

June 14, 2021 Minutes
Rutland County Democrats Committee
Zoom Meeting, 7:00 – 8:00 p.m.

The Rutland County Democratic Committee Meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Heather Juliussen-Stevenson. Meeting was held on Zoom video/phone.

Report from the Secretary

The minutes from the April 2021 meeting were sent with the meeting notice. Motion to approve April minutes made and seconded. Minutes approved unanimously.

Report from the Treasurer

Scott read the Treasurer's Report. Income of \$2,631.55 as of last Friday. Bank balance is now \$3,3031.50. This is good for a nonelection year. Expenses of \$261.14, including postage and printing of fundraising letter.

Legislative Report

Rep. Will Notte: Hats off to new legislative members for handling a very difficult year without being able to go into the statehouse. Overall successful season, including distribution of Cares Act Funds and helping businesses during pandemic. The Governor vetoed 3 bills which Democrats will be trying to override. The legislature may be returning in October to discuss more funding work. Looking forward to meeting in person. The Criminal Expungement Bill would allow people to apply for expungement for certain youthful offender crimes committed up to 19 years of age instead of 18.

Rep. Mary Howard: Worked hard in General Housing and Military Affairs Committees. Listened to lots of testimony on the housing bill. Very disappointed in the way it turned out. As Chair of VT Worker's Caucus, hopes to get a chance to fix the state pension issue. Lots of constituents were upset about this issue.

New Business

Declaration of Inclusion

Bob Harnish and Norm Cohen: The declaration started with the town of Franklin. Bob, Norm and Al have been supporting efforts to pass the declaration in other towns, including Pittsfield and Brandon,. The City of Rutland has adopted it with the help of BOA and Chamber of Commerce. Gov. Scott has issued a Declaration of Inclusion, and also declared the 2nd week of May inclusion week. Rutland Town hasn't adopted the Declaration.

Bob Harnish said some towns have adopted the original while others have modified the language. It's important that towns that have passed the declaration take the next step to look at town practices and to root out implicit bias in hiring and other practices. This should lead to discussions about historical events and modern-day efforts to encourage diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Bob and Norm have been contacted by various organizations and individuals about the declaration. Other areas of the state have also contacted them.

Discussion about supporting the passage of the Declaration of Inclusion in every town in Rutland County. Mendon, West Rutland and Pawlet are at various stages of the adoption process.

Talking points for promoting the declaration can be found at:

<http://rutland-democrats.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/DOI-FINAL-really.pdf>

Rutland County Democratic Declaration of Inclusion

Motion made to adopt a declaration of inclusion for the county committee. Motion seconded. Declaration adopted.

National Politics

Mary Droege: National and VT Indivisible Groups are working on the For the People's Act (S.1). This is a important piece of legislation to protect voting rights from voter suppression acts. It prohibits gerrymandering and codifies other important voting rights laws. No Republicans in the Senate support it and McConnell has pledged to filibuster. Indivisible is proposing a series of actions during Congressional recess on 6/28 – 7/10 (2 weeks). VT has an important role to play in this, because it's crucial that we respectfully pressure Sen. Leahy to support S.1 and to modify the filibuster, if needed, to pass it. He has a lot influence with other Senators. S.1 is very popular with voters across the board, including Republican voters, but it is unpopular with Republican members of Congress.

The actions that Indivisible is planning will include something for everyone—postcards, tweets, calls, and positive rallies outside his office. Rights and Democracy is also working on this.

Events:

The Rutland County Democratic Executive Committee is marching in the Brandon July 4th parade. Rep. Welch and Lt. Gov. Molly Gray are expected to attend.

Possible Fall Fundraising Film – “Natasha Mayers: An Un-Still Life” - The film is short, so we would need to include a discussion or something else. Perhaps we can hold this at the Paramount.

Adjourned: 8:00 pm

Respectfully submitted,

Carol Wright,

Recording Secretary