

## **Sudbury Democratic Town Committee (SDTC) Minutes of the Meeting of 17 January 2012**

Chairperson Beverly Guild convened the meeting at 7:15 pm at the Sudbury Grange Hall. Twenty members were in attendance. The committee welcomed guests Karen Darmer and Catherine Frazer. Also in attendance was State Rep. Tom Conroy, State Committeewoman Sue Kennedy, former State Senator and candidate Michael Barrett, Selectman Joseph Nolan from Wayland and Mr. Norman Birenbaum from the Elizabeth Warren campaign. The attendance list is attached to these minutes in the permanent record.

**State Senate Candidate Michael Barrett:** Chairperson Beverly Guild introduced Mr. Michael Barrett of Lexington. Mr. Barrett is a former State Senator (Cambridge, Brighton, Belmont, Arlington) who is an announced candidate in the Democratic primary for State Senator from the Third Middlesex Senate District which includes precincts 1, 4 and 5 in Sudbury. Mr. Barrett discussed why he was running and his background in public service and the private sector. He stated that if elected he will focus on higher education, health care reform and elementary and secondary school funding. In response to questions Mr. Barrett indicated he supports a single payer health care system but is not optimistic that it will be enacted anytime soon. He also supports a progressive income tax, but in discussing Sen. Eldridge's legislation (S19) that would improve the progressivity of the state income tax he opined that the Supreme Judicial Court likely would have trouble squaring this approach with existing state constitutional law.

**State Committee Woman Sue Kennedy:** Ms. Kennedy discussed the State party's focus on vote builder training and utilization by local town and city committees this election cycle. Also discussed was a postcard campaign, about which the committee provided input.

**Citizens United:** Sen. Eldridge's resolution (SRes772) regarding amending the federal Constitution to reverse the Citizens United decision of the Supreme Court was discussed. It was suggested that Mr. Tom Hollocher draft a letter to Chairs of the State Judiciary Committee expressing the committee's strong support of the resolution. The committee voted unanimously in favor of a motion by Mr. Chauls to support SRes. 772.

**State Rep. Thomas P. Conroy:** Rep. Conroy spoke briefly and informed the committee that he was running for reelection as representative for the 13<sup>th</sup> Middlesex District which includes all of Sudbury. He noted that he is in a race and respectfully requested support from committee members. He also discussed the State budget and transportation funding, particularly the MBTA. He also noted some success he had recently moving a provision that put an additional \$5 million in the supplemental FY 2012 budget that is intended to help local communities and he noted that some of this budget authority might be available to Sudbury to help with its budget shortfall attributable to extraordinary special education funding (\$770,000 for Sudbury alone).

**Minutes:** Minutes of our meeting of 15 November 2011, which had been vetted by e-mail and distributed at the meeting, were adopted as submitted by unanimous vote of the committee.

**Finances:** Ms. Guild reported that Treasurer Jane Moeller informs the committee that the current balance in the committee's bank account is \$1,144.03.

**Letter Writing Campaign:** Mr. Chauls discussed the committee's on again-off again letter writing campaign and requested broader participation from committee members. A sign-up sheet was distributed requesting monthly volunteers.

**State Health Care Reform Legislation:** Mr. Chauls and Rev. Deutsch discussed their testimony before the legislative committee considering reforms to the state health care system.

**Progressive Income Tax Forum:** Mr. Chauls informed the committee about a public forum at Goodnow Library, on Sunday Feb. 26 from 3-5 p.m., featuring State Sen. Eldridge and a representative from the Mass. Budget Policy group to discuss progressive revenue systems to support State budget priorities. Publicity efforts were recommended.

**Grass Roots Communications Program:** Mr. Chauls noted that he had been recruited by State Committee Woman Sue Kennedy to spearhead a portion of the effort in the Middlesex 7 WORCESTER Senate District to have a "rapid response" letter writing, blogging, tweeting capability during the coming election cycle.

**Endorsing State Committee Person:** Ms. Guild brought up a request by Kate Donaghue (Westborough) that the Sudbury town committee endorse Ms. Donaghue for the position of State Committee person from the M&W district. She is a candidate for election on the March 6<sup>th</sup> presidential primary ballot. Ms. Guild moved the endorsement, and it was seconded by Mr. Offner. A brief discussion ensued about whether other candidates were running and who they might be (Faye Morrison of Ayer is running) and the propriety of endorsing a candidate in a contested race on the Democratic primary ballot. The motion carried 19-1. Ms. Guild agreed to write a press release informing the Sudbury electorate of this endorsement.

**Third MAD/M&W Alliance:** There was a brief discussion of matters involving the Third Middlesex Area Democrats and the M&W regional alliance. Mr. Carmine Gentile agreed to chair a committee with Ms. Guild and Rev. Deutsch to select nominees for the Spring awards breakfasts of these groups. Suggestions from committee members were encouraged.

**Transportation Funding:** Mr. John McQueen led an excellent and informed discussion of the tremendous challenges facing the Commonwealth in securing both short and long-term reliable and adequate funding for public transportation. The MBTA, for instance, is facing an immediate \$161 million deficit in its current fiscal year budget. There has not been a fare increase in many years and the legislature is requiring the transport agency to balance its budget. A public forum organized by the MBTA on the 14<sup>th</sup> of February will be held on this subject. Details are available at [www.mbta.com](http://www.mbta.com). Rep. Conroy noted that the economic developments benefits of a sound public transportation system are widespread and there should be a statewide component to its funding. He lauded Mr. Hollocher for his recent, thoughtful letter which was distributed to all committee members. Rep. Conroy emphasized the mismanagement of the state transportation system and funding under the administration of Gov. Mitt Romney and how important that now factors in the current crisis.

**State Rep. Candidate Joseph Nolan:** Ms. Guild recognized Mr. Joseph Nolan, Wayland selectman, who is announced candidate in the Democratic primary for State representative from the 13<sup>th</sup> Middlesex. He spoke briefly, and among other things he stated his belief that any fix in the MBTA funding crisis must include general state revenues, and cannot be resolved simply through fare increases, service cuts or a combination of the two. He urged committee members to actively engage in communications with their legislators in this regard.

**Elizabeth Warren:** Mr. Norm Birenbaum of the Elizabeth Warren U.S. Senate campaign introduced himself as the Central Massachusetts regional field organizer.

**Endorsement of Marisa DeFranco:** Rev. Deutsch moved that the committee endorse Marisa DeFranco for the U.S. Senate. The motion failed of a second and was not considered further.

**Bob Gottberg:** Mr. Riordan mentioned with deep regret the passing of our friend and long-time committee member Mr. Robert Gottberg. He will be missed.

**Old Business:** None.

**New Business:** None.

**The meeting was then adjourned at 9:20 pm.**

### **Announcements**

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

If you have not already done so, please forward your **2012** dues contribution of \$35 minimum, made out to Sudbury Democratic Town Committee, c/o Ms. Jane Moeller, Treasurer, 30 Thoreau Way, Sudbury, MA.

Respectfully submitted,  
John D. Riordan, Secretary, 6 February 2012.