

Plymouth Area Democrats
Minutes of the Meeting, February 15, 2012

Vice Chairman Paul Phillips welcomed members to the February meeting. He informed the group that Bob Lamb, the current chairperson, would be arriving later in the evening. Many of our usual attendees and expected guests were delayed in Concord because the NH legislature was in session with a heavy load of 44 bills to be debated. Paul recognized our elected delegates and former representatives who were in attendance: Phil Preston, Carol Friedrich, Catherine Mulholland, and Dr. Sheryl Shirley, PSU Democratic Advisor.

Barbara Therriault gave the treasurer's report. We currently have \$1,969.76 in our treasury. She mentioned that we will need more funds to open a campaign office for the fall election. She received \$825 from the Grafton County fundraiser. Doug Grant explained the process of this "Bedrock Program" – if you donate to the program, 10% of your donation goes to Grafton County Dems and 90% to the organization of your choice, which is how Plymouth Area Democrats received the \$825.

Approval of the minutes of the November meeting is deferred until March.

Announcements

Paul Phillips reported that our January event, Keep the Heat On, was hugely successful, raising \$27,000 for Plymouth Area Community Closet (PACC). Our total for the 7-year life of the fundraiser is now \$139,000. Patsy Kendall added that this represented PACC's full budget for fuel assistance and that \$10,000 of those proceeds had already been allocated to neighbors in need. Denise Castonguay mentioned that fuel companies now often require a \$600 purchase to authorize a delivery.

He also reported on the Sunday 2/12 meeting of Organizing for America (OFA). Veronica Barbaros urged people to volunteer to help her make phone calls.

Everyone was encouraged to participate in the training for VoteBuilder, to take place on Saturday, 2/18 in the PSU hub from 10am to 4pm. Rob Avruch of OFA is organizing this "neighborhood team convention." His contact is ravruch@OFANH.com, 603-410-7763.

Paul announced that the NH Democratic State Committee's Annual 2012 McIntyre Shaheen 100 Club Dinner will take place on Friday February 17 at 6:00. Tickets are available through the NHDP's website.

He also announced that on Wednesday evening, 2/22, First Lady Michelle Obama would be meeting on-line with anyone interested. This is being set up at Foster's. Details to come. Another organizing day is being set up for 2/29, and since this is Leap

Year, it is being called the “Leap to Victory” event. Details to follow.

Finally, he reported that March’s meeting will be dedicated to the town caucuses, when we will elect the officers for each town in our area. We will also hold our normal elections for two PAD officer positions: Chair and Secretary. As many members will remember, all PAD officers serve two-year terms, and these terms are staggered so that one year we will elect a Chair and Secretary while the following year we will elect a Vice Chairman and a Treasurer. Paul asked that anyone who is interested in running for either office to contact him after the meeting.

Panel Discussion on Health Care

Our panel was originally planned to include three experts, but because of the ongoing session in Concord, Rep. Cindy Rosenwald (D-Nashua), Member of House Finance, former Chair of House Health and Human Services, was not able to participate. The remaining panelists were Thomas G. Bunnell, Esq., Executive Director, New Hampshire Health Policy Institute (UNH School of Law), and Frederick S. Kelsey, M.D., Medical Director, Mid-State Health Center, Plymouth.

Tom Bunnell offered a handout – a great summary of the health care reforms. His discussion showed an exhaustive depth of knowledge on both the federal and state level. Fred Kelsey brought the doctor’s point of view to the program and had encouraging input about Mid-State’s local attempt to reform a broken system.

The meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted in Carole Heuser’s absence,
Joyce Weston