

Four Freedoms Democratic Club
January General Membership Meeting & Executive Board Elections
January 14, 2019
The Church of the Holy Trinity, Draesel Hall
7:00-9:00pm

Minutes

1. Introduction/Welcome (2 minutes)
 - a. The meeting called to order by President Bridget Cusick
2. Discussion and Vote on Amendment to the Constitution (10 minutes)
 - a. District Leader Ben Wetzler introduced a proposed amendment to Article IX, Section 4, paragraph e of the Club Constitution, which the Executive Board had voted to present to the Club at its December 7, 2018 meeting – the amendment is as follows (with the changes in bold):
 - i. “Those with the highest ranking, up to the total number of positions being **nominated**, shall receive the endorsement for Judicial Delegate, and those with the next highest ranking, up to the total number of positions being **nominated**, shall receive the endorsement for Alternate Judicial Delegate. **Membership shall approve the number of positions to be nominated before the vote is held on the recommendation of the Executive Board.**”
 - b. Ben explained the rationale for the amendment as follows:
 - i. The amendment would abolish the requirement that the Club endorse a full slate of candidates for judicial and alternate judicial delegate
 1. Because of the high turnout in the 2018 midterms, the number of seats increased to 16 judicial delegates and 16 alternates
 2. The Club might not be able to recruit enough motivated, active candidates to run for all 32 seats (and, if we do, the amendment does not *prevent* us from running a full slate)
 3. If we and the other clubs all run less than a full slate, it would guarantee more Club representation at the convention
 - c. The full membership, after given the opportunity for questions and debate, voted by more than the two-thirds threshold to adopt the amendment, with none opposed
3. Elections (40 minutes)
 - a. The Club agreed to reelect the current Executive Board officers, who were all running unopposed, by acclaim – the officers are:
 - i. Bridget Cusick, President
 - ii. Frank Wilkinson, Vice President
 - iii. Jerry Ferguson, Corresponding Secretary
 - iv. Pierre Ratzki, Recording Secretary
 - v. John Bartos, Treasurer
 - b. The Club next held elections for Members-at-Large, with the following candidates:
 - i. Alex Bores
 - ii. Flor deMaria Eilets

- iii. Ilyssa Fuchs
 - iv. Arlene Kayatt
 - v. Nancy Lang
 - vi. Matt Lombardi
 - vii. Elana Schwartz
 - viii. Ronnie Weintraub
 - ix. Esther Yang
 - x. John Wagner (not present, with Ben speaking on his behalf)
 - xi. Teresa Malyshev (not present, with Jerry speaking on her behalf)
 - xii. Bob Menna (not present)
 - xiii. Lisa Smith (not present)
- c. The candidates were given 90 seconds each to speak
 - d. After speeches, the candidates were asked to leave the room, and the remaining members discussed their candidacies
4. District Leader Updates (10 minutes)
- a. District Leader Kim Moscaritolo gave an update on the recently-passed package of state elections reforms:
 - i. Reforms included implementing early voting, consolidating the state and federal primaries, same-day registration, closing the LLC loophole, expanding absentee voting, automatic transfer of voter registration, and pre-registration for 16 and 17 year-olds
 - 1. Kim noted that the consolidation of the two primaries would affect the dates for the bi-annual County Committee meeting and the judicial convention
 - b. Ben gave an update on elections reforms still sought by the Fair Elections NY Coalition, including:
 - i. Banning LLC donations
 - ii. Replicating the City's public matching funds program at the state level
 - 1. Expanding the program to apply to any public office under the state election law
 - 2. Assemblymember Rebecca Seawright and State Senator Liz Krueger are on board with this measure, and the bill has passed the State Assembly before
 - a. But, without grassroots pressure, it may not be reintroduced and pass both chambers
 - 3. To keep the pressure up, Fair Elections NY has asked that those in favor write to their elected officials
5. State Committee Updates (10 minutes)
- a. In response to State Committee leadership's unfavorable actions at the Fall meeting, 43 Committee Members, including Lauren Trapanotto and Adam Roberts, signed and sent a letter to leadership expressing our concerns and demanding change by the Spring 2019 meeting
 - i. The full letter is available [here](#)

- b. At the Spring meeting, we plan to reintroduce the progressive resolutions that leadership blocked from discussion and vote in October
 - c. At the end of 2018, State Democratic Party Executive Director Geoff Berman [announced that he is resigning](#)
 - i. State Committee Members have not been informed of the next steps with leadership.
 - d. Jay Jacobs was appointed as Chairman of the Party*; however, appointments are not permitted in the case of a vacancy, and he must be elected by the full membership
 - i. *Note that Jacobs later clarified that the original article misstated that he was appointed, as he was in fact only recommended for the seat, and the Committee will hold an election
6. Public Advocate Race Update (5 minutes)
- a. Following the Public Advocate candidate forum on January 3rd, the Club voted to endorse Jumaane Williams
 - i. Members were encouraged to speak to Ben or Jerry about petitioning and other volunteer opportunities
7. Committee Reports (10 minutes)
- a. Policy and activism committees (Kim):
 - i. The policy and activism committees will be merged, as there is a tremendous amount of overlap between the two
 - 1. This will help turn the Club’s policy goals into concrete results, particularly with the new opportunity that the unified Democratic state government presents
 - 2. Members will also be able to work together on discrete issues in smaller groups
 - b. Diversity and outreach committee (Tricia Shimamura):
 - i. The committee made big efforts in 2018 via outreach at street fairs, in the community, and via the Women’s History Month panel, with a focus on youth engagement
 - c. Social media committee (Jerry):
 - i. The committee has had success in boosting the Club’s presence on Instagram, Twitter, Facebook, and other platforms
 - ii. In 2019, the committee intends to focus on promoting the Club’s issues
 - d. Events committee (Ilyssa and Matt):
 - i. The committee thanked everyone for helping make our 2018 holiday party a great success, and the Club’s biggest event to date
 - ii. The Club’s 5th Anniversary is coming up in February, which we will celebrate with a happy hour (with perks for members), possibly combined with a petitioning kickoff
8. Member Time (5 Minutes)
- a. Tricia discussed the upcoming Women’s March on January 2019
 - i. The organization she sits on the board of – She Will Rise – is hosting a potluck dinner, where attendees can discuss solidarity at the March

- ii. She Will Rise will also be attending the March
 - b. Ilyssa discussed an upcoming US Supreme Court case
 - i. The Supreme Court will hear a case – [Manhattan Community Access Corp. v. Halleck](#) – which will consider whether a public access television station constitutes a “public forum,” and whether the station’s operator can be considered a state actor because it was designated by New York City to run the station
9. Guest Speaker – Councilmember Brad Lander (20 minutes)
- a. Ben introduced guest speaker Councilmember Brad Lander, who discussed the issue of pedestrian fatalities
 - i. The city has had a string of recent pedestrian fatalities, including four on the Upper East Side, and many particularly in Brooklyn
 - ii. CM Lander has introduced a bill – the “Reckless Driver Accountability Act” – intended to address the problem in an innovative way:
 - 1. The bill would flag habitual reckless drivers, and empower the city to impound drivers’ cars if they have 5 or more speeding or red light violations in a year
 - 2. The bill would also expand a program designed to deter further reckless driving from repeat offenders
 - b. CM Lander took questions from members on his pedestrian safety bill, as well as the possibility of the Charter Revision Commission discussing ranked choice voting
10. Election Results (2 minutes)
- a. The following members were elected to the Executive Board as Members-at-Large (listed in order of votes):
 - i. Arlene Kayatt
 - ii. John Wagner
 - iii. Ilyssa Fuchs
 - iv. Esther Yang
 - v. Alex Bores
 - vi. Matt Lombardi
 - vii. Teresa Malyshev
 - viii. Flor De Maria Eilets

11. Adjournment