 Saugerties Democratic Committee Newsletter

May 2023

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| **Politics and Elections Because That’s What We Do** |
| *What beliefs define every Democrat in this country? What do we hold dear, every single one of us, from rural Joe Manchin supporters in West Virginia to fierce Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez backers in the Bronx, and everywhere else in between?...*  *…****the center of our struggle is the idea that the American government exists to help people.***                                                               ~Democrats 101: A Primer for Us (Plainwords Press, 2021)    **Saugerties Democratic Committee Endorsement Process**  We take our role to vet candidates seriously and recommend who we believe will work to better our lives. In order to be endorsed, a candidate must specifically ask for our endorsement and then receive 2/3 of the members’ votes. In raw numbers, when the SDC is at full complement, a candidate needs 20 out of 30 votes of SDC members. SDC membership at the recent endorsement vote was 29, meaning at least 20 yes votes were required for endorsement.    The town candidates who received our endorsement share our values and consistently show they support our vision—government exists to help people. Do they align with every member all the time? Of course not. But we have selected candidates who the vast majority of our committee believes will best serve our town. All candidates exceeded the vote threshold for endorsement.    **Fred Costello**, our incumbent town supervisor, has guided Saugerties through various challenges, including the Covid pandemic. Under his leadership, our town was designated a Climate Smart Community, the first Ulster town to achieve a bronze certification. Fred has been a careful steward of our tax dollars and he has listened to residents as the town navigates development. Fred is best suited to take on the challenges of affordable housing, climate change, and job creation as town supervisor.    **Leeanne Thornton**, our incumbent deputy supervisor, is a retired middle school social studies teacher who is committed to economic growth while preserving the values of “Friendly Saugerties.” She is the liaison to various town boards and committees, including the Saugerties Boys and Girls Club, the Bristol Beach Finance and Outreach Board, the Comprehensive Plan Committee, Saugerties Public Library, and Saugerties Transportation Advisory Council. Leeanne puts our children’s future front and center in her work on the town board.    **Mike Ivino**, our incumbent town board member, is a lifelong Saugerties resident, small business owner, and volunteer firefighter.  Along with Fred and Leeanne, Mike is committed to sustainable development, creating affordable housing, and public safety for all. Among his principled votes was the deciding vote to stop a gun show at Cantine Field, a stone’s throw away from the junior and senior high school.    Fred, Leeanne, and Mike consistently attend Saugerties Democratic Committee meetings to report on major issues and to elicit opinions and suggestions. They are responsive to our concerns and values.    **Aimee Richter**, first-time town justice candidate, is an attorney with nearly 30 years of court experience. Aimee knows the law. She will follow the law to ensure public safety and equal justice for all. As a practicing family law attorney, Aimee has worked on countless cases involving housing, domestic violence, child custody, finances and more. She is a Saugerties Animal Shelter board member. She lives with her husband, Charles Matusiak, and their seven rescue cats.    **Meet and Greet:** Come meet, spend time, and get to know our endorsed candidates on May 18 at 7:00 PM at the Senior Center.    **Molinaro Watch**  In a recent tweet, Molinaro emphasized that he broke with his party on a particular solar power vote. Voting 99% of the time with Kevin McCarthy, Marjorie Taylor Greene, and Lauren Boebert does not make Molinaro bipartisan. Despite his word at the Saugerties Town Hall, Molinaro voted for the McCarthy debt ceiling bill. This bill would include cutting veterans benefits; removing 200,000 children from Head Start and another 100,000 from child care assistance; decreasing higher education aid to 6.6 million Pell grant recipients and eliminating the grant for 80,000 students; reducing rental assistance to millions of poor and disabled; cutting funding for research on cancer and other life-threatening diseases; blocking student loan debt relief; adding further work requirements for federal food assistance; and more draconian measures.    The irony is that Molinaro is bragging about breaking with his party over solar energy initiatives. Yet he joined Republicans in a bill to boost investment in fossil fuel by increasing domestic oil production, natural gas, and coal, and easing restrictions on the development of pipelines and refineries. Beware of Molinaro’s slick messaging. He distorts his votes with benign language that hides the true policies behind his words. For instance, he claims to be protecting parents’ rights by banning books and whitewashing history. He claims to champion women’s rights by voting to bar a handful of trans girls from playing sports while voting to take away millions of women’s reproductive choice. Oh, Mendacious Molinaro!    **Ulster Republicans Lose in Court**  Sloppy and inaccurate petitions forced two Republican legislative candidates off the ballot. Legislator Craig Lopez of District 14 and Jarad Keplinger, candidate in District 8, were [removed from the Republican line](https://www.dailyfreeman.com/2023/04/28/ulster-county-legislator-craig-lopez-loses-bid-to-stay-on-gop-line-in-novembers-election/?share=3oteotmieemetireuwyn) on the November ballot. Lopez had earlier been removed from the Conservative line for lack of valid signatures. After fielding just 12 candidates for 23 legislative seats, the Republican Party will have 10 candidates on the ballot. |
| **Monthly Meeting News** |
| **April SDC Meeting\***  The Saugerties Democratic Committee had a meeting on Tuesday, April 25. The executive committee presented its recommendations for the bylaws regarding endorsed candidates, emphasizing that this was still a work in progress. The committee also voted to allocate funds to help our endorsed candidates in the upcoming Democratic primary.    \*For a copy of the full minutes, please email [saugertiesdemocraticcommittee@gmail.com](mailto:saugertiesdemocraticcommittee@gmail.com) or check [saugertiesdemocrats.org](https://saugertiesdemocrats.org/). Meeting schedule for 2023: May 24 , June date TBA (moving from Primary date of June 27), July 25, August 22, Sept 26, Oct 24, Nov 28. Meetings at Senior Center. All welcome. |
| **News & Newsworthy** |
| **New York State Budget Expected to Pass**  Governor Kathy Hochul announced on Thursday, April 27, that a tentative budget deal had been struck. As with all compromises, no one is completely happy and many are upset.    Among other things, the deal will raise the minimum wage, provide money for the cash-strapped Metropolitan Transportation Authority, and make changes to the bail reform law. The budget will raise the minimum wage—currently $15 an hour in Long Island, NYC, and Westchester and $14.20 for the rest of the state--by 50 cents a year beginning next year until it hits $17 an hour. (For areas north of Westchester, the initial increase will be 80 cents next year and 50 cents until it hits $16.) After that, the wage will be tied to inflation.    A contentious item in the budget was bail reform. Hochul called for and received a concession that allows judges more discretion in setting bail. Prosecutors and police pushed for this change. Defense attorneys and criminal justice advocates say this change “rips at the heart of the state’s criminal justice reform” and point to John Jay College’s [research](https://gothamist.com/news/study-shows-those-released-under-nys-bail-reform-laws-are-less-likely-to-get-rearrested?oref=csny_firstreadtonight_nl&fbclid=IwAR3G_t1W5I5E1k5VNL9F1UJS5D4yUxcWxrzPgO60wL36wqdiD6uV3mdLfEA) that found that people released under the NYS bail law are less likely to be rearrested.    Hochul backed off her demand for 100 new charter schools and instead agreed to the reopening of 14 “zombie charter schools,” which were privately run, publicly funded schools that previously received licenses but then went dormant.    **Local & State Legislative News: A Sampling of Democratic Legislation**  NYS Senator **Michelle Hinchey’s** bill that requires Central Hudson to accurately bill monthly  rather than estimate fees has passed the Senate. NYS Assemblywoman **Sarahana Shrestha**, co-sponsor of the Assembly version of the bill, expects it to pass before the June 8 closing of the legislative session. If passed, the utility company will no longer blindside customers with astronomical bills based on the corporation’s guesses.    Ulster County legislators unanimously adopted a resolution imploring Holtec International to not release the more than a million gallons of radioactive water into the Hudson River this month that Holtec planned. At a press conference, Ulster County **Jen Metzger** called for “secure storage of the contaminated water on the Indian Point site while safer disposal methods are evaluated.” NYS Senator **Michelle Hinchey** co-sponsored a bill to ban radioactive dumping in state waters. As of now, Holtec International has [postponed the radioactive dump](https://www.nytimes.com/2023/04/14/nyregion/hudson-river-nuclear-waste.html?smid=url-share) until August. But local and state representatives and our two Democratic senators, **Chuck Schumer** and **Kirsten Gillibrand**, remain vigilant as they push for an alternative, safe plan.    **President Joe Biden Announces Reelection Campaign**  It’s official! President Joe Biden and Vice President Kamala Harris are running for reelection. The Biden announcement was [quite different than in 2016](https://open.substack.com/pub/heathercoxrichardson/p/april-25-2023?r=4uv5r&utm_campaign=post&utm_medium=web) and was met with a Republican computer-generated video because in keeping with the GOP faux news, they couldn’t find real clips of Biden and Harris to peddle the GOP lies. Right off the bat, [Bernie Sanders endorsed](https://apnews.com/article/bernie-sanders-biden-endorsement-2024-d8f0772b117e2bf83e1062708ea651c0) Biden. Expect that Republicans, in keeping with their misogyny (GOP Senators just voted down the Equal Rights Amendment and earlier this year cheered the end of Roe v Wade), will focus their [attacks on Kamala Harris](https://www.marketwatch.com/story/republican-candidate-nikki-haley-criticized-after-appearing-to-forecast-biden-second-term-death-abc588b9), the first female and person of color to be vice president. It may be a year away, but it’s no time for us to be complacent. |

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| **May Community Happenings** |
| **May 1:** Village Board meeting; 43 Partition St.; [pmelville@villageofsaugerties.org](mailto:pmelville@villageofsaugerties.org); 5:30 PM  **May 3:** Town Board Meeting (in-person & [Webex](https://townsaugerties.digitaltowpath.org:10234/content/Generic/View/294)); Saugerties Senior Center; contact [lstanley@saugerties.ny.gov](mailto:lstanley@saugerties.ny.gov); pre-board at 6:30 PM; board meeting at 7:00 PM  **May 3:** Ulster County First Annual Youth Summit; UPAC; 601 Broadway, Kinston; Info: 84-750-0953; 5:00 PM-8:00 PM  **May 3:** Keith Gurgui for Legislator (District 3 includes parts of Saugerties) Campaign Launch; Hickory BBQ, Rte 28, cash bar; Kingston; 5:30 PM-7:00 PM  **May 5:** Dance Party at the Library; 91 Washington Ave.; family-friendly; 7:00 PM-11:00 PM  **May 6:** Village-wide yard sale; throughout the village; 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM  **May 5, 6, 7:** May Melt Women’s Hockey Tournament for [Miles of Hope](https://mailchi.mp/bfa05462b534/nightmaresmaymelt?fbclid=IwAR3flYz8ZWsUVKi07Qlt1lIeAeU9Ad8uiS7UpU2ns5UkOh-GQA8Bd9pgLuA) (breast cancer awareness); Kiwanis Ice Arena; info: <mailto:nightmareshockeysaugertiesny@gmail.com>  **May 9:** American Legion Pulled Pork Dinner; info: [kpendergast@hvc.rr.com](mailto:kpendergast@hvc.rr.com); 4 PM-6:30 PM  **May 9:** Transportation Advisory Committee; Bldg Dept. Conf Rm., 4 High St.; 6:30 PM  **May 9:** Saugerties Board of Education meeting; High School media center; 6:30 PM  **May 10:** Village Planning Board Meeting; Fire Dept., 43 Partition St., 6:30 PM  **May 11:** Saugerties Public Library Board of Trustees Meeting; 91 Washington Ave.; 6:00 PM  **May 13:** Reformed Church Plant Sale & Crafts; 173 Main St; 9:00 AM-3:00PM  **May 13:** Blue Jeans Ball to benefit the Saugerties Animal Shelter; Fortune Valley Manor; 248 Old Stage Rd; [tickets](https://saugertiesanimalshelter.networkforgood.com/events/53184-saugerties-animal-shelter-2nd-annual-blue-jeans-ball-at-fortune-valley-manor);  5:00 PM-9:00 PM  **May 15:** Village Board meeting; 43 Partition St.; [pmelville@villageofsaugerties.org](mailto:pmelville@villageofsaugerties.org); 5:30 PM  **May 15:** Historic Preservation Commission Meeting; Senior Center; contact: Jeremy Russell at [jeremy@thingsrelevant.com](mailto:jeremy@thingsrelevant.com); 7:00 PM  **May 16:** School Board and Budget vote; Cahill, Morse, Mt Marion, Riccardi; 6:00 AM-9:00 PM  **May 16:** Town Planning Board Meeting; Saugerties Senior Ctr; [agenda posted](https://townsaugerties.digitaltowpath.org:10234/content/Generic/View/144) prior to meeting; for info, contact: [bbertorelli@saugertiesny.gov](mailto:bbertorelli@saugertiesny.gov); 7:30 PM  **May 17:** Town Board Meeting (in-person & [Webex](https://townsaugerties.digitaltowpath.org:10234/content/Generic/View/294)); Saugerties Senior Center; contact [lstanley@saugerties.ny.gov](mailto:lstanley@saugerties.ny.gov); pre-board at 6:30 PM; board meeting at 7:00 PM  **May 18:** [Climate Smart Task Force](http://www.climatesmartsaugerties.org/) meeting @ 5:00 PM & Conservation Advisory Committee @ 6:00 PM; Town Hall Conference Room; contact: [mhodonnell316@gmail.com](mailto:mhodonnell316@gmail.com)  **May 18:** Meet the SDC endorsed town candidates; Senior Center; 7:00 PM-8:15 PM  **May 19:** Boys & Girls Club Annual Fundraiser; Diamond Mills; [sueziw@yahoo.com](mailto:sueziw@yahoo.com); 6:00 PM  **May 19, 20, 21:** Spring [opening of HITS](https://hitsshows.com/saugerties/hits-saugerties-series); 454 Washington Ave. Ext. (Showgrounds); 8:00 AM  **May 21:** Hor’s[[LB2]](https://d.docs.live.net/8d73d65b85eb6cbf/NY%20Dems%202018%20on/SDC%20Internal%202020%20on/Secretary/Newsletter%20May%202023_lb.docx" \l "_msocom_2" \t "_blank)  Around Saugerties; public preview of village horse; Smokin’ Pony, 963 Kings Highway; refreshments and cash bar; 3:00 PM-5:00 PM  **May 21:** Last day of ice skating until the fall at [Kiwanis Ice Arena](http://www.kiwanisicearena.com/)  **May 23:** Village Zoning Board Meeting; 43 Partition St.; 7:00 PM  **May 24:** Village Historic Review Board meeting; Village Hall, 43 Partition St.; 7:00 PM  **May 26:** Community Action Farm Stand; free food distribution; Saugerties Senior Center; 10:00 AM-1:00 PM  **May 29**: Memorial Day; town, village, state and federal offices closed  **May 31:** [Saugerties Chamber](https://discoversaugerties.com/) Monthly Mixer; location and time: [discoversaugerties.com](https://d.docs.live.net/8d73d65b85eb6cbf/NY%20Dems%202018%20on/SDC%20Internal%202020%20on/Secretary/discoversaugerties.com)  **R.Y.A.N. House** [Support Group Meeting Schedule](https://www.raisingawarenessrun.com/r-y-a-n-house-schedule/) at 19 Barclay Street, Saugerties (ongoing)  *Check Saugerties Democratic Committee* [*website*](https://saugertiesdemocrats.org/) *for calendar updates.* |