



Saugerties Democratic Committee June 20, 2023 Monthly Meeting Minutes

Senior Center, 7:00pm

Roll Call

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

Voting Members: Andrew Zink, Bill Barr, Joe Hinchey, Sakinah Irizarry, Skip Arthur, Michael Harkavy, Nejla Lias, Kathy Gordon, Louise Bloomfield, Barbara Boyce, Bob Gelbach, Kevin Freeman, Rick Cousin, Margo McGilvrey, Anna Markowitz, Aaron Levine

Guests: Andy Cowan, Ken Goldberg, Leeanne Thornton

Approval of Minutes

Rick Cousin moved to approve the draft Minutes of the May 24, 2023 Minutes, seconded by Barbara Boyce. The motion passed.

Treasurer's Report

Andrew Zink moved to approve the Treasurer's Report, seconded by Joe Hinchey. The motion passed.

	24-May-23	\$2,099.11		
Income				
	ActBlue Donations	124.82		
	Meeting Collection	44.00		
	Total Income	\$168.82		
Expenses				
	Check 298 Candidate Forum	(77.97)	Check 299 New Dems Ltr	(213.09)
	Zoom CC Payment	(15.99)		
	Total Expenses	(\$93.96)		
New Balance				
	20-Jun-23	\$2,173.97		1,960.88

Chair Nejla Lias welcomed guests.

June 27 Democratic Primary—Town Board

Mike Harkavy reported that most of the prepared turfs have been canvassed or are in process, with about 8 remaining turfs. Feedback has been positive. Kathy Gordon reported that Saugerties leads early in percentage of absentee ballots returned, with 48%. It was noted that

Saugerties will have an early voting site for the general election in November, though it does not have one for the primary. Louise Bloomfield announced a primary phone bank, to launch June 21. It will remove early voters and absentee voters as those records get uploaded into VAN. Leeanne is promoting the ticket over Facebook. She reported much positive feedback from her canvassing. It was noted that yard signs for all the candidates have gone missing from several public locations. Leeanne will attend the Food Truck Festival on July 3.

Working Families Party Primary—Town Justice

Nejla reported that John Schoonmaker had put together a WFP phonebank, and that Christine Dinsmore had sent postcards to every registered Saugerties WFP member on behalf of Aimee Richter.

Committee Business

July 4 Parade: Brigid Walsh and Liz Buono are coordinating our presence and are inviting candidates to walk with us. A truck and a Tesla car are planned. Sarahana Shrestha and Keith Gurgui are expected to attend. Kevin Freeman is the executive committee contact for this occasion. We will carry the SDC banner. Rules about candidate signage and participation will be enforced this year; signs about issues are permitted but candidates cannot overtly campaign. Members will bring issues signs.

Youth Vote: Sakinah Irizarry and Kathy Gordon are working on outreach to pre-registered youth on their 18th birthday. Kevin Freeman's daughter is interested in starting a club around politics in the high school—depending on the school's policies, possibly a progressive or environmental club. Nejla reported that Olive is planning a similar outreach. All NY state high school students are required to take a Participation in Government course as part of the core curriculum; volunteering for a political party counts toward that course.

Dual Residents: Louise announced two group mailing events for packets prepared and funded by the County. Countywide there are almost 1300 identified prospects. She invited volunteers to work on the mailing and the follow-up outreach which will focus on the town and introducing ourselves as neighbors.

Bench to Honor Pam Ross: There are various bench options at widely varying prices. The Saugerties Animal Shelter is doing a bench drive; Louise will investigate who's providing their benches.

Member Resignation: Tim Scott has resigned from the SDC; as a result both Election District 8 seats are vacant.

Fall SDC Fundraiser: Skip reported that the Fundraising Committee is reaching out to Stone Pony and Partition for quotes, based on attendance of 200. Leeanne noted that Stone Pony might not have enough space to hold it on their premises. The tentative date is September 14.

Fundraiser for Manny Nneji: We have been approached by Manny’s campaign to hold a fundraiser at a private property in Saugerties. Kathy noted she has agreed to hold a meet & greet event for Manny at Cantine’s Island. Amy Fradon will hold a meet & greet for all local County candidates in Woodstock on July 23.

Community Updates

Village: Andrew Zink reported that the Village Board voted against signing on to the County’s Housing Smart initiative. The mayor and Andrew were the dissenting votes.

Town: Leeanne reported on the progress of the dog park and pickleball courts. No one from the public attended the scheduled hearing on a new signage policy, which will be further revised based on questions from the Comprehensive Planning Committee. The CPC has been updating the Zoning regulations, helped by a planning consultant, to reflect the new hotel and short-term accommodations options and requests. Summer recreation programs have a shortage of counselors and very high demand this summer. Kevin noted that the town has been talking with the state about developing Bristol Beach, including a rail trail and kayak access.

County: Aaron Levine noted the passage of the increased bed tax for Ulster County, supported by both Sen. Hinchey and Assemblymember Shrestha. He noted the “Drag is Not a Crime” legislation of which he is a co-sponsor, which will be voted on next month. A memorializing resolution opposing the Covid vaccination mandates, introduced by a Democrat, passed the Legislature by a majority of two votes.

State: Anna Markowitz noted that 25 out of Michelle Hinchey’s 51 bills have passed both houses of the Legislature. Michelle Hinchey will address our September meeting.

Federal: Nejla Lias explained the NY19 initiative led by Susan Jaworski to have a team of people with a common script call Rep. Molinaro’s office weekly about different issues. Members who would like to be on a calling team should contact Kathy Gordon.

Kathy outlined the redistricting issue now under litigation, noting the shift in balance of the NY State Appellate Court.

There being no other business, Rick Cousin moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Andrew Zink. The motion passed and the meeting adjourned at 8:41pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Louise Bloomfield, Secretary