

Sudbury Democratic Town Committee (SDTC)
Minutes of the meeting of 17 July 2003

The meeting was convened at 7:30 pm in the Unitarian Church by Chairperson Beverly Guild. Twenty-one persons were in attendance, all Committee members.

The minutes of the previous meeting of 19 June 2003, that had been vetted by email, were approved without further revision.

Helga Andrews, Treasurer, reported assets of about \$450 in the SDTC account.

Beverly Guild asked for a round of applause for the work of the members who organized and participated in the July 4th celebrations and parade in Sudbury. The SDTC was well represented and highly visible.

There followed a summary discussion of the events of July 4th. Carl Offner was surprised and reassured by the favorable reception, including applause, offered by the parade spectators to our opposition to the USA-Patriot Act as expressed by banner and signs. Henry Noer reported that congenial contact was renewed with Representative Martin Meehan. Nicholas Palermo inquired whether an opportunity occurred to have discussion with Susan Pope. Evidently the opportunity did not arise.

Several, chiefly Nicholas Palermo and Claire Schlosser, discussed progress of the Convention Reform Commission. Proposed changes include shorter conventions of a very business-like nature assisted to this end by use perhaps of the instant runoff or preferential ballot, fewer and shorter speeches, and more opportunity for delegates to express themselves on essential matters. It has also been suggested that state committee members be more available to delegates than has been the case previously. Other suggestions made to improve the Party generally included networking with other towns, contacting all newly registered Democrat and independent voters, and greater involvement of young people. Discussion then turned to a "Statement to the Convention Reform Commission" prepared by James McGowan and George Barnoski, dated 9 July. Rather than having a state-wide issues convention on every off year, the Statement proposed that the Party Chair be empowered to call an issues convention only when necessary; otherwise regional meetings would suffice. Tom Hollocher objected to these changes on three grounds: It is likely that issues conventions would be convened very infrequently, if at all; the State Chair ought not have sole discretion to decide on the need for such conventions; regional conventions would be pointless unless they were somehow integrated to achieve state-wide impact. After discussion of the Statement, it was moved, seconded and passed unanimously to draft a letter to the Chairman of the Massachusetts Democratic Party (cc. to Messrs. McGowan and Barnoski) advising him of the objections of the SDTC to the Statement of McGowan and Barnoski and recommending that no change be made in the scheduling of issues conventions.

On the impending matter of the election of Committee members, Beverly Guild moved that the number of members to be elected be 35. This motion was seconded and unanimously passed. The papers documenting this act were signed by Chairperson and Secretary.

On the matter of our Resolution, which asks that Sudbury not cooperate with what are reckoned to be unconstitutional provisions of the USA-Patriot Act, Henry Noer reported that there was a possibility the Resolution might be taken up by the Board of Selectmen at their August meeting. Petitions in support of consideration of the Resolution by the Selectmen have been prepared and members were urged to collect something of the order of 500 signatures by early August. Signature collectors are needed for the trash transfer station and shopping centers. Petitions are to be forwarded to Henry Noer by 7 August. Mr. Noer is now helping to draft a state resolution opposing provisions of the USA-Patriot Act.

A discussion by Judy Deutsch of a letter from Susan Fargo regarding Clean Elections funding was postponed until the next meeting.

Donald Chauls discussed a document he prepared and previously circulated by email concerning criteria under which President Bush might be subject to impeachment. The discussion was a preliminary one designed to focus the Committee's thinking on the subject. Currently there are formidable political barriers in any attempt to bring the President to account over the Iraq Invasion. Matters of fact also need clarification.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:20 pm.

Announcements

Remember to pay our yearly dues of \$25 minimum, c/o SDTC, to Helga Andrews, 11 Maple Ave., Sudbury.

The next meeting of the SDTC is scheduled for 7:30 pm Thursday 28 August in the Unitarian Church. Subsequent meeting dates are 18 September, 23 October, and 20 November also in the Unitarian Church, unless otherwise indicated.

Please remember to submit to the Secretary a copy of text or outline of verbal reports made at meetings, particularly if the report is long or complex.

Thomas Hollocher, Secretary, 19 July 2003.