



Village Independent Democrats  
26 Perry Street  
New York, New York 10014

General Membership Meeting  
July 13, 2017

President Erik Coler opened the meeting with his President's Report. He first announced the annual VID Street Fair on Saturday the 15th and asked for volunteers. Next up was Frieda Bradlow's BBQ on the 30th. This is a potluck event, and Kathy Slawinski and Jen Hoppe will organize the menu. There will be a Trivia Night on the 26th, starting at 7pm. There will be free beer and drinks for the first hour.

Erik announced the Executive Committee's decision to write to Keith Wright, Manhattan County Leader, who is currently also working for a lobbying firm, asking him to step down from one of his positions. Erik will send this letter to the membership.

Gale Brewer requested a meeting with the Affordable Housing Committee. She's very happy with the Committee's progress. And VID is a nominee for the Demmy's Club of the Year Award, ceremonies to be held on the 23rd at the SVA Theater. The next meeting will be held in September, as traditionally there is no meeting in August.

When Erik was asked about the agenda of the emergency Executive Committee on the 10th, he said the club was contemplating challenging Arthur Schwartz's petitions for District Leader, but decided against it.

Keen Berger was recovering from foot surgery, so there was no District Leader Report.

Tim Wu delivered a talk on Net Neutrality, his signature subject. He opened by thanking the club for being the first club to endorse him and Zephyr Teachout when she ran for Governor and he for Lieutenant Governor, and they garnered 40% of the vote. He gave a history of Net Neutrality, and his personal history. He spoke about the investigation he ran while working for Eric Schneiderman of fraudulent internet speeds provided by Time Warner, now Spectrum. This is an ongoing lawsuit.

He spoke about the monopolies that run the cable business, and how a service that costs \$5/month to provide is billed at \$60 or more. He talked about Verizon buying Yahoo in order to mine information, and expressed his fear that the Dems may be becoming more like Reps, more pro-business than pro-consumer, and urged bringing back anti-trust laws.



Erik now introduced two Resolutions in which the club endorsed the two Resolutions written by Rachel Lavine of the NYSDC's Progressive Caucus. One proposes rules changes to simplify and improve certain problematic rules of the NYSDC and the other urges the party and the local clubs not to support IDC members, who caucus with Republicans and hamper a progressive agenda. Both of these passed unanimously. Tom Connor felt the anti-IDC resolution didn't go far enough, but Zella Jones cautioned changing the wording, citing Rachel's expertise in writing.

Erik now introduced new member Mark Wallace, who will be taking a leading role in organizing 311 calls to make them more effective by getting the community to document them.

Laurie Hardjowirogo, of the Voter Reform Committee, spoke with Brad Hoylman about fighting the IDC. He recommended talking to Basil Smikle. There will be an update in September. Laurie, who's hard at work upstate, is also working on voter reform, and trying to register voters in the 19th CD, John Faso's district, On July 26 there will be a homeowners registry and fundraiser, catered by City Bakery. Jen Hoppe said she had seen a young woman on the Rachel Maddow show who had met with Faso, asking him not to stop her medicaid because she had a brain tumor. He hugged her and promised not to, then voted for the Trumpcare bill to severely limit medicaid!

Now it was Nat Johnson's turn, of the Environmental Committee. He outlined several projects for the fall, among them another showing of the film on Indian Point followed by a panel discussion. Rachel Kaufman is interested in being on the panel. Frieda is taking the lead on curbside composting. Anne Heaney, Nat and Frieda had attended a forum on organic composting which was very worthy and upbeat. Nat said attitudes are changing re composting. He also expressed a commitment to offshore wind. He's working with SANE Energy on a promotional video on Rockaway Beach--if you want to be part of it, please RSVP to him. He also urged everyone to call Chuck Schumer and ask him to oppose the Trump environmental agenda.

Laurie said petitioning was very successful--1900 signatures, and everyone on the petition qualified for County Committee.

As for the Affordable Housing Committee, Erik told us that 29 rental units had been successfully restabilized by the landlord--no rents had been lowered, but they may be in the future due to a lawsuit. There will be a Day of Action on the 29th, when two more buildings will be targeted for possible restabilization. He's working with the Housing Rights Initiative, and asked for volunteers. There ensued a discussion about the legal issues of investigating landlords.

Carlina Rivera, running for City Council in District 2, made a presentation, talking about her district, her history, and the Mount Sinai Beth Israel hospital closing. She outlined the effects this would have on the community--there will be a health needs assessment in late August She urged looking at all demographics and the real estate deal involved, how to push for affordable housing--there will be an update in September. Jamie Rogers, Carlina's husband and the chair



of CB 3, also spoke about the hospital crisis and the expansion of NYU Hospital. There is a working group that attends monthly meetings regarding this issue.

Under New Business, Anne talked about a Constitutional Convention discussion in November. Frieda spoke of a free performance on Governor's Island, to be directed by Karin Coonrod, Jonathan Geballe's wife, on Saturday the 14th, and Laurie reminded us about the July 15 street fair.

The meeting was adjourned.

