

NYS Democratic Rural Conference
General Membership Meeting Minutes
September 25, 2024
Syracuse Downtown Marriott

The meeting was called to order by Chair Judith Hunter at 3:05 PM.

Board members in attendance

| | | |
|------------------|---------------|----------------|
| Cynthia Appleton | Ron McDougall | Bill Thickstun |
| Maggie Bartley | James Mills | Ted Young |
| Judith Hunter | Liz Moran | |
| John Hurley | Michael Plitt | |

Board members not in attendance

| | | |
|----------------|---------------|--------------------|
| Kimberly Davis | Bill Hughes | Tom Schimmerling |
| Max Della Pia | Roger Saltman | Michael Zagrobelny |

Over 50 other voting and associate members were present.

Approval of Minutes (Bill Thickstun)

Ted Young moved and Cindy Appleton seconded approving the minutes of the general membership meeting of April 27, 2024. The motion passed unanimously.

Michael Plitt moved and James Mills seconded approving the minutes of the board meeting of July 27, 2024. The motion passed unanimously.

Treasurer's Report (John Hurley)

Key Bank Operating Account

| | | | | |
|--------------------------------|---------------|------------|-------------|-------------|
| Starting Balance July 15, 2024 | | | | \$25,079.69 |
| | | | | |
| Deposits | | | | |
| | | 9/5/2024 | \$48.96 | |
| | | 9/24/2024 | \$387.78 | \$436.74 |
| | Deposit in | ActBlue | \$3,000.00 | \$3,000.00 |
| | Transit | | | |
| Disbursements | | | | |
| | Allocations | 46 x \$425 | \$19,550.00 | |
| | Albany Hilton | Deposit | \$4,500.00 | |
| | Board Mtg. | 7/27/2024 | \$756.34 | |
| | Neon | 3 months | \$467.68 | \$25,274.02 |
| | | | | |
| Balance at September 24, 2024 | | | | \$3,242.41 |

Key Bank PAC Account

| | | | | |
|---|--|--|--|-------------|
| Starting Balance July 15, 2024 | | | | \$18,348.59 |
| Deposits | | | | |
| Disbursements: Congressional (see appendix for detail) | | | | \$18,273.17 |
| Balance at September 24, 2024 | | | | \$75.42 |

Disbursement Detail to Congressional Candidates from Federal PAC September 2024

| CD | Candidate | Amount |
|----|-------------------|-------------|
| 17 | Mondaire Jones | \$390.39 |
| 18 | Pat Tyan | \$195.19 |
| 19 | Josh Riley | \$3,708.69 |
| 20 | Paul Tonko | \$975.96 |
| 21 | Paula Collins | \$5,000.00 |
| 22 | John Mannion | \$975.96 |
| 23 | Tom Carle | \$2,472.46 |
| 24 | David Wagenhauser | \$4,229.20 |
| 25 | Joe Morelle | \$195.19 |
| 26 | Tim Kennedy | \$130.13 |
| | Total | \$18,273.17 |

Disbursement Detail February 29,2024 - July 15, 2024

| | | | | | |
|--------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|------------|-------------|-------------|
| Payment Date | | | | | |
| February | | | \$0.00 | | |
| March | | | \$0.00 | | |
| April | | | \$0.00 | | |
| 5/14/2024 | Conference Hotel Invoice | | | \$26,790.40 | |
| | LVD Projector Pkg | | \$1,810.00 | | |
| | Wired Podium Microphone Pkg | | \$280.00 | | |
| | Speaker Sound System | | \$200.00 | | |
| | Computer Adapter Kit | | \$75.00 | | |
| | Wireless Microphone | | \$87.50 | | |
| | Support Set Up Labor | | \$825.00 | | |
| | Service Charge | | \$490.50 | | |
| | Sales Tax | | \$235.44 | | \$4,003.44 |
| | | | | | |
| | 4/26 Dinner | 195 @ \$49.00 | \$9,555.00 | | |
| | | Service Chg | \$1,911.00 | | |
| | | Sales Tax | \$917.28 | | \$12,383.28 |
| | 4/26 BoD Work Room | 12 @ 32.00 | \$384.00 | | |
| | | Service Chg | \$76.80 | | |
| | | Sales Tax | \$36.86 | | \$497.66 |
| | 4/26 King St. Ballroom | Rental | \$1,500.00 | | |
| | | Service Chg | \$300.00 | | |
| | | Sales Tax | \$144.00 | | \$1,944.00 |
| | 4/27 Luncheon | 155 @ \$35.00 | \$5,425.00 | | |
| | | Service Chg | \$1,085.00 | | |
| | | Sales Tax | \$520.80 | | \$7,030.80 |
| | 4/27 Conf. Coffee/Tea | 10 Gal. @ \$95.00 Gallon | \$950.00 | | |
| | | Service Chg | \$190.01 | | |
| | | Sales Tax | \$91.20 | | \$1,231.21 |
| | 4/27 Credit | | | | -\$300.00 |
| | | Detail Total | | | \$26,790.39 |
| | | | | | |
| 6/3/2024 | Neon | | | \$617.25 | |
| | | | | | |
| 7/3/2024 | DRC Program Design | | | \$800.00 | |

Ron McDougal moved and Cindy Appleton seconded accepting the Treasurer's report, which passed unanimously.

John is trying to be as transparent as possible about the cost of the conference, which this year was nearly \$27,000. Members wishing to increase the funds available for our county grants can work to sell ads in the conference program book, which is one of our main sources of revenue.

Chair's Report (Judith Hunter)

Judith spoke about the upcoming 30th DRC Anniversary Conference, which will be held April 25-26, 2025 at the downtown Hilton in Albany. We plan to honor the founding board members and celebrate in other ways. As is customary in odd-numbered years, sessions will focus on committee and candidate training.

She discussed our allocations from the Federal PAC, money provided by Senators Schumer and Gillibrand. Because treating all DRC counties equally is built into the DNA of our organization, the money was divided into 47 equal shares and then donated to candidates by aggregating shares from all the DRC counties in their districts. For counties divided between two, or in one case three congressional districts, each candidate received a proportionate share of that county's allocation. Many thanks to Michael Plitt, who developed a spreadsheet to make these calculations. Judith has already received thanks from several of our congressional candidates for these funds.

We currently have several board vacancies for which we encourage voting members (county chairs and state committee members) to apply. These positions will be filled on an interim basis by the board at its November 24th meeting, and all will come up again for election by the membership at the April conference. In July, we replaced Executive Vice Chair Tim Perfetti (who took a state job on Comptroller DiNapoli's staff) with Liz Moran of Madison County. But that opens a new vacancy in her old position as Central Regional Vice Chair. Michael Monescalchi recently moved back to Utica where he grew up, vacating his position as Catskill/Hudson Regional Vice Chair. Darlene Baker is no longer a state committee member, which vacates her position as DRC Parliamentarian. A regular board position will also be open in November. In addition to these special cases, all the officers (Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary, Treasurer and Parliamentarian) and five regular board positions will come up for election by the membership in April.

New Business

Bill Thickstun asked everyone to let him know as soon as possible about

changes in state committee members and county chairs, so we can keep our email lists accurate. With your help, it's much faster for us to maintain this information ourselves than to wait on the state committee for updates.

Michael Heller from the Bronx (81st AD) spoke about his support for the rural counties and his understanding of the difficulties we face in late winter petitioning. Judith Hunter and Dan Farfaglia reported briefly on the work we've been doing with Assemblyman Magnarelli and Senator Breslin on A253/S8446, which would replace petitioning in most cases with county party conventions, much as the state convention nominates statewide candidates. A county could nominate up to four primary candidates for each position on the ballot and candidates who could not get 25% of their committee's weighted votes would still be able to petition. Districts involving cities with populations of over 1 million would not be eligible for this process.

Julie Shiroishi from Eleanor's Legacy announced a free candidate Boot Camp in Syracuse on November 23, for next year's prospective local candidates. She also introduced Abigail Martin who will be working with her.

Marcia Westling Johnson (Chautauqua County) asked about how to deal with municipalities enforcing unconstitutional sign ordinances. Her committee, like most, doesn't have the resources to take them to court.

Adjournment

At 3:45 Ted Young moved that we adjourn. Ron McDougall seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Bill Thickstun

Secretary