

## DRAFT SUDBURY DEMOCRATIC TOWN COMMITTEE

### MINUTES OF April 12, 2022 Meeting

The meeting was called to order at 7:03 PM by Chair Tania Vitvitsky.

Present were: Guest Alex Vai (in Leslie Lowe's stead) and members Andrew Bettinelli, Peg Espinola, Eva Fridman, Vice-Chair Carmine Gentile, Linda Hench-Gentile, Lisa Kouchakdjian, Henry Noer, Carl Offner, Jennifer Roberts, Sue Rushfirth, Marilyn Unger-Riepe, Tania Vitvitsky, and Colin Warwick.

#### **1. Welcome and Announcements/Communications to/from the Committee**

Chair Tania welcomed everyone, congratulated member Lisa K. for her election to the Select Board, and announced that Attorney General candidate and former Boston City Councilor and Mayoral candidate Andrea Campbell would be a guest speaker at our May meeting. She also noted that the upcoming 3<sup>rd</sup> MAD (Middlesex Area Democrats) breakfast coming up [and since rescheduled for September because of COVID-19 concerns] would be well worth attending.

**2. VOTED : Minutes of the March 9, 2022, SDTC meeting,** as corrected, were approved upon motion by Vice-Chair Carmine Gentile, seconded by Linda Hench-Gentile.

**3. The Treasurer's Report** was presented by Treasurer Sue Rushfirth (after Rep Gentile's report) with a balance of \$1,787.58 and upon motion made and seconded was VOTED to be accepted (at 7:28pm).

**4. Article 58, Climate Emergency Declaration, Sudbury Annual Town Meeting (ATM),** scheduled for Monday, May 2, 2022 [passed at ATM on Wednesday May 5,2022] at Lincoln Sudbury High School.

Alex Vai spoke and presented slides supporting Sudbury's need for climate mobilization now noting that climate change and its effects are an emergency. He highlighted extreme weather conditions experienced in Massachusetts these past 11 months in support of Article 58's three components: 1. Sudbury's acknowledgement that climate change is here. 2. Sudbury needs to formulate a climate change action plan now. and 3. Sudbury needs a fulltime Sustainability Director as a focused resource.

Alex asserted that the expenditure for a Sustainability Director would result in a positive Return on Investment (ROI) – more than paying for itself and that Senator Eldridge had committed to placing \$100,000 for it in the FY2023 state budget. Alex noted that Sudbury Public Schools and the Department of Public Works had the opportunity for solar projects, at no up front costs, which, upon completion, would reduce our (carbon dioxide) the first year by 650 metric tons, eliminate the production of 700 pounds of sulfuric acid and allow the town a \$130,000 savings in energy expenses.

**VOTED**; Upon motion of Colin Warwick, seconded by Peg Espinola, the SDTC endorses Article 58 on the Warrant for the Sudbury annual time meeting (unanimous except for one abstention).

## **5. Rep. Carmine Gentile: Legislative report.**

Carmine reported on actions by the legislature, noting that he had successfully placed \$100,000 unanimously requested (by letter signed by all five members of the Sudbury Select Board) in the House FY2023 Budget for a Sustainability Director. The Senate will vote its FY2023 state budget in May and thereafter a conference committee of three Senators and 3 Representatives will meld the two budget documents for final vote (usually unanimous) by both chambers in late July. The likelihood of the \$100,000 earmark for Sudbury remaining in the budget approaches 100%.

## **6. Select Board Chair Jen Roberts: Select Board and local issues.**

Jen, Sudbury Select Board Chair, noted that the annual town meeting indoors on week nights will be held at the high school with overflow rooms to socially distance. There will be no mask requirements. Warrant articles (in addition to #58 previously discussed by Alex Vai) concerning the Camp Sewataro property, transportation, Fairbank Community Center audio video and furniture enhancements, fire station, and others were noted.

Jen noted that the previous evening the Select Board voted 4 – 1 to extend the summer camp contract another five years. The new contract includes provision for higher remuneration to the town from the camp operator and more public access to the property. The Select Board received and took into consideration 150 or so letters from residents with many different views on how to proceed with the Sewataro issue/s. Long term study for best use of the Sewataro land, Sudbury food pantry's need for a new home and operational funds, Hope Sudbury, and ARPA (American Rescue Plan Act) decisions to be made were noted.

## **7. Democratic candidates signature drive, Sat. April 16. Details to be discussed.**

Tania has a number of signature papers to place Democratic candidates on the September Primary ballot. This coming Saturday she will be setting up a table outside Whole Foods and welcomed assistance to gather signatures. Colin W. and Lisa K. volunteered and Tania suggested 1:00 – 3:00 pm for their Saturday efforts.

## **8. Peg Espinola: Senior Center Focus Groups**

Peg informed us that the Council on Aging (COA) of which she [and Carmine] are members, are forming small focus groups to inform the COA on residents' thoughts/wishes/perceptions/desires for senior center programs and activities. They seek volunteer residents who are under or over age 65 and are or are not using the Senior Center to participate for an hour or so in these focus groups. Interested residents can reach out to the Senior Center to volunteer.

## **9. Sudbury 4<sup>th</sup> of July Parade.**

Henry Noer, who has led our efforts to participate in the parade successfully for many years said that he is hopeful that it will go forward this year and noted that the last one here in Sudbury was in 2019 (the 2020 and 2021 parades cancelled because of COVID-19 pandemic). Linda noted

that the Chamber of Commerce has already contacted Carmine [as the State Rep] and other past participants to sign up for the parade this year.

#### **10. New Business**

Colin noted Sudbury will be celebrating its 300<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the current town center this year. Israel Loring, whom he has a costume for, instituted the West Parish in 1722 (the East Parish became Wayland).

The 3<sup>rd</sup> MAD (Middlesex Area Democrats) breakfast resumes this year and members are encouraged to attend (although as of January we will no longer be a part of that Senate District which Mike Barrett represents). [It has since been postponed to September because of rising COVID-19 infections].

Carmine suggested a Ukraine item on next month's agenda, noting that one member of the Massachusetts House of Representatives had recently gone to Poland and helped refugees there for a week or more.

VOTED: On motion made by Carl and seconded the meeting was adjourned.

Next meeting will be Wednesday May 11, 7:30PM