



Bethlehem City Democratic Committee – General Meeting

August, 2023 – NCC Fowler Center Rm 114

MINUTES

Call to Order: by Ben Felzer at 7:04 PM

Minutes for July meeting: Submitted by Patrice Teltser

Motion to approve minutes (Kathy Fox); Seconded (Celeste Dee):
>> Motion passed

Treasurer's report: Submitted by Mark Moss, Treasurer

Discussion:

Elected Officials / Candidates:

Michael Colón, Bryan Callahan (zoom); Coleen Laird (zoom): attending for discussion below; also taking opportunity to thank Committee for help and support in primary

Brian Panella (zoom); Reminder that City turnout in November will be important for Dems in Northampton County.

County/State Party Committee reports:

Northampton County – Matt Munsey, Chair

NORCO Dems to hold their Summer Picnic: August 19, 2023 at Hugh Moore Park, Easton. It is a potluck. It is a fundraiser. Tickets: \$10.

Terry Houck withdrew from DA race. GOP has 10 days to file a nominee for November ballot. Deadline is August 24. Actual procedure to select a candidate is determined by GOP Party by-laws.

Lehigh County – Lori, Chair

Announcements for upcoming events

Old Business:

Table at the Puerto Rican Festival (July 23) (report from Ben Felzer)

Summer Picnic: well done event; Roy Ortiz at Lynfield was very pleased and encouraged us to do this again. Michael Colon: keep Roy involved as much as possible; was on school board; very active in community;

New Business:

Request to co-sponsor candidate debate from City Republicans:

BCDC was approached by our Republican counterparts requesting that we co-sponsor a debate for City Council candidates. They suggested September 13 as a possible date. Ben said he would need to bring it to the Committee's attention (fortunately, this took place within the last two weeks). Ben has also contacted our candidates, all of whom indicated they are in favor of it. Further details would need to be negotiated, particularly the issue of potential moderators.

General Discussion:

All candidates indicated a general willingness to participate. There was also a general degree of caution regarding specific details that might need to be negotiated, and how they would be resolved. Topics raised included: date (mail-in ballot schedule is relevant), location, structure and format, rules, appropriate moderator, clarification on scope and range of topics to cover.

Historically, candidate debates are sponsored and coordinated and arranged by non-partisan community organizations. Many seemed to feel that would be more appropriate context for a debate. Unclear if there is any relevant Democratic Party policy.

Grace Crampsie Smith: heard that NAACP is considering sponsoring a candidate debate; no further details

Further discussion pro and con.

Michael Laws called and spoke with Esther Lee. Bethlehem NAACP is planning to sponsor a debate for candidates running for City Council and BASD. They are planning for October 5th and have booked the Union Hall.

Ben wanted further clarity because there hasn't been any formal announcement for a debate. He wanted a back-up plan in the event the NAACP did not hold a debate.

Motion (Ian Ali): Support plans for NAACP, as non-partisan community organization, to sponsor a debate for candidates. If that plan does not happen, the Executive Board is empowered to make final decision whether or not to co-sponsor a debate, and follow through accordingly. Motion seconded: Patrice Teltser. Motion passed.

Member Forum:

Rayah Levy: First-time candidate for BASD.

Kathy Fox: Candidate for City Treasurer

Lisa Ditalia: Motion: Committee make contribution to Rayah Levy's for yard signs.

Motion tabled (more information needed)

Brian Lucas: Announcement to save the date July 22nd for Pub Crawl, 2:00 – 7:00 PM. Community Action for election kick-off and civic engagement. Tickets at \$5 each. Please help spread word; poster to drop soon with further instructions including starting point, list of pubs participating, how it will all work.

Motion to Adjourn: Michael Laws; Second: Ian Ali;
Motion passed.

Meeting Adjourned: 8:34 PM

Respectfully Submitted, Patrice Teltser