



# Saugerties Democratic Committee

## April 25, 2023 Monthly Meeting Minutes

### Senior Center, 7:00pm

#### **Roll Call**

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

*Voting Members:* Ken Kleinberg, Andrew Zink, Bill Barr, Christine Dinsmore, Mike Harkavy, Nejla Liias, Kathy Gordon, Louise Bloomfield [remote], Joe Maloney, Kevin Freeman, Sakinah Irizarry, Margo McGilvrey, Helene Lesterlin, Lanny Walter, Aaron Levine

*Guests:* Chris Allen, Claudia Andreassen, Mike Ivino, Nina Schmidbaur, John Stegmayer

#### **Approval of Minutes**

Christine Dinsmore moved to approve the previously circulated Minutes of the March 28, 2023 meeting, seconded by Mike Harkavy. The motion passed.

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

##### **SDC TREASURER REPORT APRIL 2023**

	<b>Actual</b>	
<b>Beginning Balance</b>		
	28-Mar-23	\$2,616.45
<b>Income</b>		
ActBlue Donations	120.02	
Meeting Collection	124.00	
<b>Total Income</b>		\$244.02
<b>Expenses</b>		
Check 295 US Postal Svc	(114.00)	
Zoom CC Payment	(15.99)	
<b>Total Expenses</b>		(\$129.99)
<b>New Balance</b>		
	25-Apr-23	\$2,730.48

Margo McGilvrey moved to approve the Treasurer's Report, seconded by Nejla Liias. The motion passed.

Chair Nejla Liias welcomed the guests. Members reported on seeing Skip Arthur, who is now recovering at home.

### **Endorsement Process**--local primary elections

Nejla reported that the Executive Committee (EC) has compiled and discussed all the feedback gathered at the April meeting. Meanwhile, the County subcommittee on Bylaws is looking at the question. Barring any County determinations to the contrary:

- The next time local endorsements are anticipated to come up is for the 2025 primary election. Based on members' feedback from this year, local candidates in *uncontested* races will be considered for endorsement. The EC recommends that carrying petitions for uncontested endorsed candidates should be an obligation of Committee members.
- The EC also recommends that the Committee hold endorsement votes for local races that it knows to be contested. The Committee petition coordinator will only provide petitions for endorsed candidates (should an endorsement be made). The EC recommendation is that members who wish to can carry petitions for opposing candidates, but are obligated to carry also for the endorsed candidates and to identify both endorsed and unendorsed candidate and provide explanation, so voters are informed and empowered to sign either petition.

Aaron raised the question of whether a member is able to sign a petition for one candidate in a contested race and witness for another candidate in the same race. The EC will clarify with the Board of Elections.

Discussion followed, during which Nejla stated that the issue is ballot access for endorsed candidates, not whom each individual committee member will vote for in the primary. (Not getting enough petition signatures to get a Democratic candidate on the primary ballot could potentially allow a Republican to win in the general election.) Lanny Walter and Andrew Zink spoke in favor of members being allowed to carry only for their choice of candidate.

### **Town Board Primary**

Margo McGilvrey for the Program Committee announced a SDC event for Endorsed Candidates for Town Office, to take place on May 18 at the Senior Center. She moved to request \$75 from the Committee for refreshments at the event, seconded by Nejla Liias. The motion passed.

Mike Harkavy moved to request \$657 from the Committee funds to direct toward the Town Board primary expenses, seconded by Margo McGilvrey. The costs to be covered include printing and postage for a postcard mailing, and Facebook and print ads. Andrew spoke against the Committee giving its candidates financial support. Lanny, Helene Lesterlin and Christine spoke in favor of the Committee helping to fund its candidates' campaign. The motion passed.

### **WFP Primary**

Christine suggested that SDC members call any WFP members they may know on behalf of SDC endorsed candidate Aimee Richter. Aimee has also been endorsed by the WFP in her primary against Stan O'Dell.

Mike Harkavy noted that—like some other Dem-endorsed County Legislator candidates—neither Aaron Levine nor Joe Maloney secured WFP endorsements this year. It was noted that there are continuing issues with the WFP.

## **Committee Business**

*Campaign Support:* Christine reported from the County's Campaign Support Committee that she is their liaison for the three Saugerties County Leg candidates among others. Most of the County's campaign support will focus on the countywide races: Jen Metzger's re-election and Manny Nneji's DA campaign. County Leg candidates can use the county committee's liaison, but need to look to the Town chairs and committees for campaign work and financial support. Keith Gurgui (LD3 candidate) especially will need the SDC's support as his district is split among 3 towns and he already has an opponent. His campaign launch will be held May 3.

*SDC Vacancies:* Justine Tomkiell has resigned from representing ED4 because she is relocating. Sakinah Irizarry lives in ED4 but is representing ED12 and would like to represent her home district. Nejla moved to switch Sakinah to ED4, seconded by Christine. The motion passed. The remaining vacancies, in ED8 and ED12, will not be filled immediately.

*N2N:* Christine reported that N2N Day in ED4 will be planned for after the primary. A fundraiser could be held at Cantine Field following on from the N2N Day canvass.

## **Updates**

*Village:* Bill Barr has joined the Tree Commission and is now an alternate on the Village Planning Board. Lanny Walter and Mike Ivino reported that there is much discussion about the proposal to build senior housing on land owned by the Dominican Sisters. The normal process will apply.

*Town:* There is a new candidate for Tax Collector.

*Local Candidate Recruitment:* Kevin Freeman recommended attending this online training, scheduled for May 1. It will focus on developing a candidate pipeline in rural areas.

*School Board:* Three seats are open in the May 16 election, which is also a vote on the school budget for 2023-2024. Five people are running, including one incumbent and the former principal of Mt. Marion School. Sakinah will follow up with more information. Interim Superintendent Dan Erceg is in place; there is no word on the search for a permanent appointee.

*County:* Kevin noted that Saugerties is not receiving its proportional share of County tax revenue. Aaron explained that the larger towns in the county had gotten a slightly increased portion of the revenue at last year's renegotiation. Nejla reported that one GOP County Leg. candidate has been barred from the line because of sloppy petitioning, and a lawsuit was to be filed against another for the same reason. A motion was made, seconded by Nejla, to spend \$100 in support of the County Committee's lawsuit; the motion passed.

*Democracy Tent:* Kevin reported that we need a liaison for our committee to the County's Democracy Tent team.

*Town Outreach:* Kathy reported that she has a list of newly registered Democrats in the town and is planning to write to them. She also has a list of youth who will turn 18 this year and needs volunteers to send a birthday card to them. Sakinah volunteered to take on that job. Aaron reported that the Board of Elections has started its sticker contest for the year and he volunteered to approach the School District about it.

*State:* Michelle Hinchey will join a future meeting.

*Federal:* Josh Riley has announced his candidacy for CD19 in 2024. A Bus Stop Tour by Courage for America stopped in Saugerties over the weekend. Rep. Molinaro has no office in Saugerties; his closest office is in Leeds.

The SDC meeting in May will be held **Wednesday, May 24** in person at the Senior Center. The June 27 meeting will also need to be held remotely or postponed (because of the primary election).

There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 9:10pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Louise Bloomfield, Secretary

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