

**Sudbury Democratic Town Committee (SDTC)**  
**Minutes of the meeting of 15 January 2008**

Chairperson Beverly Guild convened the meeting at 7:15 pm in the First Parish of Sudbury. Twenty-four members and associate members were in attendance, plus two guests: Bob Savoy and Patty Helsingius (helsingius@comcast.net), both of Sudbury. Patty attended to represent MetroWest for Obama, an organization supporting Barak Obama in the primary election. The attendance list is attached to these minutes in the permanent record.

**Minutes:** The minutes of our meeting of 15 November 2007, which had been vetted by email and distributed at this evening's meeting, were approved as submitted.

**Finances:** Helga Andrews, Treasurer, reported a balance of \$385 in account. She also reported that she had filed the annual Campaign Finance Report for 2007 with the state. A copy of the Report is entered into the permanent record. The account is presently low because many members have yet to submit their contributions of \$35 minimum for 2008. Members were urged to attend to that important business.

**Discussion and actions:**

**SDTC website, sudburymocrats.org:** It was pointed out that the website was not up to date in that it displayed the date for the November meeting rather than the January meeting. The Secretary assured the meeting that remedial action would be taken. A service bill of \$35 for the website was submitted by the Chair for consideration, and payment was approved unanimously.

**Peace Committee:** Reporting for the Peace Committee, Susan Thel said that the Saturday antiwar vigils continue to be well attended, notwithstanding cold, snow and rain. There is no plan to terminate the vigil. The vigils began in November 2005.

**Fundraiser for James Eldridge:** There was brief discussion, largely by way of reminder, of a fund raising event in behalf of the campaign of James Eldridge for reelection to the Massachusetts legislature in 2008. Carl Offner is the Sudbury coordinator. The event is scheduled for 6 February from 6-8 pm at the Boxborough Holiday Inn, 242 Adams Place, at exit 28 off rt. 495. Remarks are expected from Governor Patrick and Senator Resor. Those attending are asked to rsvp (508-274-0055; [james@repeldridge.com](mailto:james@repeldridge.com)).

**Forum on gambling:** Offner (chiefly) and Tom Hollocher reported on a forum on the question whether casino gambling ought to be approved in Massachusetts. The forum, held on 6 January in the Weston Middle School and hosted by the Weston Democratic Town Committee, proved to be informative. Those in attendance were overwhelmingly opposed to the Governor's idea of licensing three casinos in the state, the chief arguments being related to lack of independent analyses of costs and potential financial gain to the state, potential corruption of state government, encouragement of gambling addicts toward financial, social, and personal ruin; the consequences of transferring large sums to an economically unproductive industry, the likely transfer of gambling profits out of state, and the competitive interaction of casinos and the state lottery. To put the matter in perspective, consider that for the state to realize an expected \$400 million per year from casino taxation, people must lose something like \$2000 million to casinos. Offner prepared a written report on the forum that was distributed at this evening's meeting, and a copy has been placed in the permanent record.

**Reform of taxes in Massachusetts:** Discussion then turned to why the state should reform the tax structure, particularly taxes on businesses, rather than seek revenue from casinos. A proposal from the Governor to close some tax loopholes on businesses has made little progress in the legislature in recent months, and Henry Sorett stated that he lobbied against some of the provisions in the proposal. Nevertheless, there are some egregious loopholes that ought to be closed. We as a committee ought to know more about this issue, and, to that end, Offner and T. Hollocher volunteered to make a study of it. Judy Deutsch suggested that we start a movement for a graduated income tax.

**Caucus 2008:** The Democratic Caucus will be held on 10 February at 2 pm sharp in the Senior Center. Its chief purpose is to elect delegates to the 2008 Convention on 7 June. The elected delegates will comprise five men and four women (our Chair, Beverly Guild can be an ex officio delegate). The registration fee for the Convention is set at \$75 and \$50 for seniors, etc. Those attending the Caucus, who are unregistered in the Democratic Party or who registered after the deadline in December, will not be eligible to vote or, one presumes, run as a delegate.

**Mass Care:** Judy Deutsch raised the issue of our making a contribution to Mass Care, an organization of which the SDTC is a supporting member. However, in view of the small size of our bank account and the need for campaign contributions in 2008, she suggested that we defer until next year.

**Presentation by guest:** Patty Helsingius represented the interest of MetroWest for Obama and hoped that some of us would support the work of that group. She distributed information on contacts for the group and announced an organizational meeting scheduled for 16 January (tomorrow).

**The next meeting is scheduled for 7:15 pm, Wednesday 13 February 2008 in the First Parish of Sudbury. Subsequent meetings in 2008 are scheduled for Thursday 13 March and Tuesday 15 April. Please put these dates on your calendars.**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 pm.

#### **Announcements**

If you have not already done so, please forward your 2008 contribution of \$35 minimum, c/o SDTC, to Helga Andrews, 11 Maple Ave., Sudbury. Also remember that contributions for 2008 are expected during January.

Thomas Hollocher, Secretary, 21 January 2008.