

Four Freedoms Democratic Club  
March General Membership Meeting  
March 11, 2019  
The Church of the Holy Trinity, Draesel Hall  
7:00-8:55pm

### Minutes

1. Welcome (2 minutes)
  - a. President Bridget Cusick called the meeting to order and invited everyone to participate in a letter writing campaign after the meeting
  
2. Fair Elections resolution (10 minutes with Q&A)
  - a. Ben Wetzler gave a presentation on the Fair Elections working group's proposed resolution supporting a statewide matching funds system, similar to the one at the city level
    - i. Matching funds will reduce impact of big donors and amplify the impact of small contributions
    - ii. The assembly passed a matching funds bill numerous times, when the Senate was still in Republican control and thus the bill had no chance of passing
      1. We must keep the pressure on now that the legislature is unified
      2. State Senators Liz Krueger and Jose Serrano are both staunch supporters; Assemblymember Seawright has also agreed to sign a letter of support
  - b. The resolution supports the following:
    - i. The creation of a statewide system for public matching of election funds
    - ii. The bill must:
      1. Provide adequate funding;
      2. Offers candidates either a 6-1 or 8-1 match; and
      3. Sets reasonable conditions for rules of participation
  - c. Discussion:
    - i. Fred noted Assembly Speaker Heastie voted for it in the past; will he support it now? The Club must hold past supporters' feet to the fire
    - ii. Frank raised the question of whether it will encourage too many people to run
  - d. The Club voted to adopt the resolution, with 23 in favor, 0 opposed, and 2 abstentions
  
3. Update from City Councilmember Ben Kallos (15 minutes)
  - a. City Councilmember Ben Kallos thanked the Club for supporting the matching funds resolution
    - i. He was instrumental in enacting city-wide matching funds
    - ii. In response to the concern about too many people running in an election, CM Kallos pointed to the recent Public Advocate election, where roughly 17 candidates vied for the seat

1. The large field created lots of interest and ensured that there was a fair fight
- b. Club members met with CM Kallos a few weeks ago to discuss priorities and how the Club can help
  - i. One of the hardest issues will be the opening of a second homeless shelter in the neighborhood, which CM Kallos supports
- c. CM Kallos participated in a Q&A with Club members, including on the following topics:
  - i. When will the 90th St. ferry landing be ADA-compliant?
    1. The City wants to extend the entrance to 88th St. so that passengers won't have to take the stairs, but the project is behind schedule and won't be completed until at least 2020
      - a. CM Kallos is open to working with Community Board 8 and the Club to put pressure on the Parks Department to get work done faster
  - ii. Has there been any discussion in the City Council about reducing bicyclist-caused accidents and injuries?
    1. Given the population of the City, there are relatively very few injuries caused by bicyclists
    2. The Bike New York safety program seeks to reduce the number even further by focusing on education, equipment, and enforcement
      - a. CM Kallos supports a program to give safety trainings to delivery employees; in exchange, they receive a safety belt, vest, light, and helmet
      - b. CM Kallos also supports more enforcement of moving violations by cars, bikes, and e-bikes
  - iii. With the sanitation facility opening on March 26th, how do we ensure compliance with their mandates (e.g., no more than 50 trucks per day maximum, and no blocking of buses)?
    1. The City will be monitoring the facility's performance and make sure they stick to their promises
  - iv. Is there any update on a possible revived Amazon deal?
    1. CM Kallos was concerned that the original deal didn't go through the proper process, including too many subsidies, and had potential labor practice concerns
      - a. He worked with a labor law firm and the Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union to come to a handshake deal with Amazon on "labor peace" – i.e., if an employee expresses desire to form or join a union, the company can't retaliate by firing them
        - i. But Jeff Bezos pulled out shortly after, possibly because he didn't want a unionized workforce that makes a living wage

4. District Leader updates (10 minutes)
  - a. District Leaders Kim Moscaritolo & Ben Wetzler gave an update on petitioning efforts, and thanked everyone who made it out to collect signatures over the past few weeks despite the cold
    - ii. There are more opportunities posted for this week
    - iii. Members can also try to collect signatures from registered Democrats in their buildings, and can talk to Ben about getting such a list
  - b. Next Wednesday is the monthly County Committee Executive Committee meeting, which is open to all to attend (and is also usually live-streamed)
    - i. Kim & Ben intend to ask about the upcoming biannual county-wide meeting, which should take place in July
      1. This will be the first biannual meeting to operate under the new rules, with a lower (but still substantial) threshold for placing items on the agenda
      2. Members will also be electing certain officers, including the County Chairperson
5. State Committee updates (10 minutes)
  - a. State Committee Member Lauren Trapanotto gave an update on the recent meeting
    - i. The Committee has about \$650k in the bank
      1. We don't know where money has been spent because the Committee won't publish this information online
    - ii. Jay Jacobs was officially elected as Chair
      1. He seems open to reforms and is primarily focused on 2020
    - iii. 3 rules reforms passed:
      1. The Committee will use an electronic voting system that counts votes *and* their weighted amount automatically
      2. Candidates running for party leadership must give advance notice of their candidacy
      3. Information about the candidates must be circulated prior to the meeting
        - a. The long-term goal is to have competitive DNC delegate elections, and these reforms help lay the groundwork
    - iv. The Committee adopted a resolution to ban fusion voting, which allows candidates who are endorsed by more than one party to appear on the ballot under the different party lines
      1. Both Lauren and Adam Roberts voted against the resolution, as banning fusion voting would be harmful to upstate candidates and doesn't address real reforms
      2. Although the resolution passed, it does not have any legal effect, and the issue still has to be voted on in Albany

6. Club committee updates (10 minutes)
  - a. Tricia Shimamura gave an update on the diversity & outreach committee
    - i. The committee will be meeting two Tuesdays from now at Tricia's house, and will have some high school students attending, which will help with our youth outreach
  - b. Ilyssa Fuchs gave an update on the events committee
    - i. The Spring Fundraiser will be held on April 11th at Bohemian hall, with more details forthcoming
  - c. Kim gave an update on the activism and policy committee
    - i. The committee is in the process of shifting more towards working group model, and dates for those groups' meetings will be posted on the website and in email blasts
  - d. Alex Bores gave an update on the social media committee
    - i. The committee recently elected Alex as the new chair
      1. He will focus on Facebook outreach
    - ii. Lauren will handle the Instagram account
    - iii. Jeremy Berman will handle the Twitter account
  - e. Mike Shatzkin gave an update on the rapid response group
    - i. The group aims to organize mass protests at the drop of a hat (e.g. when Trump declares a national emergency)
    - ii. The Club is going to try to institutionalize this capability, and interested members should contact Mike or Jerry Ferguson to get involved
7. Discussion of Public Advocate primary (10 minutes)
  - a. Another Public Advocate race is coming up, with the primary in June; the Club debated whether we should endorse a candidate
    - i. We didn't have time to add any candidates to petitions, so if we do endorse it will not involve petitioning
    - ii. At this point, we don't know whether Jumaane will face serious Democratic competition
    - iii. Kim made a motion to table the issue until the April meeting , by which time we will know who is running
      - a. The motion passed unanimously
8. Member time (10 minutes)
9. Adjourn
10. Postcard writing (30 minutes)
  - a. Club members were invited to stick around after the meeting's adjournment and participate in a postcard writing campaign, organized by Jordan Stein
    - i. Two topics had pre-written language (though members were encouraged to personalize their messages):
      - a. Fair elections
      - b. Congestion pricing