

## **Sudbury Democratic Town Committee (SDTC)**

### **Minutes of the Meeting of 26 April 2011**

Chairperson Beverly Guild convened the meeting at 7:25 pm at the First Parish Church, Sudbury. Thirteen members attended, as well as special guest Concord DTC Chair and State Committeewoman Mara Dolan. The attendance list is attached to these minutes in the permanent record.

**Minutes:** Minutes of our meeting of 24 March 2011, which had been vetted by e-mail and distributed at the meeting, were discussed. The minutes were adopted as amended.

**Finances:** Jane Moeller, Treasurer, reported that the current balance in the Committee's bank account is \$1,164.79. Twenty (20) Committee members have submitted their dues. All bills have been paid.

**Mara Dolan On Public Policy Sessions at the State Convention :** The Committee heard from State Committeewoman Mara Dolan regarding the program of break-out sessions that is being offered in Lowell on Saturday June 4 following the conclusion of formal State Convention business. Ms. Dolan is co-chair of the Public Policy Committee of the State Party. She handed out a list of some of the more prominent break-out sessions that are already scheduled such as Finance Reform and Banking (Cong. Frank), Health Care (Jim Roosevelt and Ben Day), Citizens United (Jeff Clements of Free Speech for People), Obama and the Budget (Carl Nilsson of OFA) and Redistricting (Avi Green of MassVOTE). The break-out sessions are open to all Democrats, not just delegates. Also, Ms. Dolan mentioned that the State Party is welcoming many non-delegates to come as volunteers to help with the annual meeting, which is a great way to participate.

**Third Middlesex Area Democrats:** Ms. Guild reminded all of Third MAD annual breakfast on Saturday, May 14 at the Doubletree Guest Hotel & Suites in Waltham. Tickets to the event are \$35 and all were encouraged to attend. John Riordan reported that Rep. Tom Conroy's campaign committee has graciously offered to sponsor a table this year. We would like to have as many Sudbury Democrats as possible at this event, which features comedian Jimmy Tingle and honors our own Katherine "Kitty" Hill for her long-standing community volunteerism and Democratic activities.

**Joint Wayland-Sudbury Democrats Get Together:** Don Chauls reminded everyone of his invitation for a joint, informal get together on April 28<sup>th</sup> of local Wayland and Sudbury Democrats at J.J. McKays in Wayland for a meal and conversation about whether a primary challenger to President Obama would be desirable in the hope of moving the President back to the progressive end of the spectrum from which he campaigned successfully in 2008 but since has essentially abandoned. Some expressed concern about this appearing to be disloyal to our Democratic President and hurtful for his general election chances. Mr. Chauls said that the very purpose of the meeting was to elicit such views and welcomed everyone to participate and voice their opinions. Mr. Riordan observed that it was the accepted political wisdom in Washington that substantial pressure from Tea Partiers and right wing zealots in the Republican Party led to the robot-like adherence among virtually every House Republican to vote for the unthinkably parsimonious Ryan budget plan. Would but there be some countervailing pressure on the progressive end of the spectrum to move the Democratic Administration to greater adherence to the party's own platform. Ms. Dolan mentioned that such friendly, social gatherings of Democrats serve a positive, reinforcing purpose and that the Concord Democrats now meet every fourth Thursday of the month at the Main St. Café in Concord as part of a "Living Liberally" chapter. She invited all to attend future Living Liberally meetings in Concord. The May meeting will be Thursday, May 26 at Main St. Café in Concord.

**Redistricting:** Mr. Riordan reported on Sec. of State William Galvin's address to the Middlesex & Norfolk Democratic Alliance on redistricting. It was noteworthy that there is a fairly ambitious schedule for accomplishing this difficult and politically charged task. Deadlines as early as late Spring 2011 face communities as they respond to the distribution of 2010 census data in reconfiguring precincts (and wards in larger cities) for review and approval by the Sec. of State's office. Much of this process goes at the staff level in local towns so it is incumbent on town committees to be proactive in monitoring the steps along the way. Tom Hollocher noted that the Legislature's Special Joint Redistricting Committee has an informative website at <http://www.malegislature.gov/District> A hearing of the Joint Committee has been scheduled for May 11 at 6:00 p.m. at Framingham State University.

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**Letter to Editor Campaign:** Mr. Chauls is organizing a monthly letter writing campaign to local media for the purpose of keeping the editorial pages well informed of views of Democrats on the voting record of Senator Scott Brown. So far, the following members have signed up to help in this effort: Ms. Guild (May), Ms. Maloney (June), Mr. Bonn (July), Ms. Deutsch (August). Mr. Chauls welcomes more volunteers. Mr. Hollocher noted regretfully that recent trends in the format of the MetroWest Daily News make it increasingly difficult to get this kind of substantive content printed.

**Voter Registration Drive:** Ms. Guild discussed the voter registration drive that is being promoted by the State Party. She has in her possession the guidelines issued by the Secretary of State for conducting voter registration drives. There was no firm consensus on what actions if any the committee should take at this time with regard to a voter registration drive. Helga Andrews volunteered to find out what the League of Women Voters is doing with respect to voter registration activities. Maxine Yarbrough and John Riordan supported the idea of the committee doing something. Ms. Yarbrough observed that Democrats should have an edge in new registrations. Clark Moeller thought there is a window of opportunity to tap into to public anger and frustration in a registration drive. He thought a compelling message behind voter registration should be that if you haven't registered to vote you don't have the right to complain. There was a discussion briefly of on-line voter registration. Mr. Moeller noted there is some research indicating that with on-line registration public participation in elections may actually diminish. Mr. Chauls recommended that the committee look into what the experience has been in states where voter registration is permitted by mail. Mr. Riordan observed that according to MassVote literature, Massachusetts isn't very forward thinking with regard to making registration easy and user friendly when compared to other states. Overall there was a feeling that this is an important subject that should continue to be considered by the committee.

**Health Care Financing Reform:** It was noted that there is an upcoming HealthCare Financing Forum at the Boston Islamic Center on Boston Post Road in Wayland.

**Membership:** Ms. Guild mentioned Ms. Esther Mann and her status as a member. She is not currently listed as a member on our official records. Ms. Guild will look into whether Ms. Mann is interested in serving as an active member of the committee and report back.

**New Business:** No new business was raised.

**The meeting was adjourned at 9:10 pm.**

**The next meeting for 2011 is scheduled for Wednesday May 25, 2011 at 7:15 p.m. at the Sudbury Grange Hall, 326 Concord Road, Sudbury. Ample parking can be found behind the Grange Hall and Town Hall.**

**Announcements**

The SDTC has acquired a postal mailbox: Mailbox 252, Sudbury MA 01776.

If you have not already done so, please forward your 2011 dues contribution of \$35 minimum, made out to Sudbury Democratic Town Committee, c/o Ms. Jane Moeller, Treasurer, 30 Thoreau Way, Sudbury, MA.

John D. Riordan, Secretary, 23 May 2011.