

PLYMOUTH AREA DEMOCRATS
GENERAL MEETING
2/27/2019

Jay Knowler, PAD Chair, opened our meeting at 6:36 pm. He recognized past and present elected officials in the room. The mic was turned over to Val Scarborough for information on upcoming Board elections which will take place at our March 27th general meeting. She announced those candidates who have already step forward and invited anyone else who would like to run to please be in touch with the Selection Committee, comprised of Val Scarborough and Stephanie Osborne. Jay invited candidates running for Town Offices to please stand and introduce themselves. Present and introduced were: Dan Boynton of Campton, Bill Bolton, Kathy Kelsey, and Mike Weaver of Plymouth.

Mike Mechanic, vice-chair, took the mic and invited comments from the floor. After which he introduced our immigration panel presentation for the evening. Present on the panel were: Gilles Bissonnette, legal director for NH ACLU, representative Manny Espitia of Nashua, and Sebastian Fuentes of Thornton. Gilles was first to speak. The Concord office of the ACLU is 1 of 54 affiliates in the country. The ACLU is approaching its 100-year anniversary. Equal protection, voting rights, privacy, police accountability, reproductive rights, and immigration policy are just a few of their issues which they address. He reported that membership nationally grew from 500k to 1.725 million on the weekend of January 28th, 2017, when President Trump signed the Muslim travel ban. New Hampshire has an immigration Detention Center. The number of detainees went from 25 to 125 during the Trump Administration, due to the current policy changes under this administration. The Detention Center is housed in the Stratford County Jail, in Dover, NH. He talked about the traffic stops on I-93, and the litigation which took place as a result of the illegal partnership between Woodstock police and ICE, which they won, and all plaintiffs' charges were all dismissed. He alerted us to two anti-sanctuary bills that are in Concord currently, and he urges us to call our Congressional Delegation regarding our views on these policies.

Sebastian spoke next. He came to this country and to our area as a J-1 Visa holder. After his Visa expired he decided to stay here illegally for 2 years. He stated it was very difficult to live his life under this secrecy. He began his process to citizenship and completed it on July 4th 2016. He spoke about his personal experience with I-93 checkpoints happening here in New Hampshire, his fears and hiding while here illegally, and how freeing it is at this point that he is able to speak up.

Manny was third to speak. He moved to NH 4 years ago. He is a graduate of Princeton Univ and is a former staffer for Maggie Hassan and has recently been appointed NH presidential campaign director for Julian Castro. His parents were undocumented but gained citizenship in the mid-80s. He spoke about some current legislation to be aware of. He co sponsored HB397, regarding drivers licenses for NH residents who do not possess a SSN. He also alerted us to HB232 the NH anti-sanctuary city bill.

The forum was then opened to questions from the floor.

Meeting ended 8:10pm.