



VILLAGE INDEPENDENT DEMOCRATS

26 Perry Street New York, NY 10014

Minutes, March 12, 2015

President Nadine Hoffmann opened her report with the announcement that the Manhattan Young Democrats had donated \$100 to VID. She announced the Chelsea Reform Democrats would be showing "To Russia with Love", a documentary about LGBT Olympic athletes in Russia, on March 19. Letitia James, Public Advocate, will be holding a rally concerning school funding and teachers at City Hall on March 15. Nadine spoke of forming a possible Alliance with the Chelsea Reform Club, who have a new President. She talked about the success of the Small Business Forum.

Because District Leader Keen Berger was away, she also gave the D.L. Report. She explained the process for electing the new State Committeeman, Buxton Midyette. He is a well-admired schools activist. He is also opposed to fracking and for election campaign reform, gender equality, universal healthcare and affordable housing. Tony Hoffmann and Jonathan Geballe explained the duties of the State Committeeman.

Now there was an election for vacancies on the Executive Committee. There were two nominees, Marlene Nadle and Joe DiMattia. After they gave their presentations, they were unanimously acclaimed.

Sharon Woolums and Steve Null gave a presentation on the Small Business Forum, co-sponsored by VID and The Villager newspaper, and held at Judson Memorial Church on March 5. (Lincoln Anderson moderated.) Steve gave a history of the dire condition of the small business community and the demise of the commercial rent control which had been under the auspices of the courts between 1945 and 1963. He spoke about various organizations and movements which had been formed, but there was no pressure from the government to support this movement. He proposed a petition drive to support Intro #402, Small Business Jobs Survival Act. Ten members volunteered.

Next Assemblywoman Deborah Glick made a report on the state budget negotiations. The Assembly passed their bill, and the Governor put out his proposal in January. He tied the Dream Act to tuition assistance and linked it with a tax credit for Yeshivas, Catholic schools, and private schools. The bill can't be changed, but Cuomo can make 21 or 30 day amendments. Ms. Glick feels this is the beginning of a voucher program, but negotiations are ongoing. She spoke of Sheldon Silvers' ethics

predicament, and said the Governor had proposed changes in disclosing income, but she wanted more disclosure. No changes will happen until 2017.

Now Brad Hoylman made his report from the State Senate. He said it was more depressing being in the minority and talked about various budget disappointments--like reduced funding for HIV services, campaign finance reform, rejection of raising the minimum wage, no increase in oil spill cleanups, tenant protections, the Dream Act, etc.

He said each house has its own budget and the Governor has his. Jeff Klein and the IDC have joined the Republican majority, and the Governor included them in the discussion. Brad felt the Mainline Dems also need a voice at the table. He talked of the plight of LGBT homeless youth. He spoke of the possible demise of rent regulation and possible solutions. Volunteers will be bused to Albany to protest inadequate tenant protections and real estate loopholes which allow more luxury housing and less affordable options. He also discussed the ethics reform issue--he has sponsored a bill to prohibit outside income for legislators and link this to a raise in salary.

Nadine now reported on the Gala--Zephyr Teachout and Tim Wu will be honored, among others, and the venue will be Tio Pepe again. She received a letter from Ling Tsou and a coalition to support Resolution #549, opposing the construction of a natural gas port facility, Port Ambrose, off the New York coast. Nat Johnson explained the environmental repercussions of the facility, and Jonathan stressed the need to change to non-fossil fuels.

Tony Hoffmann now spoke of the Candles for Clemency project to protest Cuomo's lack of clemency for anyone currently in jail, mentioning Judith Clark particularly. On April 18, buses will travel to Cuomo's house in Mt. Kisco for a rally and candlelight vigil. He asked for volunteers--at least seven people stepped up. A motion to join Candles for Clemency passed unanimously.

Under New Business, Anne Heaney mentioned joining with Food and Water Watch to make GMO labeling the law.

The meeting was adjourned.