

Sudbury Democratic Town Committee (SDTC)
Minutes of the Meeting of 25 May 2011

Chairperson Beverly Guild convened the meeting at 7:15 pm at the Sudbury Grange Hall. Fifteen members attended, as well as six guests including State Committeewoman Sue Kennedy, and elected officials Rep. Thomas P. Conroy, Mr. Jeff Beeler of the Sudbury School Committee and Mr. Mark Collins of the Lincoln-Sudbury District Regional School Committee. The attendance list is attached to these minutes in the permanent record.

Minutes: Minutes of our meeting of 26 April 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 \$1,016.59. The Committee is fully paid up on all outstanding obligations.

Address by Representative Thomas Conroy : Rep. Conroy addressed the Committee and guests. He noted action this date by the State Senate on the FY 2012 budget, and noted Senate passage of a revised municipal health insurance/GIC provision which he discussed and compared to the House provision. Rep. Conroy informed the Committee that he is seriously considering entering the race for the Democratic nomination for the U.S. Senate seat up in 2012. Republican Scott Brown is the incumbent. He discussed his biographical information and the experiences and qualities that separate him from other announced candidates in the race, including his impressive educational and business accomplishments. Some issues that were raised in questions to Rep. Conroy were the impact of the Citizens United U.S. Supreme Court decision, CEO compensation, growing income inequality in the U.S., and U.S. involvement in Iraq, Afghanistan and Libya. Rep. Conroy's remarks were warmly received by those attending the meeting.

Carl Offner Commentary on Democratic Values in State and Local Decisionmaking: Mr. Carl Offner addressed the Committee on the importance of democratic values in the choices we are making in State and local governance, particularly the funding of education in our local communities. Mr. Offner spoke eloquently about the attack on public education and public servants, and the insidious effect this is having on our public discourse and the commitment in Massachusetts to a common weal. He noted that much of the criticism of our public schools in Sudbury is baseless and intentionally misleading. Mr. Offner asked leave to introduce two guests who were in attendance, Mr. Jeff Beeler, Chair of the Sudbury School Committee, and Mr. Mark Collins, Member of the Lincoln-Sudbury Regional District School Committee. Messrs. Beeler and Collins gave strong statements in support of the pending override vote (June 7). Both of these elected officials gave informed and clarifying statements establishing the facts behind the override need and making a case that the School Committees and the public teachers unions had taken considerable steps to keep expenses in check. Mr. Collins refuted many misperceptions that are entering into the debate on the override, particularly citing the continued high level of academic performance of the high school in the face of sharply declining spending levels on a per pupil basis (compare to other communities) and alarming increases in student-teacher ratios over the last decade, and the inability of towns to plan/budget for expensive ch. 766 special education costs.

U.S. Senate Candidate Marisa DeFranco: Ms. Marisa DeFranco of Middleton, a prominent immigration attorney and worker's rights advocate, addressed the Committee, introducing herself and explaining her decision to seek the Democratic nomination for the U.S. Senate seat in 2012. She noted that wanted to tackle head on the overriding issue of wealth redistribution in America, an issue that "everyone knows is happening but no one is stepping up to address". She wants to be the candidate for worker's rights and economic justice, and said she will not be afraid to defend entitlements. Ms. DeFranco evinced a feisty attitude and willingness to call out Republicans on their coded use of language that is nothing more than an attack on the American dream. She will run on a platform of "Jobs, Justice and Security" and pointed out that we can have security and liberty at the same time – these are not mutually exclusive concepts. Ms. DeFranco noted that she stands foursquare behind a public option for health care reform and was critical of the Democrat's negotiating strategy on this issue in 2010. She responded to a number of questions on foreign policy, high speed rail as an economic development initiative, support for organized labor and the Employee

**Minutes, Sudbury Democratic Town Committee
May 25, 2011, p.2**

Free Choice Act, and her name recognition obstacles and snubs by the corporate media. Her remarks were warmly received the Committee.

Progressive State Income Tax Amendment: Mr. Don Chauls addressed the Committee and asked for support for a resolution by the Committee encouraging all Democratic town and city committees to actively support a bill, S. 19, introduced by Senator James Eldridge (D-Acton) and Senator Stanley Rosenberg (D-Amherst) entitled "A Constitutional Amendment Creating a Progressive Income Tax". There was a brief discussion about how this legislation might impact legislation introduced in the House and Senate by Rep. O'Day (D-Worcester) and Sen. Chang-Diaz (D-Boston), An Act to Invest In Our Communities (H. 2553/S. 1416), that would raise the tax rate to 5.95 percent and the capital gains rate to 8.95 percent, while increasing the personal exemption to \$7900 as a means of introducing greater progressivity in our state tax system. It was agreed that this resolution was desirable and not inconsistent with the O'Day/Chang-Diaz legislation and had previously received broad support in the Committee. On a motion by Mr. Offner and a second by Mr. Noer the resolution was passed unanimously. Logistics around printing the resolution and distributing at the State party Convention in Lowell were discussed. It was agreed that members would contribute from their own funds toward the cost of printing sufficient copies to distribute at the Convention. Several delegates to the convention volunteered to help Mr. Chauls distribute the resolution.

New Business: No new business was raised.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:30 pm.

The next meeting for 2011 is scheduled for Thursday June 23, 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, 13 June 2011.