**Saugerties Democratic Committee 22 January 2019 Meeting**

**Minutes**

**Call to Order:** In the absence of the Chair, the meeting was called to order by the

Secretary,Bill Barr. He noted that there were several candidates available and that

they would be given time to present themselves to the Committee following approval of

meeting minutes and Treasurer’s Reports. (Due to a confusion of messages, no song

was provided for the meeting.)

**Roll Call:** Kathy Gordon, Mike Cimorelli, Pamela Ross, Bill Barr, John Schoonmaker, Kathleen Gray, Christine Dinsmore, Skip Arthur, Michael Harkavy, Tim Scott, Nancy Schaef, Chris Allen, Kevin Freeman, Rick Cousin, Barbara Boyce, Aaron Levine, Kathryn Smith

**1. Approve minutes from November 27, 2018 meeting**. The Acting Chair noted

amendments to wording in the Committee Vacancies section and moved that the

minutes be approved. Seconded by Mike Harkavy and unanimously approved as amended.

**2. Treasurer’s Report:** In the absence of the Treasurer, the Acting Chair read

Treasurer’s Report for the November meeting and moved that they be approved and

appended to the November meeting minutes. It was seconded by Tim Scott and unanimously approved.

The Acting Chair then read the Treasurer’s Report for the current meeting, as follows:

Balance as of November 27, 2018 $1503.23

Collected at meeting 134.00

Refund of deposit by Town for Fund Raiser 90.00

Check #182 to Kathy Gordon (Facebook ads) 52.00

Check #183 Christine Dinsmore for party food 123.06

Check #184 Lanny Walter for Books 64.80

Balance as of January 22, 2019 $1487.37

The Acting Chair then moved that the report be approved. The motion was seconded by Christine Dinsmore and approved unanimously.

**3. Introduce Guests (Non-members):**

Barbara Pokras, David Gordon, Starley Swonyoung, Evan Schelpler, Joe Fullman and

Sue Rosenberg,

**4. Overview of the.upcoming election season and Introduction of Candidates for**

**County Executive:** The Acting Chair reported on the recent changes in the Election cycle and that, as a result, petitioning will take place from February to April [note: the actual dates are February 26 to April 4].

The State Primary will be June 25, 2019.

The County Executive Special Election will be 90 days from Mike Hein’s resignation date. Adele Reiter is named Interim Executive and will serve from then until a new Executive is elected.

February 20, County Committee names County Executive candidate. As a result, it is suggested our next SDC Committee meeting will be rescheduled to February 19. Place TBD.

The County Executive Candidates were then introduced and allowed 5 minutes to speak followed by a 5 minute question and answer period.

**Marc Rider** spoke about his experience and why he wants to run for the position of

County Executive. His most recent experience has been working at the pleasure of

the present County Executive as one of the three Deputy County Executives. He has

also served in the County Attorney’s office and as Director of the Purchasing

Department. These positions have given him experience and knowledge of how the

County operates and the systems and mechanisms that are presently in place. In his

roles with the County he has overseen several major projects for the present County

Executive including the creation of the SUNY Ulster Midtown Campus and the

Restorative Justice Center. Important issues going forward is to focus on housing

affordability in Ulster County which affects the low and moderate and seniors of our

community. This housing shortage is critical issue for our county. Also he plans to

deliver high paying jobs and work on developing a skilled local labor force. Plans to

work with Office of Economic Development and with SUNY Ulster to expand these

efforts. Mark will continue to reduce the overall tax burden to County Residents as

Mike Hein has successfully done. As County Executive he would work with the towns

to develop a Health Care Consortium to reduce health benefits costs for the towns

which in turn would reduce the tax burden for home owners.

Q&A: When asked what he would do differently than Mike Hein, he said he feels we

can go further with shared services in the County; i.e., purchasing consortium with towns and the Health Care Consortium as done in Tompkins County. A Health Consortium would allow other municipalities to buy into the County health system for town/village employees which would be a self-pay program which would lower health benefit costs for the municipalities.

**Pat Ryan**: Pat grew up in Kingston; lives in Gardiner; and is part of large Ryan family

in Kingston. He is the oldest of 19 first cousins in the area. He proposes that the

County should have a Green New Deal that would stand up against dirty energy

production projects. He would endorse the acceleration of economic growth bringing

jobs to the area. He plans to continue Mike’s legacy to redefine what justice means

and continue the work of the restorative justice center. He said he plans to work with Juan Figueroa, our new Sheriff on the new projects he’s proposing. This job is about

leadership and being an executive. Pat explained that he has provided leadership in the military and in his company and has the executive skills as a result of that experience.

Q&A: What would he do differently? Respects Mike but would work more as a team

with other elected officials in Ulster County. What is business he ran? His professional career after his Army service and it had the purpose to get new small innovative companies to get safer and better strategies to the Armed Forces. Recognizes there were some questions in the previous campaign raised about his company which he would be willing to sit down and talk with anyone about at length.

**Pat Strong**: Pat spoke about the previous campaign citing the excellent response she

received in Ulster County. She actually feels this position fits her skills set better than the Senate. The major issue facing the County is the Economy. We have neighbors living paycheck to paycheck and this is where she plans to focus efforts. Emphasis would be economic development. Has worked in her own business working on Solar Energy Consortium/ has worked with SUNY Ulster in building workforce for Green Jobs. Pat mentioned the need to collaborate with other elected officials better. Need to work with IDA, NYS Assembly and other tourism efforts.

Q&A - What would she do differently? Work better with other elected officials. What would you do to develop stronger workforce with skills for tech jobs. Need to work with IDA coordinate outreach to micro enterprises. Need to expand efforts to build a skilled

workforce. We need to figure out how to support small businesses and do that.

**5. Ulster County Court-Candidate Bryan Rounds, Esq.**

Bryan introduced himself with first explaining the rules of the Judicial campaign.

Judicial candidates cannot tell you in advance how he would rule in a type or issue.

He attended and graduated from Albany Law School. He was an ADA in Albany

County at age 25 where he prosecuted misdemeanors and felony cases. Presently

has a private practice that does solely criminal law. Also provides senior trial law

services in Ulster County in the public defenders office. Has prosecuted and defended each type of crime possible in Ulster County for 25 years.

Q&A: What does he think Ulster County criminal justice restorative justice center will do for preventing recidivism? Hopes that it will provide best interest for those youth to keep kids out prison help to end the school to prison pipeline. Drug court is also an alternative to incarceration for felony cases. Judge he is running against has not used drug court resource as much as is possible. Feels it should be taken advantage of more than presently its used.

**6 Ulster County District Attorney-Candidate Dave Clegg.** The Acting Chair noted

that Dave was not present and that, given his recent presentation to this body during his

Congressional campaign, he had asked that he not be required to present himself

again, but emphasized his strong desire to be the County District Attorney.

**7. Upcoming meetings and forums.**

Meeting of County Executive Committee Jan. 24, 6:30 pm at Rosendale

Recreation Center;

Ulster People for Justice and Democracy, Rosendale Rec. Center, Jan. 28 6 pm.

**8. Ulster County Legislature-Candidates so far announced:** Legislative

District. 2- Chris Allen and John Schoonmaker; under consideration for District 1-

Bruce Chukoian .

**9. Town Government-**Caucus to be held before July 25. Arron Levine suggested

the issue of caucus vs. primary be discussed at the February meeting. The Acting Chair noted that this had been discussed by the Executive Committee but it was felt there wasn’t time to fully discuss this issue and change course for this election cycle.

Many members present expressed strong feelings that moving to a Primary may be of value, given our last experience, and that a discussion at the next meeting would be important. The Acting Chair committed that it would be on the agenda.

**10. NYS Off Fossil Fuels Resolution** - Food and Water Watch sent an organizational

sign on letter advocating for NYS to get off fossil fuels. Governor Cuomo announced

his plans to accomplish this goal by 2040. Resolution states 2040 is not fast enough.

Bill moved that SDC sign on to this letter that Governor move faster. The motion was seconded by John Schoonmaker and the motion passed unanimously.

**11. Standing Committees**

\* Local Campaign Coordinating Committee – Barbara Boyce said the

committee hasn’t met. Need to analyze how to proceed. Given the election cycle changes, much of the previous work will require revision. She will speak

to the committee at a later date.

\* Search Committee-for County Legislator and Town Government. No report.

\* Voter Data Committee- Kathy Gordon reported on the winner of the guess on voter turnout (John Schoonmaker) and noted that the turnout matched Presidential election year

\* Fundraising Committee . No report.

\* Program Committee- Christine Dinsmore reported that Committee has

planned several educational forums sponsored by Saugerties Democratic

Committee as follows:

a. Feb. 28 - NY Health Act discussion

b. March 21 - Community Policing Forum with Juan Figueroa, Chief Joe

Sinagra and NY State Trooper Representative.

c. April 25 Local Environment Program focusing on Glyde Path Issue

d. May 23 – NY Home Health Care shortage

Christine asked for SDC to set aside up to $500 for any expenses for these programs.

All programs will be at the Senior Center. Motion made by Christine and seconded by Kathy Gordon. It passed unanimously.

**12. State issues**--- Nancy Schaef reported about the heavy handed methods used by

the Governor in running the State Committee. There is a strong response from the

Progressive Caucus within the State Committee. A meeting of the Progressive Caucus

is scheduled in New York City in February to plan strategies. She reported that there

is a new Executive Director and a new State Chair being appointed. Kathy Gordon

raised the issue about the early voting and the need to get financing for this measure

from the State. The Acting Chair noted that we cannot know the status of that at this time, but assuming early voting will be passed, the need for election inspectors will increase and we should consider volunteering for that function.

**13. Federal issues** - Aaron Levine raised the issue about the shutdown and the

federal workers affected in Saugerties and whether there is something we can do.

Question raised, is there anything we can do to support Coast Guard workers in

Saugerties that are not getting paid? Discussion followed and it was felt we needed to

see what plays out in the next few days. It was decided that we could encourage locals to contribute to the food pantry on their behalf, and Christine Dinsmore offered to draft a letter for the Chair’s signature that could be submitted to local news

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**14. Business issues**--SDC social media report.

Ric Cousin noted that he will again be available to work with Elizabeth Bailey on the website.

**15.  Adjournment**

Christine Dinsmore motion to adjourn, seconded by Aaron Levine and approved unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Bill Barr, Secretary and

Nancy E.K. Schaef, Acting Secretary