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| **Politics and Elections Because That’s What We Do** |
| **Mixed Results**The 2021 elections had bright spots and disappointments. Of the five contested races, Aaron Levine and Joe Maloney flipped two seats from Republican to Democrat, the Republicans flipped one Democratic seat, and two positions remained with the Republican incumbents. (See full election results [here](https://documentcloud.adobe.com/link/review?uri=urn:aaid:scds:US:77a30c7d-2a6c-44ec-8826-73f0f6624af9#pageNum=1).)Aaron will represent Legislative District 1 and Joe will represent Legislative District 2 in the Ulster County Legislature, widening the Democratic majority from 12-11 to 16-7. Aaron prevailed over his Republican opponent with 1,346 votes to 890. In a three-way race, Joe garnered 1,124 votes to his Republican opponent’s 884 and the Independent candidate’s 115 votes. Arick Manocha lost to an entrenched incumbent in Legislative District 3. Of the 10,476 ballots cast for Town Board, Kayleigh Zaloga and Kevin Freeman fell short by 46 and 93 votes, respectively. This is a huge loss for the people of Saugerties as Kayleigh and Kevin would have brought valuable experience and solid values to our town. The Saugerties Democratic Committee hopes that they will run for elected office again. **Biden and the Democrats Achievements**The media is pushing the GOP narrative about President Biden and the Democrats rather than highlighting the Democrats’ consequential legislative accomplishments. As historian Heather Cox Richardson [writes](https://heathercoxrichardson.substack.com/p/november-27-2021), under Biden, the U.S. economy has recovered from the pandemic faster than any other country and has created 5.5 million jobs in 10 months. With the passage of the American Rescue Plan, $66 billion has reached 36 million households, cutting child poverty in half. The infrastructure bill that was recently signed into law by Biden will repair bridges and roads and provide broadband to rural areas. And Build Back Better, with its sweeping domestic and environmental funding, is moving through the negotiations. This is how laws are made and governments work in a functioning democracy. At the same time, Republicans in Congress are refusing to fund the government, which will run out of money this Friday, or raise the debt ceiling. The debt ceiling covers only money already appropriated, including the $7.8 trillion added to the debt under Trump. Since Biden’s inauguration, the Democrats have focused on passing bills to rescue our economy and improve the lives of Americans. The Republicans have set their sights on undermining the Biden administration at the expense of our country’s best interest. In other national news, more than [150 political scientists called](https://www.newamerica.org/political-reform/statements/statement-in-support-of-the-freedom-to-vote-act/) on Congress to pass the [Freedom to Vote Act](https://www.brennancenter.org/our-work/research-reports/freedom-vote-act) and the [John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act](https://my.lwv.org/montana/action-alert/action-alert-john-lewis-voting-rights-advancement-act-support-needed-now) to ensure that the Republican playbook to subvert majority rule and undermine fair elections fails.  |

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| **Monthly Meeting News** |
| **November SDC Meetings Highlights**\*The Saugerties Democratic Committee met on Tuesday, November 23, via Zoom. The committee reviewed the campaign process, voter outreach efforts, and the results of the November 3 elections. The Executive Committee announced that the SDC would forgo its usual December hiatus and instead meet on Tuesday, December 14. Note that this is the second Tuesday of the month, instead of the usual fourth Tuesday. This additional meeting is scheduled in anticipation of an earlier campaign petitioning season in 2022.\*For a copy of the full minutes, please email saugertiesdemocraticcommittee@gmail.com or check [saugertiesdemocrats.org](file:///C%3A%5CUsers%5CChristine%5CDocuments%5CDemocratic%20Committee%5Csaugertiesdemocrats.org). The 2022 SDC monthly meeting schedule is January 25, February 22, March 22, April 26, May 24, June 28, July 26, August 23, September 27, October 25, and November 2. All welcome! |
| **News and Newsworthy** |
| The **NY State Independent Redistricting Commission** continues hearings on the legislative map. It remains unclear what the final map will look like. Three Saugerties Democratic Committee members gave public testimony at the November 8 meeting held in White Plains. The testimony of [Bill Barr](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DCCy77y_8YE), [Louise Bloomfield](https://youtu.be/whEHDqie5RI), and [Kathy Gordon](https://youtu.be/BKwGZMFtQ6Y) underscored how the two proposed maps would hurt Saugerties. Currently, both redistricting maps lop off a section of Saugerties, causing the town to have two different representatives in the NY State Senate and Assembly and in the US Congress. The final public meeting will be held virtually on Sunday, December 5. On a celebratory note, the Saugerties [**Holiday in the Village**](https://villagesaugerties.digitaltowpath.org:10064/content/Calendars/View/1/2021/12%3B/content/CalendarEntries/View/5838)will take place on Sunday, December 5, from noon to 6:00 PM.The NY Democratic Lawyers Council will sponsor a virtual panel discussion,[**Voter Suppression Laws, Attacks on Elections & the Future of Democracy**](https://www.nydlc.org/voter_suppression_laws?utm_campaign=voter_suppression_laws&utm_medium=email&utm_source=nydlc), on Wednesday, December 8, from 6:30 to 8:30 PM. Non-attorneys and those not seeking CLE credits are welcome to attend for free; email lawyerscouncilcle@gmail.com to reserve a spot. With COVID cases rising in the county, **Ulster County Executive Pat Ryan** has issued a 30-day state of emergency. He discussed what that entails and what led up to his decision in an [interview](https://www.wamc.org/news/2021-11-30/ulster-county-executive-pat-ryan-discusses-covid-state-of-emergency) on WAMC. Vaccinations remain the best defense in this ongoing battle. If you haven’t been vaccinated or if you need a booster, find your closet vaccine site [here](https://www.vaccines.gov/results/?zipcode=12477&medications=779bfe52-0dd8-4023-a183-457eb100fccc,a84fb9ed-deb4-461c-b785-e17c782ef88b,784db609-dc1f-45a5-bad6-8db02e79d44f&radius=25).Wishing everyone peace and happiness this holiday season.  |