



# Saugerties Democratic Committee

## March 19, 2024 Monthly Meeting Minutes

Saugerties Public Library Community Room, 7:00pm

### Roll Call

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

*Voting Members:* Andrew Zink, Ken Kleinberg, Bill Barr, Deena Turner, Skip Arthur, Nejla Liias, Kathy Gordon, Louise Bloomfield, Nancy Schaef, Nicole Roskos, Barbara Boyce, Bob Gelbach, Kevin Freeman, Margo McGilvrey, Rick Cousin, Anna Markowitz, Andy Cowan, Lanny Walter

*Guests:* Steve Charney, Katie Cokinos, Molly Mackaman, Aimee Richter, Nina Schmidbaur, John Schoonmaker

Chair Nejla Liias welcomed guests.

### Approval of Minutes

Rick Cousin moved to approve the Minutes of the meeting held on February 27, 2024 seconded by Margo McGilvrey. The motion passed.

### Treasurer's Report

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

#### **SDC TREASURER REPORT MARCH 2024**

	<b>Actual</b>	
<b>Beginning Balance</b>		
27-Feb-24		\$2,957.91
<b>Income</b>		
ActBlue Donations SDC	96.02	
Meeting Donation	105.00	
<b>Total Income</b>		\$201.02
<b>Expenses</b>		
Zoom CC Payment	(15.99)	
<b>Total Expenses</b>		(\$15.99)
<b>New Balance</b>		
19-Mar-24		\$3,142.94

### **Petition Update**

SDC members gathering petition signatures have seen other petitioners for Sarahana Shrestha's campaign. The County committee has a team examining all its petitions before submitting them to the Board of Elections. Signatures are being gathered for opponents to the SDC slate, in at least Election Districts 7 and 13. SDC petitioners who are not entering their data in MiniVAN need to give the names of all signers to Kathy Gordon to ensure we record all signers, whether or not they signed up to volunteer.

### **SDC Business**

*Ad hoc Bylaws Committee:* Lanny Walter (Chair), Gilda Riccardi, Aimee Richter, Deena Turner. Existing Bylaws have been distributed; the committee will meet after the March 28 petition deadline.

*Ad hoc Mailings Committee:* Kathy Gordon (Chair) and others will meet March 20 at 2pm. The group will mail new Saugerties Dem voters and write postcards for impactful races nationally.

*March 16 Meeting with Rep. Pat Ryan:* Bill Barr reported on the meeting, which was very substantive though not widely attended. (A few people from other new-CD18 towns joined.) Bill asked Pat to speak about the Hamas-Gaza situation. Pat responded that he has twice not voted because the proposed legislation did not include aid to Palestinians, and that he now only supports supplying defensive weapons to Israel. He supports a ceasefire along with the return of all hostages. He noted that among the GOP in Congress a lot of members are full-on MAGA believers. Pat also noted that his opponent is a far-right Republican, Alison Esposito, who has endorsed Trump. Esposito is expected to pull strong support in Orange County, where half the district's voters are. Ulster, at 20%, is the smallest chunk of the district's voters.

The Committee will invite Pat to address an upcoming meeting as soon as possible.

*Congressional District 19:* Lanny proposed that the SDC also do everything we can to support Josh Riley, Marc Molinaro's opponent in CD 19. Kathy Gordon is on the County campaign support committee and can let members know if volunteer efforts are needed in Ulster Cty CD19 towns.

### **Community Updates**

*Group Discussion:* Members discussed their reactions to the State of the Union address. Members recommended the Hopium Chronicles and Robert E. Hubbell on Substack, along with Pod Save America. Nejla is working on a list of talking points from Biden's first term and pledges for a second term, for use by the County Dem Cttee.

Bob Gelbach noted that the Town Board March 20 meeting will be attended by advocates for a Resolution calling for a permanent ceasefire between Israel and Hamas in Gaza. The Town Board will not vote on this at the meeting; however, Supervisor Costello will be looking to gauge support for it. Bob encouraged the SDC to take a position. Molly Mackaman encouraged people

to attend the meeting speak as individuals whether or not the SDC takes a position. Similar local government resolutions are being promoted nationwide and in Albany, Newburgh and Beacon.

### **Community Updates**

*Hudson Valley:* Kevin Freeman reported that he is now in the HV leadership team of Moms Demand Action, a nonpartisan antiviolence organization. They will be doing voter registration and are planning an advocacy day in Albany, looking for speakers and volunteers.

*Village:* Bill reported that a bond will be issued to finance new equipment. The Village budget hearing is April 1. Katie Cokinos reported the opening of The Mark, at the Orpheum and announced a free screening of *The Boy and the Heron* there on March 24, in memory of Starllie Swonyoung.

*Town:* Andy Cowan reported that a proposal is in preparation to codify permitted uses of properties above 5 acres for weddings and other large events. Lanny and Deena Turner reported that the town's Housing Smart Committee is trying to get the town to apply for the Ulster County Housing Action Fund to increase affordable housing.

*Benches for Pam Ross:* Two possible sites for the benches have been suggested at Esopus Bend. Bill, Margo and Skip will review the sites.

There being no other business, Margo McGilvrey moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Deena Turner. The motion passed and the meeting adjourned c. 8:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Louise Bloomfield, Secretary

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