

Four Freedoms Democratic Club
February General Membership Meeting & Endorsements Vote
February 19, 2019
The Church of the Holy Trinity, Sanctuary
7:00-8:45pm

Minutes

1. Welcome (1 minute)
 - a. President Bridget Cusick called the meeting to order
2. Congestion Pricing Resolution (10 minutes)
 - a. Jerry Ferguson and Pierre Ratzki presented a [resolution](#) supporting congestion pricing, written primarily by Nancy Lang, chair of the transit policy working group
 - i. After discussion, the Club approved the resolution by a vote of 28 to 2
3. Presentation by judicial candidates (5 minutes with discussion)
 - b. Two candidates for Civil Court presented their credentials to the Club
 - i. Both have been nominated by the Democratic County Committee
 - c. Judge Robert Rosenthal:
 - i. Has been a lawyer for 28 years, and has always sought to represent those in need, including the indigent and capital defendants
 - ii. Currently appointed to an interim civil court position, sitting in criminal court
 - d. Ashlee Crawford:
 - i. Works as a court attorney at the Appellate Division, First Department, where she helps analyze appeals
 - ii. Previously Worked at Skadden Arps, where she was able to do a lot of pro bono work and community service
 - iii. Volunteers as an arbitrator at small claims court
 - iv. Big fan of the arts, including dance and music
 - e. The Club asked the candidates to leave the room, and thereafter held a discussion:
 - i. Kim Moscaritolo spoke in favor of both candidates, who have been in the process for years, and are both well qualified, smart, and kind
 - b. The Club ultimately voted to endorse both candidates
4. Presentation on the movement to amend the 13th Amendment (20 minutes with Q&A)
 - a. Flores A. Forbes, a criminal justice reform activist, gave a presentation on the movement to “Amend the 13th,” which aims to remove the exception clause of the Amendment, in bold below:
 - i. Neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, **except as a punishment for crime whereof the party shall have been duly convicted**, shall exist within the United States, or any place subject to their jurisdiction

- b. The exception clause insidiously permits slavery for incarcerated persons
 - i. This is thus only country in the world with a constitutional amendment that states that you can be a slave if convicted of a crime
 - ii. Together with the post-Civil War black codes, Jim Crow, and other oppressive laws, the exception clause allowed slavery to continue past the 13th Amendment's enactment in all but name
 - 1. Slavery continues today, as many prisoners work for little to no wages, a problem exacerbated by hyper-incarceration of today
 - c. Minimum wages legally allowed to be paid in prison include:
 - i. In parts of the South: nothing
 - ii. California: 15 cents per hour
 - 1. Inmates manufacture goods bought by the UC system, the governor's office, and consumers statewide
 - d. This Friday, February 22nd, Mr. Forbes and others will be hosting a panel on Amending the 13th, and Club members were encouraged to attend
 - e. Q&A:
 - i. Gabe Panek asked about the response from legislators, and what we can do to push the issue
 - ii. Diana Montford proposed a verbal resolution: to do our best to persuade legislators to amend the 13th Amendment and do away with the exception clause
 - 1. Fred Newton seconded the motion
 - 2. The Club approved the resolution, with one opposed
 - iii. Jeff Green noted that we must work towards closing Rikers
5. District Leader candidate presentations and discussions (15 minutes)
- a. The Club heard presentations from the four candidates for District Leader, as nominated at the February 11th meeting
 - i. Jill Eisner – candidate for female District Leader for the 76th AD, Part A
 - 1. Has served as District Leader for two terms
 - 2. Began as an activist in the community, and active in community advisory boards
 - 3. Has been able to work closely with our Assemblymember and other electeds
 - ii. Kim Moscaritolo – candidate for female District Leader for the 76th AD, Part B
 - 1. Has served as District Leader for two terms
 - 2. Working to help reform County Party, host educational forums, organizing phone banks and trips to swing states/counties outside of NYC to help elect Democrats in all flippable seats
 - a. Had immense success in our targeted races in 2018
 - iii. Ben Wetzler – candidate for male District Leader for the 76th AD, Part A
 - 1. Has served as District Leader for 1 term
 - 2. Working to change the party rules, with the goal of being less Tamany Hall and more small-d democratic

3. Worked hard to elect candidates in nearby districts for the 2018 midterms, including campaigning up to 3 days a week in the final run
 - iv. Josh Kravitz – candidate for male District Leader for the 76th AD, Part B
 1. Praised FFDC’s values, and advocated for more cooperation between the Upper East Side clubs
 2. However, declined the Club’s endorsement, as asked to by his club
 - b. The Club asked the candidates to leave the room, and thereafter held a discussion:
 - i. Gabe, Esther, Pierre, Devon, and others spoke highly in favor of endorsing Ben and Kim for reelection
 1. They have worked hard, and work very well together, especially on issues related to party management, recruiting for the County Committee and other downballot seats, and campaigning in the midterms
 2. They do not create conflict, drama, or other issues, but instead foster cooperation
 - c. The Club voted to endorse Kim and Ben for reelection, and not to endorse for the other two District Leader seats
6. Judicial Delegate Candidate Presentations and Discussion (25 minutes)
- a. Candidates seeking the Club’s endorsement for judicial (or alternate judicial) delegate gave presentations, with each being permitted 60 seconds to speak
 - b. After the candidates’ presentations, the Club asked them to leave the room and then held a discussion
 - c. The Club ultimately voted to endorse the following candidates:
 - i. Judicial delegate:
 1. Frank Wilkinson
 2. Alex Bores
 3. Jerry Ferguson
 4. Ruth Halberg
 5. Arlene Kayatt
 6. Matt Lombardi
 7. Gabe Panek
 8. Esther Yang
 - ii. Alternate judicial delegate:
 1. Pierre Ratzki
 2. Jeremy Berman
 3. Steve Goldberg
 4. Susan Hochberg
 5. Nancy Lang
 6. Abbye Lawrence
 7. Fred Newton
 8. Elana Schwartz

7. Policy & Activism Committee Breakout (10 Minutes)
 - a. The newly-combined policy & activism committee held its first meeting of the year, wherein Kim gave a presentation on the committee's goals and asked those interested to sign up to lead subgroups on specific topics – including:
 - i. Transportation – Nancy Lang
 - ii. Marijuana Legalization – Fred Newton and Kim Moscaritolo
 - iii. Criminal Justice Reform – Arlene Kayatt and Diana Montford
 - iv. Fair Elections – Ben Wetzler and Pierre Ratzki
 - v. Democratic Party Reform – John Wagner
 - vi. Healthcare – Roberta Jacoby Barbara Rudder and Lee Wiggins
 - vii. Education – Amy Schwartz and Debra Freeman
 - viii. Climate Change – Mike Shatzkin
 - ix. Protest Rapid Response – Jerry Ferguson
8. Member time (10 minutes)
 - a. Jerry announcement that the social media committee will be meeting on Thursday, February 28th at Jerry and Teresa's house
9. Adjournment