VID General Meeting September 11, 2025

Co-President Sara Kimbell opened the meeting, thanking everyone for coming and greeting new members. She asked everyone to take a moment to honor those who were killed on September 11, 2011, and everyone complied. She then outlined some upcoming events: a Hands Off March on Saturday the 13th organized by Rise and Resist; a Jefferson Market fundraiser on the 15th; Mark Levine and Tish James will have a fundraiser at Rosemary's Restaurant on the 16th; Downtown Nasty Women will have a post carding event on the 17th; a Mamdani Town Hall on the 18th; and a County Committee meeting on the 29th. There will also be a forum on the ballot proposals hosted by Brian Kavanagh and Brad Hoylman-Sigal possibly on the 21st, a Make Bilionaires Pay event on the 20th, and of course VID's Gala on the 30th. The Gala theme is Welcome to the Resistance, it will be held at Rafele's, and the Honorees are Ark Immigration Clinic, NYCLU (Donna Lieberman), Food & Water Action, and our former District Leader, Jen Hoppe.

Katharine Wolpe, a longtime VID member, (President and Vice President) and District Leader, passed away, and a memorial will be held for her October 11 at Saint Mark's in the Bowery. Sara said she was a force nature in the club, and she will be missed.

Monica from the Harvey Epstein campaign now spoke, thanking everyone for their support. She'll be in touch with all the clubs regarding two events: 9/26 will be a Happy Hour at Linen Hall and there'll be a Town Hall on October 22.

Now Mar Fitzgerald, the new District Leader, gave a brief report. The County Committee meeting will be on the 29th, and she urged everyone to attend, and come early. There are over 100 vacancies on the CC list, and we need to fill those seats. She will be working with everyone on voter registration, and the forum on the Ballot Proposals: she will also post monthly office hours and will be sending a regular newsletter.

Tony Hoffmann, chair of the Campaign Committee, reminded us that this is an endorsement meeting in which we will endorse (or not) four candidates for Supreme Court, and one for Civil Court.

The first judge up for endorsement was Jim Clynes. He outlined his history and experience, and current cases he is working on, including one in which two people lost limbs from a train mishap, where the MTA refuses to pay. He humbly asked for our support.

Next was Judy Kim, who would be the first Korean American on the Supreme Court. She outlined her history and experience, her work on behalf of mesothelioma victims, and her extensive mentoring.

Judge Deborah Kaplan now spoke of her 24 years as a judge and her extensive administrative work—also her experience in the first drug treatment court, matrimonial court, and her reorganization of the courts. She hoped for our support.

Judge Suzanne Adams appeared via zoom, thanking us for our previous support. She spoke of her extensive administrative duties in charge of 65 judges and 120 staff people in four buildings. She's worked with Sonya Sotomayor and Edwina Richardson, and received two awards from the Women's Bar Association.

Eric Wursthorn, up for judge in Judicial District 3, was last. He was happy to be here, he's working class from Queens, and spent twenty years in the court system. He has volunteered at the legal clinic at the LGBT Center. DL Arthur Schwartz urged an endorsement.

A vote was held for endorsements, and Dr. Shirley Smith recused herself. All five candidates were unanimously elected.

Now Jordan Stein of Open Seat gave a presentation on the County Committee and its importance. He's in the Manhattan Young Dems and a former director in Open Seat, who's spearheaded many reforms. He spoke of the CC structure, its significance, and its history. He talked of how to join and be a good CC member. He gave a link to the Manhattan Young Dems guide to the CC, and Remi Kothe, VID VP, said she would put it in the VID Dispatch.

Tony of the Campaign Committee spoke briefly of why the County Committee is so important, having nominated and elected two people he knows of, Jerry Nadler one of them, into office. He has a list of those not on CC, and took names of those wishing to join. He also asked for volunteers to campaign.

Nat Johnson, of the Environmental Committee, now spoke. Food & Water Watch is sponsoring a Rally to Stop Trump's Fracked Gas Pipelines on the 14th—a rally against the Governor and others who are in favor of these pipelines which were previously rejected. New York Communities for Change has organized a petition drive. WE WON'T VOTE FOR A GOVERNOR WHO CAVES TO DONALD TRUMP, with a link on the website. He mentioned Civil Eats, a nonprofit dedicated to critical thought about the American food system, also on the Food Tracker website. Sun Day September 21st will be a rally and celebration of clean energy—info at THIRD ACT. The Plastic House Challenge, a national survey on plastic and health, is on the Greenpeace website, and the Environmental Committee will meet on zoom on the 17th.

Judith Jacobson reported for the Gala Committee, saying they were doing very well and had surpassed last year's numbers. She said volunteers were needed at the tables, and she got three at the meeting.

Jonathan Geballe, of the Housing and Land Use Committee, said the committee had come out of its dormancy and had met with State Senator Brian Kavanagh. They also had their first committee meeting, and he outlined the topics covered. There will be a forum on the Ballot Proposals to change how housing is built on 9/21. He outlined the pros as expediting housing construction and the antis as removing City Counsel input and discrimination.

Health Care Committee chair Carol Yost now spoke. She spoke of a proposal covering prison inmates deaths and the deaths of former inmates shortly after release. She spoke of NYC retirees Medicare under threat, and said all the mayoral candidates signed on to Intro 1096 to preserve their Medicare rights except for Mamdani, and she said she had requested an answer from him at the upcoming Tow Hall.

The meeting was adjourned.