

Plymouth Area Democrats
Minutes of the Meeting, November 19, 2012

Acting Chairman Paul Phillips called the November meeting to order at 6:40pm, following an elongated dinner and social session. Jack Saunders was recognized for his 90th birthday – the group joined in a rather off-key and uncoordinated birthday song.

Barbara Therriault gave the treasurer's report. We currently have \$3,457 in our treasury. The cost of the post-election party is still pending.

Notable attendees included Martha Richards, who mentioned she won by 1,028 votes; Kelly Monahan; Deb Reynolds; Maureen Lamb (Bob was still in Florida); Mary Cooney; Sid Lovett, who reminded us with a lovely antidote that everyone has "to eat his share of rind"; Jim Aguiar Carol Friedrich; Chuck Townsend; Judy Wallick; and Catherine Mulholland, whose success was the best of all our candidates. There were a few notable absences because of other engagements.

Lawn signs were collected and sorted outside the building. The left-over signs were taken by Andi LeBaron in her truck for delivery to Jules Doner's barn. Anyone still holding signs can take them to the Doners, but please call ahead.

Paul announced that our next regular meeting would be in February, but that on January 16, 2013 at 5:30, we will be holding KEEP THE HEAT ON, the eighth annual fuel assistance fundraiser for Plymouth Area Community Closet (PACC). Over the last seven years we have raised almost \$150,000 for fuel assistance. Tickets are \$35 and go on sale on December 1 at the deli. We will be selling 200 tickets, and they sell out early. Carole Heuser mentioned that our committee member who handled volunteers, Gusti Burhman, is moving to Florida, and that we need someone to fill that position.

In Val Scarborough's absence, Paul announced an appeal from her for people to fill vacancies on both the Plymouth select board and the planning board. Applications can be obtained at the town hall.

We did it!

Paul's theme of the night's meeting was a mix of congratulations and analysis of the campaign. He lead the discussion with thanks to:

Barb Therriault for organizing a terrific post-election party at the Six Burner Bistro
Joyce Weston for her canvassing efforts at the Plymouth Station at Bill Bolton's
Barbara Fahey for visibility all over town and at the poling places

The OFA staff: Jayson, Adrian, Tyler, Jessica, Dave Lam, Becky
The PSU Dems for their amazing voter registration effort
Quentin Blaine for getting all the new voters registered and into
the voting booths on the day of the election.

Paul voiced the feelings of everyone in the room that our
greatest disappointment was that Bob Lamb was not successful in
his race, in spite of a well-run campaign and his being a far-
superior candidate.

Opening up the discussion, Paul passed the mic...

Dave Lam opened the discussion, asking for clarification on the
problem of the PSU shuttle to the polls. Why was the van sitting
at the Irving Station mid-day. **Sheryl Shirley** was able to shed
some light on the issue. Plymouth Officer Frank asked the PSU
Dems to shut down the operation after complaints about the
speakers, flyers on cars, use of electricity, chalk on the
sidewalk, the Obama signs, and where the van was stopping.
Adrienne (the OFA student liaison) asked the vans to wait at the
Irving Station while they sorted it out. The shuttle route was
changed to the HUB after an hour delay. Shirley's assessment was
that the Dems did the right thing and that there was no real
justification for the complaints.

Deb Reynolds added that we needed to have a conversation with the
university to avoid these problems in the future. She then
addressed Bob Lamb's race, reiterating that he was an "amazing
candidate", and that she was very proud of him, his wife and
family, Dave Lam and Becky. Deb felt that name recognition was
the factor that most affected the race, but that we still had a
"win behind the veneer."

Andi LeBaron brought up the issue of the film, Obama 2016. She
attended the film and reported that the sound system did not work
for the first 10 minutes. The republicans seemed to think that
was a Democratic conspiracy. Alex Ray spoke before the film with
a disclaimer. The attendance was full but not packed. There was
no charge for the film. Comments after the show were as expected
from the audience. **Paul Phillips** repeated his position that the
film was just a distraction and the Democrats were best off not
to take the bait. Gary McCool added that the film was very
successful, with 32 million copies sold, and that he felt Alex
Ray made the right decision. He felt that we Democrats should not
prevent other opinions from being exposed or stifle speech. Paul
responded that the deliberate scheduling before the election was
the problem and that the Republicans were exploiting the
Democratic tendency to ask for more speech. He was bothered by
Ray's distortion of the free speech issue – a noble concept but
used against the Democrats.

Jim Aguiar took the mic to say "thanks" and to say he couldn't
wait to go back. He'd like to see Bill O'Brien's new seat
assignment next to Valincourt. Jim related that it was a

challenge getting the word out. He ran into one woman who was being driven “bonkers” by canvassing. The problem with the OFA office was that they focused on Obama, Kuster, and Hassam and did not send out flyers for the local candidates. But in spite of feeling distanced from the office this time, he had high praise for Jayson and the crew, felt the stations worked well, the party was awesome, and feels optimistic for the next term.

Mary Cooney brought up the idea of better exposure by having local papers print a column of “questions to the candidates” on a regular basis before the election. She explained that this has been very effective at the Concord Monitor.

Paul Phillips asked for feedback on the location of the OFA/PAD office on Tenney Mountain Highway. It provided good parking, lots of signage, but seemed removed from downtown. The meeting attendees were fairly evenly split on this issue. For our next office, availability of space may be the determining factor. We discussed the problem of primary signage – OFA restricted any signage of a primary candidate in their area.

We also discussed ads. **Sheryl Shirley** felt we should do a full election guide such as the republicans did right before the election. **Deb Reynolds** added that the Grafton County Democrats might be a good organization to put this together and help pay the cost. A discussion about having an ad in the Penny Saver seemed inconclusive. Not many people in our meeting read it, but that did not dissuade the feeling that it might be beneficial to place ads there.

There were some complaints about the canvassing stations being too far away from the canvassing areas, although that is what they were set up to avoid.

Dave Lam gave some perspective on our local OFA office compared to others. The fact that PAD pays part of the rent puts us in a unique position. He mentioned that Carol Shea-Porter’s staff was allocated a broom closet! But Lam cautioned that everything should be negotiated and put into writing. For instance, PAD had use of the phone lines, but Annie Kuster’s campaign did not.

Chuck Townsend brought up the affect of redistricting on the election. Wentworth was a new town in his district and therefore, he spent most of his time there. In spite of that effort, he lost in that town. He reiterated that a long-term effort is needed to win. It takes years.

Paul Phillips responded that the Democrats did not field a full slate of candidates and that we probably lost opportunities in some places because of this. We have left seats on the table. We need to do better recruitment.

Finally, **Deb Reynolds** took the mic to give a heartfelt thanks to Paul Phillips for his terrific job since he filled in for Bob

Lamb and particularly during the campaign. The floor responded with a standing ovation.

The meeting adjourned at 8:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Joyce Weston, Secretary

