that the other Committees are unhappy. The process is for the County Committee to decide if it wants to file charges. Lanny Walter intends to raise it before the County Committee. Nancy Schaef pointed out that others have been stripped of their State Committee position for doing just what the Comptroller has done. John Schoonmaker asked whether this was a violation of the loyalty clause because it was a personal contribution. The Chair said it was public because contributions are publicly released. Nancy moved that the SDC express its displeasure that Auerbach helped cause our candidate to lose, and that he be stripped of his County membership. The motion was seconded by Connie Bailey, and passed unanimously.

**Search Committee Update.** Regarding the State Assembly seat vacated by Pete Lopez, the Chair reported that the County Chairs have met and decided that they favored someone other than Aaron Levine. That person (from Green County) will probably present himself to us at the February meeting. There will be no petitioning process or primary. The real race for election will be in November. With regard to the State Senate race, Mike Harkavy pointed out that a good candidate for state senate might come from one of the five not winning the Primary for CD19 Congressional race. Nejla offered to join the Search Committee. Mike Cimorelli volunteered to serve as well.

**Fundraising Committee:** The fundraising committee plans to hold a fundraiser in the Spring, probably April 19. It will be another lasagna dinner but the group is open for other suggestions. Margot McGilvrey said she would reserve the hall with the town clerk for that date.

**Program Committee:** The Chair of the Program Committee has not been active, lately. Advocates for New York Health Act will be at the Chamber of Commerce to discuss it on January 31 at 645 Rte 212. They will be trying to get small businesses to support the Act. The meeting begins at 6:30.

**Bristol Beach**: The new Conservation Advisory Commission had its first meeting. They will begin talking to community to develop a vision for what the development will be. The Bristol Beach Advisory Commission (with Lanny and Mike) will meet with Town Board to discuss funding. Skip Arthur discussed the turn-around of the CAC composition and that it is now an extremely environmentalist-friendly group.

**CD19 Candidate Forum**: Woodstock, Feb 4, 1 PM, chance to meet candidates. Nejla Liias asked for feedback or observations from it to be sent to her. She said she can provide more information upon request.

**John Schoonmaker**: Will hold his first office hours at the Saugerties Senior Citizens Center form 6-7:30 pm this Friday, Jan 26.

Adjournment: Moved by Mike Harkavy; seconded by Rick Cousin and unanimously passed

Submitted by Bill Barr, Secretary

Saugerties Democratic Committee