VID General Meeting Notes July 10. 2025

Co-President Sara Kimbell opened the meeting, welcoming everybody and introducing Assemblymember Deborah Glick, State Assemblymember, to speak.

Ms. Glick opened by saying that it had been a long session—from March to mid-June—but it didn't accomplish everything expected. The Environmental Protection Fund budget was increased from $400M to $425M. An additional $500M annually goes to municipalities to support and ensure water quality. This year a new fund was established: the Sustainable Future Program, which supplies $1B for projects across the state to reduce emissions and invest in sustainable infrastructure projects—particularly in disadvantaged communities. The State Superfund program, which is separate from a federally funded superfund program, has been reauthorized for ten years at $125B, or $125M annually. Also, there is now a ban on PFAS in firefighting foam, an important first step.

Legislation to restrict use of plastic turf and encourage the planting of native plants and stop the use of insecticides, herbicides, etc., is in the works, along with restrictions on e-bike batteries unless the manufacturer has a recycle plan, and safe storage for batteries. Also, banning the use of horseshoe crabs for bait or blood, and providing for the recovery of mercury in thermometers. Deborah outlined other bills which have not passed. This was followed by a Q & A.

Co-President Sara mentioned that there were eight new members of VID. She also noted that seven of eight of our endorsed candidates won the Primary. The 30 Judicial Delegates and Alternates all won, thanks to club members who campaigned for them—and now we have to prepare for the General election.

She also mentioned some upcoming events—July 17 will be a national Day of Resistance, and she hopes many will attend. July 17 is a zoom for the LGBT suicide help line, and July 9 is the March Against Pipelines in NY. The August meeting has been cancelled, as is customary, and the September meeting will be in a different venue.

District Leader Jen Hoppe now spoke, noting that the election will be certified next week and thanking the club for use of the VID flag for display. She identified the six people who came out of the Independent Screening Panel as most highly qualified. The panel for Civil and Supreme Courts will report tomorrow. Two more seats have been provided for Civil—one in the 7th District and one in the 3rd District. There will be a meeting Monday regarding these two seats.

Jen said Mamdani was endorsed last night at the County Executive Committee meeting, 49 to four, after heated debate. Brad Hoylman-Sigal endorsed, along with Espaillet, Nadler, and Kristin Gonzales. Mamdani won overwhelmingly in the 66th A.D.

Now members were encouraged to speak, pro and con, for endorsing Mamdani. After debate, he was endorsed 48 to four.

Nat Johnson reported for the Environmental Committee. There will be a zoom meeting for the committee on September 17 to address what the theme will be for the committee. Councilmember Bottcher has signed on to sponsor Intro 1180-2025, to correct the loophole the mayor added to Local Law 97. Zohran Mamdani made addressing climate change central to his affordability plan for New York.

In March, Governor Hochul met with President Trump to discuss building out fossil fuel projects in NYS which have been defeated. The Williams NESE pipeline would ruin the seafloor in the NY harbor and devastate local communities, costing ratepayers more and adding climate-heating pollution and the extreme weather events that come with it. Nat urged everyone to participate in the August 9 March Against the Pipelines to stop it. And why is it so hard for New York to pass climate bills? Assembly Speaker Carl Heastie is increasingly blamed. Nat provided a link to an article on the topic.

Mindy Rosier and Judy Jacobson reported for the Gala Committee—the date is September 30 at Rafele's. Three of four honorees have been identified: Jen Hoppe, Food and Water Watch, and the NYCLU (Donna Lieberman). The fourth one is still not confirmed.

Jonathan Geballe now reported for the Housing Committee, opening with a discussion about judges and the upcoming Judicial Convention. The Housing Committee is coming back to life, and he's excited to have the party nominee pushing affordable housing. Brian Kavanagh, chair of the State Senate Housing Committee, has ten bills regarding housing, and he's willing to meet with a group of VID members in September. He asked for volunteers to join the committee. This was followed by Q & A.

Carol Yost, for the Healthcare Committee, said there was no news to report except that the mayor has backtracked on his plan to force city retirees onto a Medicare Advantage plan that they don't want.

Tony Hoffmann announced that the County Committee in the 66th A.D. is not officially certified. If you live in the district, contact him and he'll appoint you.

Ben Yee, State Committeeman, outlined a resolution that came out of County to call on the party to 1. Endorse the elected nominee, 2. Communicate that on all platforms, 3. Encourage the county committees to endorse the candidate (Mamdani) and support him, 4. Ask the other candidates to drop out of the race. Rachel Lavine, the State Committeewoman, differed with the reso. Hopefully, Zohran will engage the Jewish Caucus regarding any reservations.

New Business:

David Siffert brought up a sign-on letter regarding the proliferation of factory farms. Jabari Brisport and Linda Rosenthal support it. After discussion, it was decided to be discussed at the next Executive Committee meeting.