



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

GENERAL MEETING MINUTES  
November 9, 2017

President Erik Coler opened the meeting by announcing he had nothing to report except for Frieda's holiday party, to be held on December 10. The December Executive Committee meeting would be held on December 18 instead of the usual date, which would have fallen on Christmas.

Keen Berger, in her District Leader report, declared the Virginia election results wonderful. She described how she brings cookies to the polls. Before the election, she had brought cookies to Third Avenue and 14th Street, where the busses to Virginia were departing, thanks to Jen Hoppe. Her next to last stop was at PS 3, where Austin Brown had been handing out VID palm cards. She was persuaded to vote no on the Con Con after hearing the arguments against it at VID.

Tony Hoffmann reported on the Election Committee by first congratulating VID on their incredible performance even though in the world of excitement, this year's election was not near the top (in NYC). He thanked the volunteers who covered the polls even though the weather in the morning was cold and in the evening, it rained. Those were Laurie Hardjowirogo, Ed Yutkowitz, Elissa Stein, Irene Kaufman, Jen Hoppe, and Erik Coler.

Laurie reported on the Voter Reform committee by saying the three candidates she campaigned for upstate all won. Where Indivisible groups were active, results were good; where they weren't, results were not so good. The second phone bank for second home owners got many people to re-register, and a few went to the True Blue Summit. There was still a lack of transparency with the DNC, and she was concerned that millennials, who will outnumber baby boomers in 2020, are mainly registering as Independents.

Erik Coler, head of the Affordable Housing committee, stated there would be another meeting with the tenants of the second building he's working with; and a suit will be filed in a month or so regarding a third building.

Nat Johnson, of the Environmental committee, spoke of a panel on New York's energy visions with Aaron Belcher and John Fresina to be held December 4 at the Little Red Schoolhouse. A documentary on Indian Point will be held in January. A rally on November 13 at Cuomo's office on Fifth Avenue will be held to urge him to stop the Williams Pipeline and commit to transitioning NYS to renewable energy. Alison Stowell is working with the Sanitation Department regarding recycling and sustainability, and the committee is committed to getting curbside composting.

There followed a discussion of the close vote on Proposition 3, about land banking.



Next, Paul Newell reported on the County Committee for the club. Certain reforms were pushed at the September meeting, with seven resolutions proposed. Five were straightforward rules changes, but the seventh one, regarding Keith Wright, was quite controversial. It called for Keith to resign one of his positions, County Leader or lobbyist. A Rules Committee has been convened and will meet in three months, which has never been done before--most meetings are held every six months. He urged anyone interested in proposing rules changes to let Keen know--he said we can convene a new meeting, and he feels we will win. The Democratic party must be set up to be open to outside groups and other activists.

Arthur Schwartz, District Leader, was next. He said he totally supported Newell's resolutions. Schwartz had gotten a call alerting him that three polling places had been moved--he tried to get an injunction against this, and a judge ordered they be put back on Tuesday. Two hundred thousand people, according to Dan Garodnick, had their polling places moved. He also mentioned the four candidates running against Cuomo--Terry Gipson, Stephanie Miner, Jumaane Williams, and Mike Genaris.

Next was a panel discussion about the move and downsizing of Beth Israel Hospital by Mt. Sinai. Judy Wessler and Anthony Feliciano represented the community--Mt. Sinai Beth Israel declined to attend, saying they had already spoken enough on the issue.

Assemblyman Deborah Glick spoke, advising everyone of her upcoming seminar on climate change to be held November 28 at the New School. She also spoke of her proposal of an enhanced TAP for private colleges.

Erik Coler announced that Jonathan Geballe had put together a resolution re Beth Israel, but he didn't have copies, so he read it. There was a discussion, and Tony recommended putting together a committee comprised of Susan Gottesman, Zella Jones, Alec Pruchnicki, Marlene Nadle, and Judy Wessler and Anthony Feliciano. They will meet before the next membership meeting. This passed unanimously.

Tony also introduced a substitute amendment to replace the amendment passed at the last meeting re Executive Committee members running for Judicial Candidate positions at a different club, saying the amendment that passed was meaningless. Susan proposed tabling this to the Executive Committee meeting. This passed with 25 for and one abstention.

There was an election for two new Executive Committee members to fill two vacancies. The candidates (and election results) were Deb Sherman (22 votes), Irene Kaufman (19 votes), Yvonne Sherwell (9 votes), and Cam Krause (2 votes). So, the new members are Deb Sherman and Irene Kaufman.

Under New Business, Laurie announced a November 16 phone bank against the IDC.

Grace Price thanked everyone for the warm reception for Marc Fliedman, write-in candidate against Cy Vance --almost 60,000 voters abstained from voting for Vance. She will be working for the next four years to unseat Vance, and advised anyone interested in this cause to contact her.

Jen, who campaigned in Virginia, told us that Danica Roehm, the transgender candidate who won, had gone to her journalism school. She also announced there would be a call on Monday to canvass, perhaps in Alabama.



Lois Rakoff thanked all those who worked at the polls and announced two events--the Washington Square Music Festival on November 19 and her annual Poe Room event on November 30.

Alec Pruchnicki announced a free music festival on November 25 at St. Veronica's church, which is closing. He said if this goes well, a proposal will be made to make the church a community and performance space.

Erik announced that an election for President and three Vice Presidents would be held at the next meeting, and advised anyone who is interested should let him know. The meeting was adjourned.