

**Sudbury Democratic Town Committee (SDTC)**  
**Minutes of the meeting of 28 April 2005**

The meeting was convened at 7:15 pm in the Unitarian Church by Chairperson Beverly Guild. Sixteen persons, including 14 SDTC members and two guests (Nancy Crooker and George Siscoe), were in attendance as indicated by the attached sign-in sheet.

The minutes of the previous meeting of 16 March, that had been vetted by email, were approved without change, and paper copies of those minutes were distributed at today's meeting. Three pages of material from Common Cause that described Senate Bill #12 and the campaign for fair voting districts was included with the minutes.

Helga Andrews, Treasurer, reported that the SDTC now has about \$1700 free and unencumbered.

Thomas Hollocher reported that the op-ed piece critical of President Bush's plans for Social Security privatization, was forwarded to three newspapers during late March and early April: The Sudbury Town Crier, Metrowest, and the Boston Globe. To the best of his knowledge, none of these papers published the article. The document was also forwarded to state senators Pamela Resor and Susan Fargo, state representative Susan Pope, US senators Edward Kennedy and John Kerry, US representative Martin Meehan, and the Massachusetts Democratic Party headquarters. Of these, only the office of Mr. Kennedy acknowledged receipt of the document.

Hollocher described something of the history of the campaign by Common Cause and the League of Women Voters to transfer the authority to modify voting districts in Massachusetts from the legislature to an independent, nonpartisan commission -- the Fair Districts for Fair Elections campaign. Beginning with signature petitions last summer, the project now focuses on Senate Bill #12, introduced by Richard Moore and now endorsed by some 55 member of the legislature. Rachel Rosenblum of Common Cause has asked the SDTC to Endorse Senate Bill #12 and transmit the fact of this endorsement to Common Cause, The League of Women Voters, Mr. Moore, our legislative contingent (Susan Fargo has not yet signed on to the Bill), and the State Committee. Accordingly, Hollocher moved and received a second that the SDTC endorse Senate Bill #12 and so inform the parties listed above. After some discussion of the notion of a redistricting commission and an examination of the content of Senate Bill # 12, Carl Offner moved and received a second that it is the opinion of the SDTC that the word "private" ought to be struck from line 10, page 3 of the Bill, thus allowing state colleges and universities to be eligible for selection of a commissioner. Both the amendment and main motion were carried unanimously.

Common Cause also requested that the SDTC consider hosting, alone or in cooperation with surrounding towns, a non-partisan forum in support of redistricting reform in early September. This should be held early in the month, before the anticipated start of a statewide campaign to collect the signatures needed to bring Senate Bill #12 before a Constitutional Convention, probably in 2006. The question of an event of this sort was discussed briefly and informally with what this Secretary interpreted as positive sentiment. Hollocher is willing to serve as the contact person in this matter.

Jonathan Sclarsic reported that he has entered into discussions with Sage Systems (sage-systems.com) to purchase the use of a web-accessed database that would be used to organized and sort information on Democratic voters in Sudbury. This database is updated quarterly and so assures that information on voters is current. He assured the meeting that we would own and retain our data, should we wish in future to use a different database or software. He has personal knowledge and experience with the Sage Systems database and recommends the product. He further believes that he can negotiate a contract with Sage Systems for about \$300 per year. Accordingly, he moved and received a second that he be authorized to negotiate a database contract with Sage Systems for one year at a price not to exceed \$300. The motion was carried unanimously.

There was brief discussion of the impending reception for Martha Cokley on 24 May. A suitable hall has not been found to date in Sudbury and the search continues. Volunteers are needed to supply refreshments.

Two candidates for high state office were discussed. Maxine Yarbrough reported very favorably on Deval Patrick, who declared recently for Governor, and recommended that we invite him to one of our meetings. Holllocher also had a favorable opinion of him. Sclarsic described the merits of Deborah Goldberg who has declared for Lieutenant Governor and for whom Sclarsic is the campaign manager.

It was informally but broadly agreed to participate again this year in Sudbury Day on 17 September. The registration deadline for participants is 1 June.

Henry Noer reported briefly on the civil rights scene. Some members of the Massachusetts congressional delegation may be wavering in their opposition to the anti-flag-desecration amendment before congress. A petition campaign is underway for an anti-torture amendment to the Constitution. Montana has become the 5<sup>th</sup> state to approve a resolution opposing the USA-Patriot Act.

After confirming **the next meeting for Wednesday 18 May at the First Parish of Sudbury**, the meeting was adjourned at 9:13 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, 30 April 2005