

## **Sudbury Democratic Town Committee (SDTC) Minutes of the meeting of 10 January 2005**

The meeting was convened at 7:15 pm in the Unitarian Church by Chairperson Beverly Guild. Eighteen persons were in attendance, of which sixteen were Committee members, as documented by the attached attendance record. The two non-members were D. Bruce Langmuir and Marissa Herzog. Ms. Herzog is a student at Lincoln-Sudbury High School and a member of that school's young Democrats group.

The minutes of the previous meeting of 15 November 2004, that had been vetted by email, were approved without change. Paper copies of the minutes had been prepared by the Secretary but were forgotten and will be distributed at the next meeting. The Secretary reported that our Statement opposing the nomination of Antonio Gonzales for Attorney General, as approved at our last meeting, had been mailed to the stipulated parties. Carl Offner, who had composed the Statement, reported that it had not been forwarded to newspapers for publication as of 10 Jan. [The Statement was subsequently forwarded to newspapers as a letter to the editor on 13 Jan. and was published in the Sudbury Town Crier and Metrowest Daily News.].

Helga Andrews, Treasurer, reported that the SDTC now has \$1388 free and available for use, and that a check of \$100 had been forwarded each to the campaigns of Messrs. Melaccon and Mount of Louisiana for a total outlay of \$200. It was suggested that the Treasurer prepare and submit a yearly report beginning with 2004 for the general information of the Committee. [In fact, Helga circulated a brief fiscal report for 2004 by email on 12 Jan. 2005 for ordinary receipts and expenses, excluding the fund raising event with Robert Drinan. This report is part of the record.]

It was proposed and agreed informally to invite the young Democrats group from L-SHS to our meeting in March or April.

There was general agreement that the Christmas party was a success and well worth the effort. The Hosmer House seemed too small a venue, however, to some.

Beverly led a discussion of the Sudbury Democratic Caucus that is scheduled for 29 Jan. at 2 pm in the Senior Center. The chief function of the Caucus is to elect 10 delegates and 6 alternatives to the Massachusetts Democratic Convention on 14 May in Lowell's Tsongas Arena. Susan Thel indicated a wish to be nominated as a delegate *in absentia*, and the meeting agreed with this request in so far as Caucus rules allow this action. [In an email message from Kate Donaghue, our state committee representative, dated 12 Jan., the *in absentia* rule was clarified. An absent person's name can be placed in nomination, if 2/3 of those present and voting approve.] In addition, nomination *in absentia* is permitted if a written intent of acceptance is in hand at the caucus.

Henry Noer reported on the civil rights picture in the nation and state. Legislation passed by Congress in Dec. 2004 to revise and combine the several federal intelligence agencies would appear to have some adverse civil rights ramifications. The Massachusetts Resolution on Civil Rights and Liberties has been introduced at the State House and is now gaining supporters, 30-40 in the House and a few in the Senate. Sen. Pam Resor is one of its champions. We were urged to contact the office of Rep. Susan Pope and urge her to sign onto the Resolution. It is expected that the Resolution will soon be assigned a bill number. There is increasing concern about new technologies for the invasion of privacy. Henry reported that some 390 towns and cities across the U.S. have passed resolutions opposing the USA-Patriot Act and sundry Presidential directives targeting civil liberties. In this regard, it was suggested that Henry forward copies of our Sudbury resolution broadly to other communities in Massachusetts. He agreed it would be a useful thing to do.

Carl Offner argued that the SDTC ought to oppose strongly any attempt by the Bush administration and Congress to privatize and otherwise diminish Social Security. To this end, a subcommittee was formed to consider the matter, consisting of Carl Offner, D. Bruce Langmuir,

Donald Chauls, Claire Schlosser, Thomas Hollocher, and Marissa Herzog. A public forum on the issue sometime this spring was considered a possibility.

Susan Thel reported briefly on her attendance at a recent meeting of the Concord Democratic Town Committee. She was particularly impressed with their Minutemen Fora as good vehicles for the timely discussion of issues.

Jonathan Sclarsic was concerned that we need to develop improved means of contact between the Committee and registered Democrats. Suggestions included creation of a “post to” email list for interested Democrats and creation or reactivation of an outreach subcommittee. He also suggested that we invite John Thomas to address our next meeting on the lessons learned during his recent campaign against Rep. Susan Pope. Beverly agreed to contact him and see if a presentation could be arranged.

Jonathan also discussed the election of the Chairman of the National Democratic Committee that is scheduled for 12 Feb. He urged that we ought to exert whatever influence we can in support of Howard Dean, who was on this date not an officially declared candidate [he declared on 11 Jan.]. There was general agreement on this aim, but confusion and uncertainty about the election procedure and the role, if any, of town committees in it. How can we exert influence? Probably through Massachusetts members of the DNC. Beverly agreed to seek clarification of this issue and communicate what she learns by email.

Donald Chauls submitted another version of his “The Beginning of a Democratic Party Manifesto”, but the late hour did not allow discussion. He expressed a hope that it might be taken up at the next meeting. There was some concern that it was overly long and disjointed to be discussed as a whole. Could it not be divided and discussed in its parts?

Langmuir reminded the meeting of the “Global Warming” series now in progress in the First Parish. The next presentations are scheduled for the evenings of 13, 19, and 26 Jan. and 10 Feb.

After setting **the next two meetings for 7:15 pm on Thursday 17 Feb. and Wednesday 16 Mar. at the Unitarian Church of Sudbury**, the meeting was adjourned at 9:25 pm.

### **Announcements**

If you have not already done so, please forward your 2005 dues of \$25 minimum, c/o SDTC, to Helga Andrews, 11 Maple Ave., Sudbury. Dues were expected on or about 1 January 2005.

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. This is the only way to assure that an accurate summary is entered into the minutes.

Thomas Hollocher, Secretary, 13 January 2005