



Tuesday, July 12, 2022
Meeting 6:30 to 8:00PM via Zoom

MONTHLY MEETING SUMMARY

Members Present: Bentonne Snay, Jane Moscovitz, Richard Thurer, Rachel Stempler, Elizabeth Newman, Victor Vazquez, Linda Fernandez, Brian Olson, Martha Schoolman, Monique Selman, Esther De Varona, Janet Stearns. Sheryl Gold, Karen Moore, Cindy Lerner, Mac Hooton, Diana Hooton, Julie Samkoff, Madeleine Shirley and Adam Benna

Non-Members: Miriam Lopez, Roz Roman, Jane Torres, Dawn Grayson, Rob Piper, Judy Byrum, Lynn Williams, Jessie Sanders, Maruxa Cardenas, Xavier Lopez, Nikola Patterson Molina, David Chatfield, Nancy Sittig, Lucia Huete-Suarez, Kira W., Diego Lazcano, Cecilia Tavera-Webman, Diane Simonoff, Vincent Halloran, Olga Hernandez, Barbara Schwartz, Dawn Grayson, Ana M. Del Rio and Gary Held

Speakers/Candidates: Miami-Dade Voter Protection Team Chair, Wayne Brody; Florida State Senate District 36 Candidate, Raquel Pacheco; former Florida Legislator and US Congress District 28 (was 26) Candidate, Robert Ascencio; and County Commission District 6 Candidate/Miami Springs Councilman, Victor Vazquez.

Meeting called to order at 6:30 pm

I. Welcome

President Bentonne Snay

President Bentonne Snay welcomed everyone and thanked our co-hosts: Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee, The Blue Wave Coalition of Miami Dade, The Flamingo Democrats, The People's Progressive Caucus of Miami-Dade, The Kendall Democrats and the Coral Way Democrats. She then described the Zoom guidelines for the meeting.

II. CG Dems Business

a. Finance Committee & Treasurer's Report Treasurer Richard Thurer

Current Account Balance is \$7,897.52, with \$220 in outstanding obligations. We have received \$1,770.00 in donations, calendar year to date.

We have merchandise for sale (shirts \$25 for members, mugs and visors \$15 for members). Purchase can be made through the website. Contributions are always welcome. Bentonne added that we also have lawn signs for Val Demings available for free for whoever wants one.

b. Membership Committee

Chair Elizabeth Newman

We currently have 133 dues paying members in good standing. Our goal is 200 members. The 2022-2023 membership year begins September 1, 2022. Membership renewal dues are due no for the membership year of September 1, 2022-August 30th, 2023. Renewals can be made through the website and clicking on “get involved” or by sending a check to our Treasurer, Richard Thurer. If anyone needs his address, just email Elizabeth and she will send you the address.

c. Volunteer Committee Co-chairs Jane Moscovitz, Martha Schoolman and Janet Stearns.

Martha remarked that door-to-door canvassing is the most effective way to keep voters engaged and that this is the most important work we are doing. The next canvass will be held on July 24th. It will be held at 3:30 in the afternoon in the West Grove targeting voters for Janelle Perez and Adam Benna. The meeting place will be at Varrick Park, on the corner of Hibiscus Street. Martha sent out a google doc link to use to sign-up. The link is also being put in the chat box. Our website is being updated.

Upcoming canvasses after that are planned for August 28th, September 11th and 25th and October 9th and 23rd. All members were encouraged to participate.

Monique and Fâde described their experiences as canvassers and found it extremely rewarding.

Jane reported on our most recent post carding project. 40 volunteers sent out 1880 postcards to people whose voter registrations as Democrats were rejected, giving them information on how to correct their registrations. Our next project will be to welcome new registrants in Coral Gables and Richmond

III. Upcoming Meetings

VP Jane Moscovitz

- **August 5th**- Live Meeting with 10 Dem candidates including Janelle Perez, Adam Benna, Annette Taddeo, Victor Vasquez and More - CG Dems is co-hosting with Cuban American Democratic Club at Beat Culture Brewery 7250 NW 11 Street, 6:30-8:30pm
- **August 9th** – Zoom Meeting 6:30-8:00pm with FL Attorney General Candidate Aramis Ayala, MD School Board Candidate Maribel Balbin, FL CFO Candidate Adam Hattersley and FL Dept of Agriculture and Consumer Services (FDACS) Candidate Naomi Blemur (as of 8/1/22, FDACS Candidate JR Gaillot will also be presenting)



- **September 13th** – Live Meeting at venue TBD; possibly a Meet the Chief event with Congresswoman & US Senate Candidate Val Demings – will seek co-host Dems groups

IV. Presentation by Miami-Dade Democratic Party Voter Protection Team Chair Wayne Brody

Mr. Brody began by letting all present know how important our voter protection work is. There are now former members of the Proud Boys serving on the Republican Party Executive Committee here. Voting laws have been passed by Republicans in the Florida State Legislature and signed by Gov. DeSantis Florida making it more difficult to vote, which is why the work of this team is so important. According to Politico, out of 20 counties across the country which will have an out-sized impact on the mid-terms, the largest is Miami-Dade. The team is looking for volunteers to:

- serve as poll watchers, observing activities at the polls
- roving poll watchers who will go to sites not covered all day
- covering two dozen new polling location this season
- observe how new laws are being implemented
- volunteers being recruited now will be trained by the Voter Protection Team
- Spanish speakers are essential
- Volunteers must be registered Democrats
- sign up link to volunteer: <https://www.fladems.com/votepro22>

V. Candidate Presentations and Q & A Intros/Moderation by Martha Schoolman & Jane Moscovitz

Florida Senate District 36 Candidate Raquel Pacheco <https://raquel.vote>

Raquel Pacheco is running against current District 37 State Senator Ileana Garcia. Ms. Pacheco is a former member of the Connecticut National Guard, a small business owner, and current member of the City of Miami Beach Personnel Board and president of Miami Beach United.

- endorsed by Ruth's list
- eight year-old son in public school
- pro-choice
- will fight to remove 15 week abortion
- endorsed by Planned Parenthood
- believes Ileana Garcia is too extreme; no abortions, no exceptions and for open carry of weapons

- believes she will appeal to NPAs and moderate Dems
- top legislative priorities are insurance, housing crisis for the working class renters, the environment and water quality -

Former Florida Legislator and US Congress District 28 (was 26) Candidate Robert Asencio - www.ascensioforcongress.com

Robert Asencio was a US Army Reservist and who served for 26 years in the Miami-Dade County Schools Police Department. He was state representative for district 118 from 2016-2018 and currently works as a political consultant. He faces progressive Juan Paredes in the August primary and, if he wins that, will face sitting Republican congressman Carlos Gimenez.

- priorities – economy, economy, economy; 59% of families are one paycheck away from disaster
 - supports workforce development and apprenticeship programs
 - environment is a key economic issue for Florida's economy driven by tourism
- anti-gun; has had children die in his hands, any gun ownership must require demonstration of proficiency
 - Carlos Jimenez voted against certifying the 2020 election and against healthcare

County Commission District 6 Candidate /Miami Springs Councilman Victor Vasquez <https://votevictorvazquez.com/>

Victor Vazquez is a US Air Force veteran and a retired Professor of History at Miami Dade College. Mr. Vazquez has been a member of the Miami Springs City Council since 2021, to which he was elected in a 70 percent landslide. Mr. Vazquez is running for the district 6 seat being vacated by the term-limited Rebecca Sosa. Since the commission race is non-partisan, he will be facing three republican challengers in the primary. Our first job is to make sure that Mr. Vazquez makes it on to the November ballot.

- county commission race is non-partisan – he is facing 3 Republicans
- to be successful “everything is about planning” -importance of developing a the post-covid economy
- priorities affordable workforce housing
- thoughtful development of rail

VI. Adjourn

Bentonne Snay

Meeting Adjourned at 8:00pm

Meeting Summary prepared by Board Members Julie Samkoff and Elizabeth Newman