



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

General Meeting Minutes
December 13, 2018

The meeting opened with President Erik Coler requesting the adoption of the agenda, which was unanimously accomplished. He also announced that the next Executive Committee meeting would be held on December 17 rather than Christmas Eve, the usual last Monday of the month.

District Leader Keen Berger gave her report, stating that the club had spent a lot of money on the election and it worked. She talked of the Trump meeting with Nancy Pelosi and Chuck Schumer, and said possibly the negotiation over immigration could be conducted differently. This sparked a general discussion on the topic.

Next, Robert Rosenthal expressed his thanks to the club for its help in his losing campaign. He noted that the VID palm cards devoted 50% of their space to him and he was deeply grateful.

Nat Johnson of the Environmental Committee made four announcements. First was that Manhattan SWAB had a brochure online on recycling and organics collection. Second was that, because of Corey Johnson, there would be a new composting site on Seventh Avenue and Christopher Street. Third was that the Public Advocate had proposed a law to provide an organics collection depot in all city buildings. And fourth was the December 4 rally for a radical bill to lower the carbon footprint.

Tony Hoffmann, noting that he wore two hats, first delivered the Treasurer's Report, stating that the club had \$32,000 in the main account, \$9,790 in the campaign account, and \$671 in Paypal. This is a total of \$42,820, which is very good considering the rent on the clubhouse is paid, dues are flowing in, and everyone is becoming more politically active.

Switching hats, he now spoke of the successful VoteBlue 2018 campaign, of which VID was the principal club participant. This involved 18 buses and numerous volunteers sent to four out of six CDs, resulting in the winning of six State Senate seats. He also reminded us there was a Public Advocate election in February, and that VID, along with 7 or 8 cosponsors, would hold a forum on this on Sunday, January 6, at the LGBT Center. Erik Bottcher will co-chair, and after the forum, VID would make an endorsement.



Arthur Schwartz, male DL, (and Jumaane Williams' lawyer) reminded us that petitioning starts December 4 and lasts only 12 days. Tony discussed the nomination process and said if no clear winner, petitioning would be done by Captain's Choice. There was general discussion.

Carlina Rivera, City Councilmember, arrived and wished everyone happy holidays, saying she was just getting over a cold. She said she was proud of the work VID did re ousting the IDC and the big wins in the State Senate. She said the Council had passed a really great budget under Corey Johnson, a really great supervisor. She cited Fair Fares, and stated Corey had been very good to her for funding. She talked of school funding, food pantries, the Merchant's House win, community gardens and the Village Alliance. She spoke of legislation she helped pass taking on Airbnb, rents, preventing bird trafficking, the "state of the storefront" bill, the L-pocalypse, and air quality monitoring, etc. She said she was attending monthly meetings regarding landmarking in District 2, and the renovation of water mains in Manhattan.

She segued to the Tech Hub, the positive aspects of the project, and the benefits of Tech Hub training. She said CB3 was highly in favor of the Tech Hub because of the opportunities it provided. She had asked the LPC to reconsider the St. Denis Hotel, slated for demolition. She got 7 buildings landmarked, as opposed to the 193 originally proposed. She talked of the benefits of the developer's plan, which supposedly meant more students and \$200,000 in scholarships every year for 99 years, with 20% of the trainees to be district based. She said the original asks, for more landmarking and zoning restrictions, were "off the table" according to the mayor and real estate interests, but she would continue to meet with the mayor and the LPC to fight for preservation. There was a discussion, with Carlina answering about four questions. Andrew Berman, who was present, was not able to ask any question.

Carlina, after being confronted by some hard questions, explained that her second week on the job she was faced with some very difficult issues.

Now there was an election for club President. David Siffert, the only candidate, was not present because he was at the Mexican border trying to help immigrants, so Jen Hoppe read his statement. The vote was 39 for Dave, with 2 invalid and 1 for Jen.

Arthur Schwartz, District Leader, now gave a report in which he said he had rejoined VID and voted for the first time since 1998. He said he had been involved in a number of things in the district, among them a suit he filed a year ago to stop the closure of Beth Israel Hospital. After nine to ten months, the judge decided not to dismiss the suit. Mount Sinai Beth Israel wanted to sell the hospital building for residential use but there was a problem with zoning--the site was not zoned for residences--so they were over a barrel.

There was also a suit over the L train stoppage, with discussions continuing over the 14th Street bus situation, and Arthur advocating for some cutouts for certain traffic. He said VID had done a great job on the elections, with some issues needing to be pushed. He said voting reform should be easy, campaign finance reform is needed, and the NY Health Act may get passed, but



has some opposition from unions and the government. He noted that as of now there are 21 people running for President and we should get them to come to VID.

Now there was the election for the three Vice Presidents. There were three candidates-- Erik Bottcher, Sara Kimbell, and Allison Stowell, and each candidate made a statement. All were elected through acclamation, with the Secretary casting one unanimous ballot.

After the election, Frieda Bradlow, VID member since 1982, proclaimed the club had had no greater President than Erik Coler. Tony echoed this sentiment, with one caveat--Erik was second best after Nadine, Tony's wife. He led the club in a standing ovation for Erik.

Under New Business:

Cameron Krause proposed making a rule that VID members should have priority over non-members during questions. He also said he was potentially doing a film series and hoped to get actors and directors to come to the club and speak. If anyone was interested in participating in the project, he asked them to speak to him.

Sharon Woolums said to save the date for Doris Diethers birthday party on January 10, to be held at Judson. Tickets are free, but the church is hoping for donations to their elevator fund.

Jonathan Geballe had gone to a True Blue meeting earlier--they were looking at opportunities to put forward legislation to benefit New York, like voting rights, rent reform, and MTA funding. There was a proposal to put a 1% tax on Wall Street trades to fund public schools and the MTA. He also thanked Frieda for donating her home for the holiday party, and Frieda thanked Sara Kimbell for her help. Jerry Nadler was there, along with all the local electeds.

Dusty, of WestView News, spoke of how two years ago, after Hurricane Sandy, she had gone to George Capsis about the the 9/11 tiles she had salvaged during the storm. She was able to get a Bluebird Library bus to house them, and asked people to get involved by contacting her or George at WestView News. The bus is at Seventh Avenue and Greenwich, and tourists from all over the world come to see the tiles. Katharine Wolpe suggested sending an email to help with this project, and Erik said he would follow up.

The meeting was adjourned.