

**Minutes of the Wayland Democratic Town Committee Meeting  
Thursday, December 1, 2011**

The meeting was held at J.J. McKay's and preceded by an informal gathering of members and guests for dinner. It was called to order by the Chair promptly at 7:00 PM

**Members Attending:** Michael Gilbreath, Chair; Sylvia Dickens, Secretary; Hope Podell, Membership Outreach Coordinator; Michael Bate; Steve Garone; Sheila Loazya; Susan Hager; Rodney Hager; and State Representative Thomas Conroy, Candidate for U.S. Senator from Massachusetts.

**Visitors:** Janet Hadingham (Wayland); Ramuel Raagas (Framingham); Joe Nolan, Wayland Selectman; Carol Coakley (Millis & Massachusetts Peace Action); and Karen Darmer, Field Director for Tom Conroy for U.S. Senate Campaign.

**I. Treasurer's report** – (In Irene Chang's absence, the report was given by the Chair)

- Current Balance: \$1051.59 (same as prior month)
- There was general agreement that we should try to increase available funds with an election year coming up, should we want to contribute to upcoming campaigns.
- Members were encouraged to pay their dues if they had not already. It was pointed out that although dues are \$30 annually, members may contribute whatever amount they can or wish to.

**II. Announcements** –

- Matt Shear has volunteered to administer our Facebook Page in an attempt to reach out to the community and to "populate" it -- currently we have 110 "likes," so there's more traffic than on our Yahoo list serve.
- Reminder that The Dem Caucus will be held on Sat, February 25<sup>th</sup> @1 PM at a place tbd. Michael is looking into availability of the community room at the Public Safety Building.

**II. Holiday Party** – Michael G raised the question of whether we should have our own holiday party this year, and if so where and when?

- There was unanimous approval for having a WDTC holiday celebration.
- Rodney and Susan Hager graciously volunteered to host the party at their home.
- It was decided it would be a potluck event, which Susan will coordinate.
- The Hagers will also check best dates for them and get back to us. (Subsequently they chose Sunday, Dec 18 at 6 PM and posted an invitation on the Yahoo group)

**III. Letter-Writing Campaign** – Michael G made a plea for members to reinvigorate the plans we made in September to wage a campaign of letters to the editor to highlight Scott Brown's failings and his alignment with GOP voting, and to undo the mythology that surrounds him; i.e., use research and his voting record to demonstrate why he is *not* "independent", *not* caring or attuned to needs of most residents, and *not* accessible to residents.

Discussion: Susan Hager has agreed to be "The Whip" for this effort, but questioned the timing – whether it might be too early and therefore the effect might be lost if readers not ready for

election yet. It was felt that in light of the general election atmosphere already created by national interest in the MA Senate race and by Elizabeth Warren's subsequent entry into the race, and because of the negative ads already running aimed at both EW and SB, that it was not too early to start writing substantive arguments for his defeat. Carol Coakley urged that we not focus on candidates but on common goal of defeating SB - members could focus on SB while still supporting their own primary candidates.

Steve Garone reiterated the importance of doing research in different key areas. Susan agreed it greatly benefits the letter writers to have researched facts on hand -- about SB votes, his involvement in various news-breaking events, or his performance. Rodney said there is no end of material to choose from -- just last week he attacked the League of Women Voters!

Tom Conroy recommended taking advantage of research already conducted by various special interest groups, e.g., the Sierra Club, that track legislative activity and votes. Michael G added that there is already a lot of material to work from out there, including letter suggestions on the State Democratic Website, so urged members to write, not wait.

#### Action items:

- Letters will be simultaneously sent to the Wayland Town Crier, the Sudbury Town Crier and the MetroWest Daily beginning the week of December 5, 2011.
- Susan Hager volunteered to write the first letter, focused on undoing some of the SB myths.
- Sheila Loazya, Sylvia Dickens, Hope Podell, and [in absentia] Matt Shear volunteered to conduct research on various issues of their choice, unless otherwise assigned, and to provide the Whip with short briefs to distribute where needed or inspirational.

#### **IV. Guest Speaker – MA State Representative Thomas Conroy, Primary Candidate for U.S. Senate**

We were fortunate to have a lot of time with Representative Tom Conroy, who asked to sit with us and speak informally, rather than to give his usual formal presentation, and to give him our candid feedback and advice. Tom openly articulated his reasons for getting into the senate primary race, shared some of the high points of his campaign -- meeting so many different people statewide, gaining name recognition and support along the way. He also laid out the unusual challenges in this particular primary contest. He spoke of timing and fairness, the media squeeze, returning from his statewide tour to the early PAC endorsements, the polls, the withdrawal of other leading candidates, unprecedented fundraising and inherent challenges. Tom went on to discuss the need to balance his drive to win, his conviction that he could best beat Scott Brown given the opportunity, his lifelong desire to serve the public and compassion for those in need, and his great concern for the growing problems we face and the need for solutions in DC, rather than more polarization -- to balance all this with the reality of the situation and means available to him. Members were generally very impressed and supportive and expressed their gratitude for his dedication. They questioned his stand on a couple of issues and inquired about his expectations and plans. Michael G said later, "Tom was at his best on the values we support and the issues we care about."

**V. Old business/new business**

- Sylvia Dickens mentioned that the wooden sign had disappeared from the barrels of flowers that the WDTC tends to at the Plain St entrance to Cochituate Park. No one knew who had removed it. We need to check with Bonnie Gossels or Wayland Beautification Committee.

Having no further items of old or new business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:10 PM