



## Saugerties Democratic Committee

### January 24, 2023 Monthly Meeting Minutes

Senior Center and Zoom, 7:00pm

#### **Roll Call**

The Secretary called roll and determined that a quorum was present:

*Voting Members:* Gilda Riccardi, Liz Buono, Ken Kleinberg, Andrew Zink, Bill Barr, Justine Tomkiell, Christine Dinsmore, Skip Arthur, Nejla Lias, Mike Harkavy, Louise Bloomfield, Kathy Gordon, Tim Scott, Nancy Schaefer, Nicole Roskos, Joe Maloney, Bob Gelbach, Kevin Freeman, Margo McGilvrey, Rick Cousin, Hélène Lesterlin, Lanny Walter, Aaron Levine

*Guests:* Candidates Fred Costello, Leeanne Thornton, Michael Ivino, Stanley O'Dell, Jill Zarcone, Emmanuel Nneji, Jarrid Blades.

Amy Fradon, Patti Kelly, John Dashman, Kathleen Gray, Josepha Gutelius, Nina Schmidbaour, Richard Azoff, Sheila Dinesburg-Azoff, Chris Allen, Joe Puma, Larry Alexander, Claudia Andreassen.

#### **Approval of Minutes**

Andrew Zink moved to approve the draft Minutes of the November 22, 2022 Committee meeting, seconded by Bill Barr. The motion passed.

#### **Treasurer's Report**

Skip Arthur moved to accept the Treasurer's Report, seconded by Liz Buono. The motion passed.

#### **SDC TREASURER REPORT JANUARY 2023**

	<b>Actual</b>		<b>Pending</b>
<b>Beginning Balance</b>			
22-Nov-22	\$2,646.70		
<b>Income</b>			
ActBlue Donations (Recurring)	220.84	Refund Chk#294	\$260.00
<b>Total Income</b>	\$220.84		
<b>Expenses</b>			
Rafael Warnock CC Payment	(200.00)		
Check#293(W. Barr for Zoom)	(400.00)		
Zoom CC Payment	(59.96)		
Check#294(Twn of Saugerties)	(260.00)		
<b>Total Expenses</b>	(\$919.96)		

## **New Balance**

24-Jan-23

\$1,947.58

\$2,207.58

### **Guests and Guest Speakers**

Chair Nejla Liias welcomed guests and explained the process for hearing from Democratic candidates for Town office and District Attorney. Each candidate was given up to 5 minutes to speak and 5 minutes to respond to questions.

Fred Costello (Town Supervisor), Leanne Thornton (Town Board), Michael Ivino (Town Board), Stan O'Dell (Town Justice) and Jill Zarcone (Receiver of Taxes) each spoke about their experience and reasons for running and answered questions.

The Chair noted that District Attorney David Clegg has decided not to run for re-election, and introduced the two Democratic candidates to replace him. The first candidate, County Chief Assistant District Attorney Emmanuel Nneji, spoke and answered questions. Candidate Jarrid Blades then spoke and answered questions.

The Chair thanked all the candidates and announced that a Special Meeting will be scheduled for February, to allow Committee members and guests to hear from County Legislature candidates in Saugerties districts. Endorsement votes for Town candidates could also take place at this meeting.

### **Neighbor to Neighbor (N2N)**

Town N2N lead Christine Dinsmore explained that our N2N strategy this year is to “start small” with one Election District (ED). She introduced co-leads Liz Buono and Tim Scott. She stressed that the N2N program is about discovering like-minded Democrats, meeting our community, and understanding what Democrats care about. Nejla noted that we welcome N2N participation from all Democrats, not just Committee members. Christine then introduced Amy Fradon, the County Democratic Committee’s Vice Chair of Voter Outreach. Amy explained how starting to build these relationships early in the year can significantly increase Democratic turnout while building community.

Nejla proposed forming a special N2N committee as a subcommittee of the SDC. Gilda Riccardi moved to form this committee, seconded by Louise Bloomfield. The motion passed.

### **Committee Business**

Nejla alerted the Committee to the County Democratic Committee Convention set for February 22, at which endorsement votes will be held for Countywide candidates. Before that convention there will be a County Committee District Attorney forum open to all County committee members.

Andrew Zink announced his candidacy for the Village Board.

Nejla noted the Saugerties CSD’s proposal to consolidate all school election poll sites into one poll site at the high school. She reported that the SDC Executive Committee wrote a letter to the School Board and the Superintendent opposing this consolidation. Among the reasons for this opposition, limiting voting to a single site could disenfranchise many voters (in an election where turnout is already low).

### **Proposed Resolution**

Bill Barr proposed a Resolution to change the Bylaws that would authorize the Executive Committee to expenditures up to \$500. Currently, the Executive Committee can approve any proposed expenditure up to \$100; anything over that sum has to be put to a full Committee vote.

The proposal was discussed, in preparation for a vote to take place at the Committee's next regular meeting. As written, the Resolution would cover campaign donations as well as other expenses. Nejla noted that the intent is to allow the Executive Committee to approve expenditures only in urgent cases, if a timely full Committee vote were impossible to schedule. Members expressed different views about allowing campaign contributions to be included, including a proposed amendment to restrict them to campaigns of previously endorsed candidates. Rick Cousin proposed amending the Resolution to exclude them. Lanny Walter commented that the Executive Committee, by planning further ahead, could avoid such expenses becoming matters of urgency. He also proposed lowering the Executive Committee's approval threshold. Liz Buono supported Rick's proposal. Christine Dinsmore suggested a threshold for approval of the lower of \$500, or a set percentage of the Committee's current balance. Andrew supported excluding all campaign donations. It was agreed that a revised Resolution would be circulated before the vote at our February 28 meeting.

### **Honoring Pam Ross**

Nejla spoke about Pam and introduced a video prepared by the Committee. Members and guests shared memories of Pam and reflections on her many gifts to the community and the community. Bill spoke of his and Pam's wish shared wish that the Committee continue its work in her memory.

Kevin Freeman moved to adjourn, seconded by Andrew. The motion passed and the meeting adjourned at 9:33pm

Respectfully submitted,

Louise Bloomfield, Secretary