

Sudbury Democratic Town Committee (SDTC)
Minutes of the meeting of 13 March 2007

Chairperson Beverly Guild convened the meeting at 7:15 in the First Parish of Sudbury. Twenty-four persons were in attendance, comprising twenty members and associate members and four guests. The guests were Kate Hogan representing the Middlesex and Worcester District, and Bob Savoy, Neill Silverman, and Michael O'Connor, all three of Sudbury. The attendance list is attached to these minutes in the permanent record.

Reports: Kate Hogan took the floor to remind the meeting of the details of the honors and fundraising breakfast to be sponsored by the Middlesex and Worcester District at 10 am, Sunday 25 March in Hudson. Twenty-five dollars is asked per person.

The Treasurer, Helga Andrews, reported that the Committee's account now stands at \$1011.76.

The essay, concerning where the Democrats ought to lead the nation, which was prepared by Donald Chauls and Susan Offner, was reported by Carl Offner (Susan was absent) to be nearly ready for release. The authors are working with the Secretary to discover efficient ways to transmit the document electronically to Congress, the Massachusetts Legislature, etc.

The subcommittee devoted to the support of Rep. Tom Conroy reported that a few persons attended his February meeting in Sudbury on the 16th and that he presented himself well. The next open meeting is on Friday 16 March. To date the subcommittee has not submitted letters to the editors of newspapers in support of Conroy.

There was no report from the High School Award subcommittee, inasmuch as John Greeley, its Chair, was absent.

Concerning Affiliation of the SDTC with Mass-Care, a matter deferred last month to the legal opinion of Carmine Gentile: Gentile commented on the various contacts he made in order to clarify whether there might exist a legal prohibition against our affiliating with or joining Mass-Care. There seemed to be no clear prohibition. He suggested that unless we hear to the contrary from the Massachusetts Democratic Party, we should plan to affiliate or join, as the case may be.

Susan Thel of the Peace subcommittee reported that the Saturday vigils continue to attract 15-20 people and will continue indefinitely. She also informed the meeting that Move-On is organizing peace vigils to be held at 6 pm on Monday 19 March (the 4th anniversary of the start of the Iraq War), and there will be one such vigil on the Sudbury Common at that time. She urged all to attend.

Regarding development of our new website, Carl Offner, Eric Shienbrood, and Tom Hollocher reported that the domain name, sudburydemocrats.org, has been registered in the name of the SDTC with Hollocher as the Account Administrative Contact. It is set up so that this administrative function can be easily transferred to successive Secretaries of the Committee. The server of the Massachusetts Democratic Party will host the website, apparently for free. It is now necessary actually to create the home page and related pages and load content into them.

Candidates for honors: The names of Donald Chauls, Susan Offner, and Jean Maloney were placed in nomination to be recognized for special service to the Democratic Party at the breakfast affair on 25 March in Hudson. These persons were approved unanimously, and the Chair stated that the SDTC would pay for their attendance, if necessary.

Election of Associate Member: Hollocher nominated Michael O'Connor for Associate Membership. This received a second and was approved unanimously. Michael described in

some detail his long commitment to the Democratic Party prior to his move to Sudbury and his work in past political campaigns.

A new subcommittee on taxation?: Carl Offner suggested the formation of a subcommittee or working group to research the question of taxation with an eye to writing an investigative report. He believes that part of our social and political dilemmas can be traced to inequitable and regressive taxes. Relevant to tax research would be the history of taxes, principal sources, questions of equity and fairness, and role in political decisions, among others. He thought that Eileen Glosky would be a valuable person for such a study due to her committee work in Sudbury and her present work in state government. There was some interest expressed in such a project, but no definite commitment by individuals insofar as the Secretary could discern.

Discussion of the replacement for US Rep. Martin Meehan: Henry Sorett strongly advocated support for James Eldridge, Mass. Rep. 37th Middlesex, who was a guest at our February meeting. Others agreed that he was a very promising candidate.

Support for Democrats in Sudbury's local election on 26 March: Henry Noer suggested that we ought to support Democratic candidates for town offices. Objection was raised based on a longstanding tradition that town elections are considered nonpartisan and the Committee refrains from taking an official partisan position. Nevertheless, individuals could publicly support Democratic candidates for town offices.

Minutes: The motion to accept the minutes of the February meeting was seconded and then amended such as to set aside the paragraph following the heading, "Transfer of the SDTC website". The amendment passed 13 to 4, after which the main motion was approved unanimously.

Meeting dates: The Chair announced **future meeting dates** as follows: **Wednesday 25 April, Thursday 24 May, Tuesday 19 June, and Wednesday 18 July.** These dates follow the present practice of rotating dates through Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday. The Secretary was of the view that meeting dates ought to be set for an entire year in advance as an aid in resolving personal scheduling conflicts.

Dues or contributions? Gentile advanced the argument that the SDTC cannot levy mandatory dues, because full members are elected to office by the public and their service therefore cannot depend on a mandatory monetary levy. The \$35 amount expected of us each year is therefore a contribution. One assumes that the same applies by declaration or tradition to Associate Members and Members in Perpetuity, who are not elected to office in the same way as Members.

The next meeting is scheduled for 7:15 pm sharp, Wednesday 25 April 2007 in the First Parish of Sudbury.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:02 pm.

Announcements

If you have not already done so, please forward your 2007 contribution of \$35 minimum, c/o SDTC, to Helga Andrews, 11 Maple Ave., Sudbury.

Please 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, 24 March 2007.