VID General Meeting December 11, 2025

Co-President Sara Kimbell opened the meeting with an announcement about the VID holiday party, to be held on January 11 at Irene Kaufman's house. She reminded us that tonight's meeting would include a candidate forum and endorsement vote, and votes on two proposed VID constitution amendments. Former Co-President Irene will be stepping down, and she had some kind words for her.

She thanked David Siffert, Irene, and all who participated in the educational ICE response for local businesses; another one will be held on Saturday.

The January meeting will include the second round of VID elections. Sara also announced an upcoming special election for NY Assembly District 66, with four candidates currently: VID member David Siffert, Ben Yee, Ryder Kessler, and Jeannine Kiely. On January 21 there will be a candidate forum for US Congress NY12 (we have only a few EDS), and on the 22nd there will be an endorsement vote. Also on the 22nd there will be an endorsement vote for US Congress NY10—Dan Goldman (incumbent) and NYC Comptroller Brad Lander. After discussion, Sara welcomed NYS Senator Brian Kavanagh.

State Senator Kavanagh, chair of the Housing Committee, thanked the club for the opportunity to speak on his accomplishments in his eight years in the Senate, working very hard to make housing affordable. He touched on 5 WTC and the fight there for affordability; addressing Trumpism, and legal issues like good cause eviction, and SCRIE and DRIE. He noted that we just elected a mayor who campaigned on freezing rents.

He stated he had passed a bunch of bills this year and had spent 8.6 billion for housing, a 250% increase over the last five year period. He's working on property insurance, federal food assistance and chemicals in food. He wants to close the loopholes in the legislation, and his bill passed the Assembly and needs to pass the State Senate.

In the Q & A, he was asked if he would consent to meet with the club's Housing Committee in the next two months, and he agreed. He mentioned Fanny and Freddy Mae mortgages have jumped up and he's trying to get subsidies. Asked about nuclear power, he said nuclear may be acceptable in certain cases but the core of our policy must be clean energy.

After discussion, a vote was taken on whether to endorse Kavanagh, and he was unanimously endorsed.

Sara now proposed votes on the two proposed amendments to the VID constitution. The first to be addressed was the proposed Waiver Amendment, involving changes to Article VIII. After discussion, this passed, with 30 in favor, one against, and two abstentions. There will be another vote at the next general meeting.

Next up was the Membership Coordinator Amendment, involving changes to Articles IV and VI. This also passed, with 31 in favor and four against. This will also be addressed again at the next general meeting.

Now the VID elections for President or Co-Presidents, and three Vice Presidents. Sara ran for President, and Mindy Rosier, Liz Cohen, and Remy Kothe ran for VPs. After speeches and discussion, all won.

Nat Johnson, chair of the Environmental committee, reported. Sunday December 14 Manhattan Solid Waste Management Board (MSWMB) will be meeting at the Repair Café at El Barrio with volunteers who will help repair any household items. They meet once a month.

December 12 in Washington Square Park there will be a press conference with State Senator Liz Krueger and Assembly Member Emily Gallagher to launch their campaign for plug in/ balcony solar in New York State. On December 16 there will be a protest at Governor Hochul's Manhattan office demanding she sign the 100 foot repeal, adhere to our state's climate laws, and include climate in her 2026 budget. On April 15 there will be a virtual mobilization launch on zoom with Bill McKibben to prevent Hochul from siding with oil and gas billionaires and prepare for the Deadline Hochul climate march on April 18 in Albany.

Dan Goldman, in DC, made a presentation on zoom, saying cracks were starting to appear in the Rsepublican contingent where some signed on to a discharge petition in the case of bills that had been passed over by the Speaker, so the Senate went over his head. The Republicans are very worried about the ACA tax credits expiring, crushing working families. The Dems did a very good job with Kristi Noem, and Dan got her to admit that she violated the laws regarding immigrants; he introduced a bill prohibiting arrests at courthouses and ICE check-ins—at least half of immigrants not showing up are afraid of being arrested. His office has been turned into a triage center where immigrants can come for information and legal assistance, and assistance with food pantries and shelter.

There is also a bill prohibiting masks and demanding DHS allow electeds into detention centers, and the NYPD to oversee ICE actions and make arrests if laws are violated. He also introduced a tax bill to prevent billionaires from avoiding paying taxes—Bezos pays a 1% tax rate and Musk pays only 3%. This bill would put a 20% tax on loan loopholes, and generate $30B a year which could reduce childhood poverty by 50%. Brad has entered the race and has been endorsed by Mamdani, but there's a lot we can work on together. Q & A followed.

Jonathan Geballe reported for the Housing Committee, saying there will be a meeting on January 5 and new members are welcome. The new mayor is all about affordable housing.

Carol Yost reported for the Health Committee, saying Chris Marté had introduced a bill to guarantee city retirees will get full Medicare and get rid of copays and Medicare Advantage. She has written to Mamdani urging him to support the bill. She is looking into detainee health care.

New Business:

Jen Hoppe recommended a video she had seen which recommended going to every door and talking to everyone to rally voters. If we get one in four voters who don't normally vote, we can win all open seats.

Rick Braun spoke of getting ill and going to Northwell Health, which recently added 8 beds. The staff was wonderful and he would recommend the facility.

Jonathan Geballe lauded the recent victories in Miami, Louisiana, and Georgia.

The meeting was adjourned.