

Democratic Rural Conference
DRC General Membership Meeting Minutes
Saturday April 27, 2024
Crowne Plaza Albany

The meeting was called to order by Chair Judith Hunter at 9:25 AM.

Board members in attendance

Cynthia Appleton	Judith Hunter	Liz Moran
Darlene Baker	John Hurley	Tim Perfetti
Maggie Bartley	Ron McDougall	Michael Plitt
Keith Batman	James Mills	Bill Thickstun
Bill Hughes	Michael Monescalchi	Ted Young

Board members not in attendance

Tom Schimmerling Kimberly Davis

Over 100 other voting and associate members were present.

Judith Hunter welcomed everyone and called on Nominating Committee chair Phil Jones to conduct the board election. One candidate was nominated for each of these positions:

Treasurer, 1 year term—John Hurley (Ontario County)

Secretary, 1 year term—Bill Thickstun (Oneida)

Keith Batman moved to close nominations, Max Della Pia seconded, and the motion passed unanimously. Liz Moran moved that the positions be filled by acclamation, Bill Hughes seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

One candidate was nominated to a two-year term for each of the Regional Vice Chair positions:

North—Ron McDougall (St Lawrence)

Catskill/Hudson—Michael Monescalchi (Rensselaer)

Central—Liz Moran (Madison)

West—Cynthia Appleton (Wyoming)

David DiPasquale moved to close nominations, Ted Young seconded; the motion passed unanimously. Judith Hunter moved that the positions be filled by acclamation, Lynne Boecher seconded; the motion passed unanimously.

Five seats on the Board of Directors were up for election. Each of the six candidates or their proxies spoke briefly:

Ted Young (Seneca)

Tom Schimmerling (Delaware, represented by Kathleen Hayek)

Max Della Pia (Tioga)

Roger Saltman (Madison)

Jeff Lewis (Orleans, represented by Michael Plitt)

Michael Zagrobelny (St Lawrence)

David DiPasquale moved to close nominations, Ron McDougall seconded. As it was a contested election, Phil Jones announced that ballots would be sent out through Election Buddy to all voting members, present or absent.

Because minutes of the May 10, 2023 general membership meeting had not been available at the November 14, 2023 membership meeting, both of those documents needed to be approved. Darlene Baker moved and Cindy Appleton seconded their approval, which passed unanimously.

David DiPasquale moved, Cindy Appleton seconded approval of the March 24, 2024 Board of Directors meeting minutes, which passed unanimously.

John Hurley reported that former treasurer Frank Puglisi, who had to step out earlier in the year because he was seriously ill, is now on the mend. The DRC accounts have been moved to Key Bank. As it has branches across the state, that should make it more convenient for future treasurers. It has taken some time to get all the financial information together, but John can report that the current balance in our main account is \$42,834.75, and in the federal PAC \$18,323.59. An audit committee is being formed to review our finances. John expects to have a full standard treasurer's report for the next membership meeting.

Judith Hunter opened her report by saluting the downstate people attending the conference. We need them as allies and are delighted to have them here.

She discussed how important it is for county committees to have web sites, so that people can find us. The state committee has made free web hosting available to DRC counties. Ed Reed of Livingston County and Rick Gell of Putnam have simplified the template for our use and are willing to walk counties through the process of building a site. So far, Putnam, Green, Livingston, and Yates Counties have taken advantage of this opportunity.

As time was short, Judith said we will update the membership on the work of the political committee via email. There were no other committee reports.

Ed Jasewicz of Fulton County asked about the increasing annual price of the conference. Jane Dodds addressed the rising cost of hotel meals, conference space and services. The money currently in the state account is needed to pay the bills for the conference. Once those are settled we will, as we do every year, allocate any conference surplus back to the member counties in equal shares. Summer Downing (Washington County) suggested that counties could use their allocation, or part of it, to reduce costs for members next year.

David DiPasquale moved that we adjourn, Cindy Appleton seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

At lunch, Phil Jones announced that the winners of the board of directors election were Ted Young, Tom Schimmerling, Max Della Pia, Roger Saltman, and Michael Zagrobelny. We congratulate them all and welcome the new members to the board.

Respectfully submitted,

William R. Thickstun

Secretary