

Sudbury Democratic Town Committee (SDTC)
Minutes of the meeting of 17 February 2005

The meeting was convened at 7:15 pm in the Unitarian Church by Chairperson Beverly Guild. Twenty persons were in attendance as indicated by the attached sign-in sheet -- 17 members, and 3 non-members (Bob Savoy, Kate Donaghue, and John Thomas).

The minutes of the previous November and two January meetings, that had been vetted by email, were approved without change. Paper copies of these minutes were distributed at today's meeting.

Helga Andrews, Treasurer, reported that the SDTC now has about \$1300 free and unencumbered. If the \$500 check sent to the committee to elect Howard Dean as Chairman of the DNC is not cashed, the amount would be about \$1800. Mr. Dean was so elected on 12 February.

Kate Donaghue, our state committee representative, announced and discussed a number of Democratic events in the district in the near term, particularly those having relevance to the state convention in early May. Inasmuch as these events are all described in Kate's emailed Democratic Dispatch, they need not be a part of the minutes.

Guild led the meeting in a vote of thanks for those who helped to get Mr. Dean elected Chairman of the DNC.

John Thomas, candidate for state representative against Susan Pope in November's election, was the guest speaker. He undertook to describe what he learned about political campaigning during that campaign and why he narrowly lost the race. He emphasized the need for candidates and volunteers to be well informed about the political history and voting record of the opponent in order to rebut distortions and half-truths. This can be done in large part by becoming informed about state house events -- budgets, votes, vetoes, and overrides of vetoes. It is also important how one frames himself and his political program in a campaign through talks, interviews, ads, etc. Most people accept or reject a candidate on the basis of relatively little information, so it is important to keep the message simple. He explained that it is difficult to defeat an incumbent, because incumbents benefit from the trickle of publicity arising from their political work during a term in office. In response to questions after his talk, he said that although he had had enough volunteers, the SDTC and other town committees ought to be prepared to jump in with field level work: phone bank, card mailings, signs, house parties, etc. Perhaps, some of our members could join Wayland's watch dog committee that keeps track carefully of the work of Rep. Pope. At the end of his presentation, he presented the SDTC with a check in the amount of \$200, as a token of his appreciation for our collective efforts in his campaign. For this, he received sincere thanks and applause.

Carl Offner of the Social Security Subcommittee distributed copies of an informational document on Social Security, prepared largely by him, and then discussed its salient features. He and the Subcommittee hoped that the document would serve as a source of information and inspiration to enable people more easily to write letters and articles on the subject for dissemination. In summary, the weight of evidence argues strongly against President Bush's privatization plan.

Bob Gottlieb was unanimously restored to membership in the SDTC, after which he advised the meeting of the adverse effects that federal budget cuts are having on the Food Pantry program.

At the request of Donald Chauls, who was absent, the meeting considered whether it wanted now or in future to take up a discussion of his "Manifesto for the 21st Century". It was generally felt that it could not be discussed as a whole by the entire SDTC at this point, because of its diffuse organization and wide scope. It is better suited to be considered by a subcommittee of interested members, but no such subcommittee was convened. It was suggested that the Manifesto ought to be compared carefully with state and national Democratic platforms for possible similarities and congruence.

After confirming **the next meeting for Wednesday 16 March at the First Parish of Sudbury**, the meeting was adjourned at 9:10 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, 21 February 2005