

Four Freedoms Democratic Club  
November General Membership Meeting  
November 13, 2018  
The Church of the Holy Trinity, Draesel Hall  
7:00-8:45pm

## Minutes

1. Intro/Welcome (2 Minutes)
  - a. The meeting called to order by Vice President Frank Wilkinson (President Bridget Cusick could not attend the meeting)
2. District Leader Update & Elections Report (15 Minutes)
  - a. District Leader Kim Moscaritolo presented an overview of the recent midterm election victories, including in all of the Congressional and State Senate elections targeted by Four Freedoms and the activism committee:
    - i. Max Rose – New York’s 11th Congressional District
    - ii. Antonio Delgado – New York’s 19th Congressional District
    - iii. Mikie Sherrill – New Jersey 11th’s Congressional District
    - iv. Andrew Gounardes – New York State Senate District 22
  - b. Kim thanked everyone who was able to help get out the vote in these key elections by phone banking, canvassing, and writing postcards
  - c. Kim provided a recap of the recent County Committee meeting, where we were able to pass several important reforms, but with much work left to be done
    - i. Kim invited everyone who is interested to run for County Committee in 2019, and to get involved in ongoing rules reforms
    - ii. County leadership is also up for election in 2019, and the Club is already considering how best to approach the election
3. Guest Speaker: Assemblymember Dan Quart (20 Minutes)
  - a. Assemblymember Dan Quart, representing District 73, made remarks focusing on criminal justice and campaign finance reform
  - b. Criminal justice:
    - i. AM Quart has written legislation to end the cash bail system, and instead require either the pretrial release of defendants on their own recognizance, or, if they do truly pose a threat to the community, place them in custody
      1. He also supports the national movement to have cash bail ruled unconstitutional, as the connection between money and liberty in antithetical to the our constitutional liberties
      2. However, he was the only Democrat in the legislature to vote against the bail bill last year, as he believes it did not go far enough
    - ii. AM Quart also supports legislation to downgrade the use of monitoring devices, as they can lead to a loss of employment and other problems, while 85-90% of defendants appear for court dates already
    - iii. AM Quart expressed his opposition to New York Civil Rights Law § 50-A, which protects police and other officers’ personnel records from transparency

1. He has written legislation to carve out dashcam and bodycam footage from 50-A confidentiality, and ultimately believes that the legislature should repeal 50-A in its entirety
  2. He has also called on Manhattan District Attorney Cy Vance to publicly release his office's alleged private list of police officers believed not to be trustworthy
- c. Campaign finance:
- i. AM Quart spoke in favor of campaign finance reforms, including limiting contributions in District Attorney races to \$320, if the contributor is either a criminal defense firm/attorney or has business before the City
- d. Questions – AM Quart took questions from members:
- i. Ilyssa Fuchs asked about discovery reform, including ending “trial by ambush,” i.e. the practice of the city/state turning over discovery materials right at the eve of trial and thus not allowing the opposing party time to review the materials
    1. Ilyssa also asked about marijuana reform and legalization, which AM Quart supports and said should be a separate bill, rather than combined with the budget
  - ii. Patrick Bobilin asked about the deal to bring Amazon's new headquarters to Queens, and expressed opposition to the corporate subsidies in the deal
    1. AM Quart said that he and others are reviewing legislative options to either block or modify the deal
  - iii. Kim asked about the Mayor's plan to close Riker's Island and replace it with jails distributed throughout the boroughs
    1. AM Quart would rather have fewer jails overall, which would be facilitated in part by bail reform
    2. Kim also asked about voter registration and election reforms, which AM Quart supports, including early voting
- e. AM Quart ended by inviting members to sign up for his monthly non-governmental newsletter
4. Presentation of Resolution Honoring Ruth Halberg (10 Minutes)
- a. Lauren Trapanotto and John Wagner presented a Board resolution honoring Ruth Halberg for her service to the community and the Party over the years (full text of the resolution is available [here](#))
    - i. In her remarks accepting the resolution, Ruth remembered how she first became involved in local politics and activism in 1978, and has always loved the work
5. Advocating for Past Resolutions of the Club Before the New Democratic Majority (15 Minutes)
- a. Many of the Club's past policy resolutions were futile when passed, as Democrats lacked control of the State Legislature
    - i. However, with the recent elections ushering in unified Democratic control of the Governorship, Assembly, and State Senate, we have a real opportunity to

- advocate for long-awaited progressive reforms, including those already supported in Club resolutions
    - b. Jerry Ferguson distributed a list of past Club resolutions, specifically targeted at state laws, for members to rank in degree of priority:
      - i. 1. Communicate - tell people what we've done
      - ii. 2. Advocate - try to get others to come on board
      - iii. 3. Invest - spend money on advertising
    - c. From the ensuing discussion, the consensus appeared to be that both reproductive health rights and elections reform should be Club priorities
- 6. Nominations for 2019 Officers and Board (20 minutes)
  - a. The Club accepted nominations for the upcoming 2019 Officers and Board election, which will be held at the Club's January meeting
    - i. Members could either nominate someone (including themselves) in person at the meeting, or can email either Bridget or Pierre with their nominations
  - b. The following nominations were taken:
    - i. President:
      - 1. Bridget Cusick
      - 2. Frank Wilkinson
        - a. Declined the nomination
      - 3. Jerry Ferguson
        - a. Declined the nomination
    - ii. Vice President:
      - 1. Frank Wilkinson
    - iii. Recording secretary
      - 1. Pierre Ratzki
    - iv. Corresponding Secretary
      - 1. Jerry Ferguson
    - v. Treasurer
      - 1. John Bartos
    - vi. Member at large:
      - 1. Arlene Socol Kayatt
      - 2. Ronnie Weintraub
      - 3. John Wagner
      - 4. Barbara Rudder
        - a. Declined the nomination
      - 5. Ilyssa Fuchs
      - 6. Esther Yang
      - 7. Alex Bores
      - 8. Bob Menna
      - 9. Elana Schwartz
      - 10. Fred Newton
      - 11. Theo Chino
        - a. Declined the nomination
      - 12. Matt Lombardi
      - 13. Teresa Malyshev

- 14. Nancy Lang
- 15. Jordan Stein
- 16. Lisa Smith

7. Public Advocate Race Update (5 Minutes)

- a. There is an inter-club forum for the candidates in the race for Public Advocate, to be held on January 3rd at the New Church, 114 E 35th St., from 6:30-9:30pm
  - i. The candidate list is not yet finalized, but no surrogates will be allowed, and other criteria will seek to reasonably limit the number of candidates invited

8. Committee Updates (15 Minutes)

- a. Media Committee update:
  - i. There have been no meetings for a few months, as everyone was rightly focused on elections
  - ii. Current chair Jerry wants to find someone to replace him in the upcoming year
- b. Formation of a new committee on Democratic Party reforms at the State and County levels:
  - i. the State Committee and County Committee suffer from a systemic lack of democracy
    - 1. This is the result of ineffective leadership, as well as anti-democratic bylaws and state election laws
  - ii. The Board thus approved of the formation of a new committee to tackle needed party reforms
    - 1. Among other things, the committee will discuss comprehensive changes to the bylaws of both the State and County Committees; changes to the state elections laws; how to motivate our elected officials to make party reform a priority; encouraging people to run for County Committee, and make the most of their positions; filling vacant County Committee seats (particularly on Roosevelt Island); how to influence future County Committee leadership elections
  - iii. Interested members were invited get involved in the new committee
- c. Policy Committee:
  - i. The Committee presented a resolution protecting the Mueller investigation (full text available [here](#)), which was read in full and unanimously adopted by voice vote
- d. Diversity & Outreach Committee:
  - i. Many accomplishments this past year, including the Women's March, meeting with leaders to discuss barriers to progress, and outreach at street fairs and other events
  - ii. The Committee hopes to focus on age diversification going forward, particularly increasing the involvement of young Democrats
- e. Events Committee:
  - i. The upcoming Holiday Party is on December 11th at Ryan's Daughter, and will feature both an open bar and catered food

9. Member Time (10 Minutes)

10. Adjournment