

Plymouth Area Democrats

General Meeting

Minutes

Wednesday, February 26, 2020

Jay Knowler, Chair, called the meeting to order at 6:17 p.m. by introducing the dignitaries in the room. Andru Volinsky, Joyce Weston, Suzanne Smith, Josh Adjutant, Dick Osbourne, Susan Moore, Martha Richards, Sally Fellows, Tink Taylor and Bill Bolton were present.

Jay extended a special “thank you” to the subcommittee of Jennifer Legier, Sarah Daniels-Campbell and Estee Cuddihy, who planned and executed our chili cook-off in January. We raised \$934.13, after expenses, for local candidates. A special “thank you” was extended to this community and the generosity of all who participated. It was a fun evening, and the plan is to have it be an annual event.

Jay announced that Board elections are scheduled for our March meeting. Anyone who is thinking about running should be in touch with the selection committee.

Jay announced that he is stepping down a month early, due to travel commitments, and that the Grafton County Chair, Sarah Daniels-Campbell, has appointed Mike Machanic as interim chair until the PAD elections next month. Jay spoke regarding the last two years in his office as Chair of Plymouth Area Dems and the milestones and accomplishments we all enjoyed.

Microphone was then turned over to Interim Chair, Mike Machanic, who invited announcements from the floor. Ron Goggans passed the buckets. Grafton County Chair, Sarah Daniels-Campbell, announced the platform committee meeting (March 21, 11AM, Senior Center) and called for anyone interested to present changes. The NHDP platform is available on the NHDP website. She also spoke about candidate recruitment and invited anyone with information on people who may be interested in running for public office to be in touch.

Amelia Keene talked about redistricting warrant articles. These legislative papers are being reintroduced this term, after being vetoed by Governor Sununu last year. These warrant articles call on state legislature to draw up fair districting maps, via an independent redistricting commission. 30 towns are already on board, with more to be added in as time goes by. There are

bipartisan sponsors for them. As many signatures as possible are being gathered to be voted on in early March. PAD will get the documents to anyone who requests them.

Susan Moore spoke about a workshop for women called Emerge Step Forward, hosted by the National Organization, Emerge America. They host boot camps for women wanting to run for office. Northern Grafton County Dems will be sponsoring an event on March 28th. Anyone who is interested is invited to contact them. They handed out flyers with more information.

Mike talked about candidate recruitment. June is a deadline for registering to run for office. Recruitment efforts from now until then are very crucial. He made a call for people to start looking for friends and acquaintances to run for public office.

Kim Rawson and Fawn Gaudet presented a slideshow presentation on the climate crisis and local action. They referenced the Greta Thunberg video, where she was speaking before legislature in 2019. They will post that video on our PAD Facebook page. There were handouts. They concentrated on a packet of five bills in 2019 which were all vetoed. Why? Sununu's family legacy of climate denial is still very much a part of governmental reality in our state today. Sununu still has a 59% approval rating. However he continues to be a direct threat to any energy initiatives brought before the legislature. There are three reps serving on the Science and Technology committee which need to be voted out. Representative Michael Harrington (New Durham and Stratford), Representative Michael Vose (Epping), and Representative Jeanine Notter (Merrimack). In addition, Vince Paul Migliore (Bridgewater, Grafton Co.) needs to be voted out. A work session was initiated to review the roll call list of votes on these 5 bills, and we were invited to consider friends, family, relatives and colleagues in the towns where Representatives voted down these initiatives, as possible names to put forth to run against these individuals. Names were gathered.

Rep Josh Adjutant introduced Gubernatorial candidate Andru Volinsky, and stated why he was endorsing this candidate. Andru then made a speech and took questions from attendees. He spoke about the Claremont case, which he won. He spoke about the fact that our roads and bridges are in shambles, and the fact that we have a serious opioid crisis, one of the worst in the country. He brought attention to the schools tax system in New Hampshire and the fact that is not fair and does not work. His campaign platform is based on three separate areas: #1- school funding and property taxes, and revising this system; #2-climate action; #3- government races should not be bought and paid for. With regards to the climate crisis, he acknowledges that time is running out. He is not a supporter of the Granite Bridge project, an 11 mile fracked gas pipeline, and he states he is the only candidate in this race that opposes it. He helped to shut down the Northern Pass by representing families

in the wake of what would have been a devastating blow to our environment and to the communities they would have impacted. A question was posed about how to bring young people into New Hampshire and/or keep them here. His response was to strengthen the medical fields in NH by paying medical staff fairly and to attract teachers and pay them fairly. Andru opposes the 46 million dollar grant for charter schools that was intended to create new Charter Schools. None of those funds would go to already existing charter schools. This matched funding would have been stolen from public schools. He supports a \$15 an hour minimum wage. He acknowledges the roads are terrible because most dollars are spent at the federal level and very little is spent at the state level. He supports commuter rail in his position on the Executive Council. He supports reform and fair funding for paying for roads in NH. And he would focus on economic development in the Northern and Southwestern parts of the state, where there is an extreme of lack of jobs and poverty. Berlin is on track to declare bankruptcy. He concluded saying that if we want great schools, great services and great roads in the state we will have to pay for it. In light of this fact, he had refused to sign The Pledge, and states he is the only candidate in this race who has refused.

Meeting was concluded shortly after 8PM.