

Four Freedoms Democratic Club
June General Membership Meeting
June 10, 2019
The Church of the Holy Trinity, Draesel Hall
7:00-9:00pm

Minutes

1. Welcome (2 min)
 - a. President Bridget Cusick called the meeting to order

2. Pride Parade
 - a. Club members were invited to march with Assemblymember Rebecca Seawright at the Pride Parade on June 30th
 - i. Jack from AM Seawright's office circulated a sign-up sheeting

3. Youth Board
 - a. Jason Bohner, Chair of the newly-formed Youth Board, addressed the Club and explained the YB's mission
 - i. The YB will aim to collaborate with the Club and its Committees, rather than operate separately
 - b. The next YB meeting will be in June, with details TBD

4. Climate and Community Protection Act
 - a. Mike Shatzkin and Phil Kahn gave a presentation on the Climate and Community Protection Act that is before the State Assembly
 - i. The Act would mandate emissions reductions, as well as investments in green technology
 - ii. The Act would also establish a Climate Justice Working Group, which would identify disadvantaged communities for purposes of targeting pollution reductions and investments
 - b. Discussion:
 - i. Does the bill address fuel and power lines?
 1. No, and it does not solve the climate crisis single-handedly, but is an effective program we can pass now
 - c. Phil encouraged all members to call their State Senators and Assemblymembers to advocate for the bill

5. Stonewall 50th Anniversary

- a. Rod Townsend, the President of the Stonewall Democratic Club, gave a presentation on the 50th anniversary of the Stonewall riots, which served as a catalyst for the gay rights movement
 - i. He explained why Stonewall still has resonance, and why fighting for equal rights is still necessary, despite major victories in the last few years
 - ii. Storytelling is important in advocacy and can help movements achieve their policy goals
 - iii. Current fights include the Surrogacy bill, Sex Work Decriminalization, Gay Panic Defense, as well as issues facing LGBT veterans and widows
 - 1. The movement must be intersectional, which means showing up at Black Lives Matter rallies and supporting all marginalized communities
 - b. In 2021, we face the possibility of losing all of our LGBT representation on the City Council due to term limits
 - i. This is why it is critical to support a new generation of LGBT legislators and leaders
6. New York Health Act
- a. District Leader Kim Moscaritolo gave a presentation on the New York Health Act
 - i. The Act would implement universal health coverage for every New Yorker and would replace private insurance coverage
 - ii. Anyone would be eligible to join, regardless of wealth, employment, or other status
 - 1. The Act would ensure that no New Yorkers go without coverage, or suffer from being under-insured
 - b. The Club voted to [endorse](#) the legislation by a vote of 25 in favor, 0 opposed, and 5 abstaining
7. Impeachment Inquiry
- a. John Wagner presented the Rule of Law working group’s [impeachment inquiry resolution](#), and read a statement by group chair Jerry Ferguson, who was unable to attend
 - i. The resolution supported the House commencing an impeachment inquiry
 - b. Discussion:
 - i. The Club had a robust, spirited debate over whether impeachment is the right thing to do, and/or whether it would hurt or help Trump politically
 - ii. In favor:
 - 1. It is critical that the House hold Trump accountable, as is its constitutional duty
 - a. Otherwise, he will continue to act with impunity and feel validated in both his actions in 2016 and his obstruction of the investigation

- b. He will also be emboldened to continue defying House requests for information, documents, and testimony
 - 2. No one doubts that Trump broke the law, acted immorally, and abused the powers of his office
 - a. Impeachment should be a constitutional and moral question, not a political one
 - 3. Impeachment would allow avenues of investigation that are otherwise unavailable to Congress
 - iii. Opposed:
 - 1. Impeachment would potentially backfire, emboldening Trump and his allies, and would risk appearing as overreach to persuadable voters
 - 2. Impeachment would consume the news cycle and the 2020 election(s)
 - a. Democratic candidates would be unable to focus on popular proposals, such as improvements to infrastructure, health care, and environmental protections
 - 3. Any impeachment proceeding would fail to result in Trump's removal People's views on Trump's conduct are fairly well set, and are unlikely to be moved by an impeachment inquiry, while it is a near-certainty that the Senate would never convict
 - iv. The question was called and the Club voted to endorse the impeachment proposal, with 20 in favor, 6 opposed, and 1 abstaining

8. Committee Updates

- a. Social Media Committee update
 - i. Bridget discussed Club's social media strategy, including boosting certain posts on Facebook
- b. Events Committee update
 - i. Ilyssa Fuchs gave details on the Club's upcoming Summer BBQ:
 - 1. Sunday, August 18th, at Reif's Tavern, from 1pm to 4pm
 - ii. The Club will also be holding a small dollar fundraiser sometime in mid to late October

9. District Leader Updates

- a. Kim gave an update on the upcoming biennial County Committee meeting
 - i. We will have the chance to pass changes to the CC's rules, but we first need to get signatures to put the proposals on the agenda
 - 1. Kim asked County Committee members to sign onto the package of proposals
- b. District Leader Ben Wetzler discussed the Fair Elections campaign

- i. Ben also announced that he will be hosting a small dollar fundraiser in July

10. State Committee Updates

- a. State Committee Member Lauren Trapanotto gave an update on the State Committee
 - i. Efforts are ongoing to shorten the wait time to change parties in New York in order to vote in the Presidential primary
 - 1. New rules would provide 60 days to change parties, and 25 days to change from unaffiliated to Democrat
 - ii. We need to codify this change in state law and have it apply to all primaries

11. Member Time

- a. John Wagner asked members to call Assemblymember Richard Gottfried and encourage him to vote in favor of ending religious exemptions to vaccines
- b. Joyce Bahr, member and President New York Statewide Adoption Reform's Unsealed Initiative, announced that her group's bill has passed the State Senate for the first time
 - i. The bill would establish the right of adoptees to receive a copy of their birth certificate upon reaching the age of 18
- c. Charles Riggs encouraged people to volunteer to review his "excel program" that helps keep track of his survey projects

12. Adjourn