



General Meeting Minutes  
April 11, 2019

The meeting opened with President David Siffert blowing out the candles on his vegan birthday cupcake--Happy Birthday, Dave! Then the agenda was unanimously adopted.

Assemblymember Deborah Glick gave a speech on the passage of legislation in the Assembly, including the plastic bag ban, and a panel to determine the details on congestion pricing, with funds going to the MTA. Funding for electronic pollbooks passed, and funding for early voting sites, mostly upstate. Most importantly, some significant criminal justice reform was passed, including measures to ensure speedy trials and bail reform. Unfortunately, the pied-a-terre tax did not pass, but the millionaire tax was extended, and a mansion tax, with funds going to the MTA. The MTA made a commitment to 50 new accessible stations to be built over the next ten years.

District Leader Keen Berger opened her report saying she was happy the club got many signatures on the petitions and that Jen (Hoppe) will be the next DL. A presentation on dyslexia was made to CB2, and the Community Board will pass a resolution. As she was driven out of her apartment by a fire, she had been looking for a new location, but unfortunately she couldn't rent in David's building because the kitchens were too small and she was unable to bake cookies!

In his President's Report, David mentioned that Jen and the County Committee candidates were running unopposed and had the required signatures.

Sara Kimbell of the Gala Committee reported they were in the final planning stages, with Honorees being Corey Johnson, TrueBlueNY and noIDCNY, and longtime member Frieda Bradlow. The event will be held at Tio Pepe and Sing Out Louise will perform.

Nat Johnson of the Environmental Committee announced the next meeting on April 24 at Frieda's house, with issues to be discussed for the next year. Anne Heaney announced a rally on April 18 to oppose the Williams Pipeline, an entirely unneeded project. There was a discussion about the bag fee.

Arthur Schwartz, male DL, was next, announcing that even though he was not endorsed by the club he had carried petitions for Jen, Jumaane, and about a dozen County Committee candidates. The lawsuit against the closure of Beth Israel Hospital prevailed, with the hospital



to file a new plan in June. They have already closed their maternity, cardiac, and neo-natal departments. He will be in court Thursday, and there will be a Town Hall sometime in May. The coalition is currently working with Harvey Epstein.

Someone is trying to stop the Halloween parade, and Arthur will be representing the parade. He's working for Bernie, and expecting to petition next year in the Presidential primary--delegates must petition also. Arthur will also get involved in Trader Joe's stopping its delivery service.

David Siffert made the report for the Out-of-District Campaign Committee, as Laurie Hardjowirogo was not present. Two candidates being considered were Jahana Hayes and Dustin Reidy. Sara made a list of possible candidates and spoke briefly.

The Gun Reform Committee, with Sara and Deb Sherman, started their report by quoting statistics--last year there were 772 gun-related deaths in New York State. In the nation, 100 people a day die, with 262 schoolchildren killed. Comptroller Tom DiNapoli agreed that NY State will divest from companies that invest in guns. He sent letters to Wells Fargo and the credit card companies explaining the risks in investing in guns. Six anti-gun bills were not signed by the Governor, making it important to pass ERPO in more states in order to pressure him. The next general meeting will have a speaker from Gillibrand's office on gun issues.

Tony Hoffmann of the Campaign Committee was next, congratulating everyone on their petitioning efforts. The club got 1600 signatures, which is fabulous. He especially commended Ed Yutkowitz and Jen. There was a discussion about this year's primaries. Jen thanked everyone for carrying her name on petitions and announced her engagement to Cameron Krause!

Mar Fitzgerald, of the Education Committee, said she had created an agenda and will notify members about a venue. She discussed dyslexia, asserting that it's a social justice issue, where many children who have it are labeled disruptive. She outlined some future events regarding schools.

David Siffert spoke for the Animal Advocacy Committee, saying that Linda Jacobson had provided lots of information regarding neutering and spaying. Fur and foie gras are issues coming up.

Jumaane's Campaign Manager, Trip Yang, gave a history of Jumaane, and outlined issues for the Public Advocate like affordable housing and providing a constituent services desk--he's



currently hiring more people. There was a discussion about the SHSAT test and the problem of providing more diversity.

An election was held on whether to endorse Jumaane for the next Public Advocate term, and he won the club's endorsement, 30 to 2.

State Senator Brad Hoylman appeared to speak on the budget. He opened by saying he was happy to be back at VID. He said the outcome was better than last year's. He outlined a \$100M program for nurse-family partnerships, services for homeless youth and LGBT organizations like the Center and GMHC, and transgender legal defense and education funds. He was disappointed with the lack of improvement in the public financing of elections.

He mentioned improvements in criminal justice reforms in discovery, bail reform and speedy trial guarantees. He spoke of subway funding and the lack of a pied-a-terre tax. He spoke of a process bill, with Liz Krueger chairing the Finance Committee--something he's very happy about.

He spoke of Trump's taxes--he introduced legislation to authorize the NY State Tax Department to provide the tax returns as soon as requested. He spoke about the measles epidemic, which sparked a spirited discussion.

#### **Under New Business:**

Marlene Nadle distributed a flyer urging the members to take a strong stand against Trader Joe's decision to no longer deliver groceries, which will negatively impact seniors and the disabled. She urged members to write the CEO Dan Bane, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer, Trader Joe's Company, 800 South Shamrock Avenue, Monrovia, Ca. 91016. Call 626 529-4629, or go their web site, [traderjoes.com](http://traderjoes.com). Through the help of VID member Erik Bottcher, Corey Johnson has sent a protest letter to the CEO, and the Villager has written about it, but more is needed.

Sharon Woolums mentioned her new article on the SBJSA in the latest Villager.

Grace Price said that Arthur Schwartz had spoken to her about her speech against endorsing him for DL, and she asked members not to speak about her comments.