FFDC Board Meeting

1/22/18

7 p.m.

Agenda

1. Intros, board membership expectations and general housekeeping
   1. Attendance/Intros:
      1. Bridget Cusick (President), Frank Wilkinson (Vice President), Lauren Trapanotto (Recording Secretary), Jerry Ferguson (Corresponding Secretary), John Bartos (Treasurer); Members-at-Large: Tricia Shimamura, Bob Menna, John Wagner, Esther Yang, Arlene Kayatt, Adam Roberts, Matt Lombardi; Non-Voting Members: Kim Moscaritolo, Ben Wetzler
      2. Absent: Pierre Ratzki (Member-at-Large), as he was attending the County Committee Rules Committee meeting
   2. Board Membership Expectations:
      1. Bridget encouraged all of the members of the executive board to read the FFDC [constitution and bylaws](http://www.fourfreedomsnyc.org/bylaws) to familiarize ourselves with the document and with each of our responsibilities.
      2. Per the Constitution, attendance for the Executive Board states: “Members of the Executive Board are expected to attend all Executive Board and Regular meetings.Failure to attend two meetings in a row will be reported to the membership at the next Regular meeting.” Bridget will be keeping track of this to ensure all board members are in accordance. However, the board also accepted the option of members attending via Skype/Google Hangouts or dialing into a meeting if they are unable to attend in person due to travel or other extenuating circumstances.
      3. Board members cannot send a proxy and we do not allow proxy voting.
   3. Membership of Committee
      1. Our committees are very active (ex: the Activism Committee had 35+ people in attendance this past Friday, 1/19/18). As such, Bridget would like everyone on the board to participate on a committee so that the committees have a voice at the executive board meetings and their interests are represented.
   4. Housekeeping: Google calendars private and public (the latter exists)
      1. NationBuilder’s calendar is clunky, so we use a public Google calendar.
      2. Bridget suggested and the board agreed that we should set up a board Google calendar so that we can track events that we need to be aware of and plan around (ex: the special dates noted at the bottom of the agenda, events with elected officials, etc).
      3. This would be managed by Lauren, Bridget, and Jerry, but everyone would have the ability to edit/add to the calendar.
2. Schedule for first half of the year
   1. Club meetings
      1. Having a regular day of the month/week to have meetings will enable more people to attend and we can book in advance. Board agreed on this.
      2. Regular meeting day and week of the month - Board agreed that alternating the second Monday and Tuesday of the month would work.
      3. Regular location - Board agreed on Draesel Hall. Bridget to check with Draesel Hall for availability and price to book for the next six months.
   2. Board meetings:
      1. Regular meeting day and week of the month; Board agreed that weekdays are best and two weeks out before the general meeting will work. We will rotate Monday and Tuesday, matching with the upcoming general meeting.
      2. We will schedule monthly meetings out for the rest of the year. We will start by meeting monthly but we may meet every other month as time goes on and depending what we have going on. Matt mentioned that the board did not meet every month last year. Jerry noted that he felt that the board did not meet enough.
3. Content of meetings for the first three to four months
   1. Congressional endorsement (Feb.)
      1. We need to get this on the calendar if we intend to support a candidate
         1. The February meeting should be a platform for all the candidates who have filed papers to run to come and speak to the club.
         2. Ben is checking with the FEC to see who has filed.
         3. Jerry will then extend an invitation to each candidate.
      2. Petitioning starts March 6 and ends five weeks after.
         1. Aiming for a February 12 meeting (Congress not in session that day and we would like to get Carolyn Maloney there, not a staffer). Maloney’s office prints her own and if we petition for her, we pick them up from her campaign team.
         2. Club will need to vote on who we are endorsing. While we count the votes, which will take some time, Ben proposed that we use that time to have Devin Gould speak (more details below).
   2. Speakers and other issue-based programming:
      1. IDC deal - Board agreed it would be beneficial to have a forum/debate about supporting or not supporting the IDC deal and following up with a club vote.
      2. Anthony Brindisi –
         1. Board is OK with Brindisi coming to speak to the club as long as we communicate that the platform should not be used solely to ask for funding, but for a general information session, especially since we are not his constituents.
         2. We want to set the expectation that he can discuss his platform and lightly ask for volunteers and direct people to his site for more information.
         3. The club cannot give money to a candidate and we do not want to make our members feel like they are being solicited (we will not give a list of members).
         4. Jerry will make sure to communicate this to Brindisi (he is coordinating).
      3. Devin Gould/tax plan impact and ideas for New York on dealing with it –
         1. Devin is a former FFDC President and is eager to come in to speak. We agreed that the February meeting (with the Congressional Candidates) will work best (see above). (Update: 1/23, Devin agreed to speak in Feb.)
      4. Results of club interests survey –
         1. Possibly do outings instead of a meeting
         2. John suggested a forum regarding women’s reproductive rights (NYS laws, Roe v. Wade).
            1. Kim added that the club is already on record supporting this, but would still be good to host this.
            2. Likely do this in March, coinciding with Tricia’s idea about speakers for Diversity in City Council. Tricia is checking with some possible speakers and will get back to Bridget regarding dates and more information.
         3. Bob suggested that we do not circulate the full results of the survey, just the issues that came out on top, as it could be disheartening to members whose interests came out ranked very low.
         4. Evening with Corey Johnson, the new Speaker of the Council
      5. Other ideas:
         1. An event on Roosevelt Island, as we are obliged to host one meeting there a year.
            1. Esther is checking about some possible venues and events (Cherry Blossom Festival) that we could use for our meeting space/day.
            2. Tricia also looking into a few possible venues (art gallery, Cornell facility).
            3. Ben noted the location where we hosted the RI meeting last year was not ideal and we should not use that space again.
            4. Board agreed that we should try to get Jose Serrano to speak at this event, since RI overlaps with his State Senate district.
         2. Adam/Events Committee suggested doing some kind of tour (Roosevelt House, Hyde Park, Teddy Roosevelt House), many of which are free or low-cost.
         3. “Night with your Councilmembers” and host a town hall with Ben Kallos and Keith Powers.
         4. Transit Issues - Bridget has been in communication with Riders Alliance (MTA bus and subway issues, primarily) and has inquired what are concrete actions we can take as a club to support them and have impact to deliver to our officials (ex: congestion pricing).
         5. Jerry suggested an overview of content surrounding Congressional Districts (ours and sister districts we may be working to help swing). Board agreed this would be a good topic to cover in the February meeting (Kim and Matt LoCastro to cover this).
   3. Assign responsibilities for outreach to potential speakers/panelists as necessary (see outline above)
4. Committees
   1. Reports/Updates (details listed below are not exhaustive but were brought to the president pre-meeting)
      1. Diversity Committee - meeting next week and will have more updates. Tricia suggested we make a neighborhood information flyer, which we handed out last year at local events. Tricia to look into pricing and will report back to the board to vote on approving the amount.
      2. Activism Committee
         1. How will the club be involved in elections outside of the UES? We have preliminary adopted two republican districts (Hudson Valley and New Jersey).
            1. We do not need the club to vote on which sister districts we support.
            2. If members are supporting other districts themselves, they can address this during Member Time and if other members wish to help they can.
            3. Kim suggested working with other local clubs to combine efforts and share costs for buses, etc., for these efforts. We could do joint fundraisers, though we should be cautious with this as this may devalue our club and we need to be mindful of campaign finance laws.
            4. Board in general agreement on how we would promote races and how we would support.
         2. Instead of having subcommittees, have targeted meetings (ex “2018 Elections”).
      3. Policy Committee - how should the club promote our policy positions?
         1. Website/Facebook suggestions (overlaps with Social Media Committee, see below)
         2. Writing (or calling, visiting) elected officials -- our own as well as others -- as a club and/or as individuals. Jerry suggested we follow up with a meeting request. John suggested we create an “Action Alert” - club provides members the verbiage/template to call and write to the elected official(s).
      4. Social Media Committee
         1. Board agreed with the idea of forming a closed Facebook group for members. This would also be a place to post minutes.
         2. We rely on email as a means of communicating with members; however, only ~22% of emails are open and many likely caught in spam or people unsubscribe. A closed FB group would offer another way to disseminate information.
         3. This would be in addition to the Public Page (which serves as a general information/discussion of issues page).
         4. Board supports the Social Media Committee developing a budget and strategy for social media advertising.
            1. The issue is that organizations such as FFDC do not show up on FB news feeds due to FB’s algos, so we need to invest in advertising. It is also a way to reach beyond our existing membership.
            2. There are many ways to do this on Facebook and other social media platforms that are low-cost and it makes sense for us to be using Facebook for this.
            3. Jerry and the Committee will come up with a recommended budget/plan at their next meeting.
         5. A policy playbook (how we promote and communicate policies and activism actions that we support) will also be developed.
            1. Tricia is checking if there are legal limitations for using FB to disseminate policy information (does this count as “lobbying?”).
   2. Should we split into smaller groups? -  Board tabled this for now for the sake of time. Many of the committees are about to meet.
   3. Housekeeping
      1. Use “Member Time” in some meetings for “Committee Reports”. Bob noted that last year the three-minute time limit to do Committee updates was not enough time. Board agreed this time limit may be too short for some committees (like the activism committee) whereas others can likely provide an update in that time.
      2. Practically speaking, reserving places for committees that are very large (ex: Activism Committee) is costly, so may be better to do a breakout at a meeting.
      3. Bridget suggested that we perhaps alternate written reports at some meetings versus every committee getting up to speak.
         1. Matt suggested that the committees email their minutes to the Executive Board so we can best set the agenda. Jerry and John added this is good website / Facebook content. Ben said we can make a blog via NationBuilder for this and put that onto the website.
         2. Committee Chair should email the board an update from their last meeting and ask Bridget for time for their pitch, if needed, otherwise their update can be a written update.
         3. Lauren to upload board and general meeting minutes to the website/Facebook (the abbreviated versions).
5. Other business/discussion
   1. How the club is addressing issues with the County Committee and the Democratic Party in NY – John brought this to the table
      1. Ben and Kim provided an update:
         1. Pierre missed the board meeting as he was at the rules committee’s second meeting. The committee broke into issue-based subcommittees to discuss each article of the rules and proposed changes to them. Ben and Kim will catch up with Pierre on this as the Executive Committee to the County Committee, comprising the District Leaders, meets this Wednesday (1/24/18) and this will be discussed. Ben and Kim to provide updates.
         2. Kim feels the current Rules Committee is stacked against change, but the idea is to keep going so that come 2019, we can have much broader engagement.
      2. John noted that he has been on County Committee several times and feels the meetings are not efficient. We noted that the County Committee does not ever take a position on policies. Kim noted that these are all items on the agenda for Wednesday and related to the things that the rules committee is trying to change.
   2. There will be a Sixth only Civil Court Panel (the ninth and sixth will each have one).
   3. Any other business brought by members (covered above)
6. Addendum: Important dates - we ran out of time to discuss the following, but these dates should be added to our club and Board calendars:
   1. NY County Exec Committee Meetings:
      1. Feb. 22
      2. March 26
      3. April 24
      4. May 23
      5. June 19
   2. March 6th - Congressional petitioning starts (continues for five weeks)
   3. June 5 - 1st day of state petitioning (Senate, Assembly, State Cmte, Judicial Delegates)
   4. June 26 - Federal Primary
   5. July 12 - State petitions due