



Village Independent Democrats

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Nadine Hoffmann opened her President's Report by thanking everyone for attending the meeting and the Gala on April 30. She spoke of VID doing a lot of outreach, with thanks to Ed Yutkowitz.

Keen Berger gave her District Leader's Report, telling us how proud she is to be a DL, and she spoke about the three important events of the last two weeks--the Gala, Brad Hoylman's fundraiser and his efforts to defeat financial corruption in Albany, and the meeting held at the LGBT Center regarding the unveiling of 75 Morton Street, and how well it was attended. She also reported a lot of people were contacting her regarding elections and the electoral process, another function of her position.

Nat Johnson, organizer of the Special Forum on Fracking and Gas Pipeline Infrastructure, told us of attending many events regarding resource conservation and renewable energy. Despite the fracking ban, the oil and gas industry wants to expand the infrastructure needed to transport and locate fossil fuels.

He introduced Clare Donohue, of Sane Energy, who treated us to a slide show of what is happening in the world of LNG infrastructure, touching on the Spectra pipeline, fracking in Pennsylvania, the Finger Lakes pipeline, the Seneca Salt Caverns, and the Center at Horseheads. She also gave us the good news that Resolution 549, calling on Governor Cuomo to veto the Port Ambrose LNG Terminal, had just passed unanimously in the City Council.

Next was Eric Weltman of Food & Water Watch in NY, who spoke of organizing efforts between environmental groups and fighting for related issues like banning the TPP and GMO foods. His organization is building a network of 15 offices around the country as well as Latin America and Europe. He is trying to elevate the issue to the national level, making the point that more low-cost natural gas suppresses interest and investment in renewable energy. He urged everyone to take action by contacting their local politicians and passed out petitions and fliers.

Ling Tsou of United for Action spoke of her efforts to stop Port Ambrose, a facility that could be as long as the Empire State Building is high. She made the point that LNG is more polluting than domestic natural gas--40% worse in greenhouse gases. Port Ambrose would endanger the ecology of the region, along with wildlife and fishing, and increase dependence on natural gas.

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It also only provides 5 permanent jobs, despite being touted as a job-builder. Wind farms create more jobs and have a beneficial impact on hurricanes by absorbing wind. There is also the issue that Port Ambrose is owned by a company based in the Cayman Islands and the LNG will be harvested for export, not domestic use. Port Meridian in the UK was built by the same company to provide an export terminal for Port Ambrose. She urged contacting Governors Cuomo and Christie to ask them to reject this plan because climate change is the most important issue today--all other issues pale if we lose the environment.

There followed a general discussion of who supported these plans--Obama and Hillary Clinton chief among them. Again, contacting the two governors, Cuomo and Christie was urged.

Lyle Frank, candidate for Civil Court Judge, presented his credentials. He is running against Robert Rosenthal. Next was Tanya Kennedy, who faced some tough questions about cases regarding elder guardianships and possible abuse. Lastly, Robert Rosenthal made his presentation. The voting results were Kennedy 13 for, 12 no endorsement, and Frank defeated Rosenthal 20 to 4.

Tony Hoffmann briefly spoke about Candles for Clemency, which has been postponed in the expectation of some imminent clemencies. He was expecting a call. There was a discussion of the County Committee and campaigning to begin June 6.

Sharon Woolums now updated the SBJSA petition drive, to kick off Saturday. VID has taken the lead on this issue, prompting newspaper articles, comments from the head of REBNY, and two proposed new bills. Brooklyn will have a forum on this topic on June 4 at St. Joseph's High School.

Nadine said the Gala scored 118 people and possibly some \$16-17 thousand in profits.

Alison Greenberg spoke of the June 4 Forum about the NYC Human Rights Law and its impact politically, practically, and on individuals.

Tim McInerney spoke of the passing of William Stricklin, former President of VID. He is trying to organize a May 27 memorial. A resolution for \$200 for this purpose passed and was approved, 14 for with one abstention.

Keen Berger was acclaimed DL unanimously, but there were two candidates for male DL, Arthur Schwartz and Gil Horowitz. After presentations and discussion, Arthur won it 12 to 0 with 9 no endorsements.

Linda Jacobson read her "Puppy Press Release" put together with help from Kathy Slawinski and especially Ed Yutkowitz. A motion made to send it to the City Council won with 16 for and 2 against.

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Now there was a discussion about judicial delegates. Nadine has been talking to the other downtown clubs and trying to work out a compromise, but the number VID has to supply is still unclear, so provisional delegates were voted in--in order: Jen Hoppe, Zella Jones, Nadine Hoffmann, Cormac Flynn, Sharon Woolums, Kathy Slawinski, Jonathan Geballe, Charles Stimson, and Barbara Ruether.

The meeting was adjourned!