

APPROVED MINUTES
Wilton Democratic Town Committee
Tuesday, January 4, 2005

Present: Sharon Grace, Deborah McFadden, Alice Ayers, Ernie Loser, Charlie Lewis, Fred Herot, Lois Alcosser, Toni Lee, Ernie Ricco, David Borglum, Ted Hofstatter, Troy Ellen Dixon, Jon Tan

Guests: Dan Malloy (Democratic Mayor, Stamford), Jeff Yates (Wilton Bulletin), Lee Higgins (Wilton Villager), Art Shulman, Barbara Massey Bear, Inga Marowitz, Art Shulman, EJ Marcelo

Absent Excused: Richard Creeth, Hallie Wofsy, Margaret DeRose, John Gardiner

Wilton DTC Chairperson Grace calls the meeting to order at 7:30pm.

Treasurer's Report:

1. The Wilton DTC's current account balance is \$2,327. Our fund balance is healthy at the beginning of the year, considering we had an election cycle last November.
2. DTC members should pay their dues. \$40 is the suggested due; however, individuals are free to give based on desire.

Chairman's Announcements:

1. George Jepsen is stepping down as the Chair of the Democratic State Committee. The Wilton DTC will support the incoming Chair in enabling a united Democratic Party in Connecticut. George Jepsen's many contributions to the state party are very much appreciated.
2. As the Wilton DTC supports the local arts, everyone is encouraged to see the The Wilton Playshop's 68th Season opener, the hilarious farce 'See How They Run' directed by Kari Deyo. Shows are at 8pm on Jan 14, 15, 21, 22, 23, 28 and 29. There is a matinee performance on Jan 23. Tickets are \$15 each. The Wilton DTC supports the arts.

Committee Reports:

1. Platform Committee

Ernie Ricco, Chair of the Platform Committee, outlined the presentation, draft and approval process for our platform.

- Starting from a blank sheet of paper, the Wilton DTC is looking for as many Democrats to contribute their planks
- **2 public hearings will be held to facilitate this: Jan 25, 2005 and Mar 22, 2005 at Comstock, Room 21 A&B, 7:30pm. This will be announced in the local newspapers.**
- The first draft platform will be presented between April and May to the Wilton DTC
- Ratification will occur in June
- The Platform will be finalized in time for the July Caucus

Separately, there will be a Platform Committee meeting on Jan 18.

2. Nominating Committee

The Nominating Committee unanimously recommends the following candidates for these positions:

- Bob Cohen for Water Commission. This was a position Fred Herot held for many years. The Water Commission's responsibility is the state of the water coming into Wilton.
- Ted Hofstatter for the Water Pollution Control Authority. Fred Herot's term has come to an end. The Wilton DTC commends Fred for his service to the community. The Water Pollution Control Authority's mandate is the state of the water going out of Wilton.

The Wilton DTC unanimously approves the above 2 candidates for their respective positions.

The Nominating Committee is still looking for people for the following position. If anyone knows interested candidates, please let any member of the Nominating Committee know.

- Parking Hearing Officer – Charlie Lewis resigned last year after serving for 7 years

3. By-Laws Committee

Charlie Lewis, Chair of the By-Laws Committee, requests comments to the draft By-Laws presented at the December 14, 2004 Wilton DTC meeting. The draft was completed by Charlie Lewis, Ernie Ricco and Kathee Rabernak.

There will be an in-depth discussion of the By-Laws during the February Wilton DTC meeting. This will be forwarded to the Democratic State Committee in March and approved at the July Caucus.

Please note that the current draft changes the composition of the Nominating Committee to ensure that this committee is not dominated by Wilton DTC members. It proposes membership composed of 9 non-DTC members and a maximum of 5 DTC members.

4. Campaign Committee

There will be volunteer appreciation cocktail reception on Sunday, January 30, 2005 from 3:00pm to 5:00pm at The Grange. Special Guest will be Richard Blumenthal, Connecticut State Attorney General.

Other special guests that we are inviting will be Diane Farrell (4th District, US Congressional Candidate Nov 2004), Arlo Ellison (26th District, State Senatorial Candidate Nov 2004) and Paul Burnham (143rd District, State Congressional Candidate Nov 2004).

Ernie Loser has agreed to single-handedly bear the cost of this event and Barbara Massey Bear has volunteered to organize this event.

Invitations will be mailed out to roughly 60 people: volunteers, contributors, appointed and elected Town and Board officials, as well as all involved in putting out lawn signs.

The Wilton DTC needs volunteers for the following:

- Food Items – every Wilton DTC member should contribute 1 easy edible suitable for a cocktail event
- Stamp and Label Invitations
- Make follow-up calls to approximately 200 people
- Greeters
- Set up – these volunteers should arrive no later than 2:00pm, before the cocktail reception

The Wilton DTC is soliciting naming ideas for the event. Pls email Sharon Grace with ideas.

At the next Wilton DTC meeting, we may present the Democratic candidate for the Wilton First Selectman. Elections for this post and the other Selectmen positions are going to be held next year, 2006. The Wilton DTC fully intends to keep our current 2 seats and win the First Selectman race. The current First Selectman, Paul Hannah, has at times been unresponsive to the community's needs, as exemplified by last year's Montessori debacle and the recent Comstock disregard for the Wilton Children's Center constituent parents.

5. Membership Committee

Toni Lee, Chair of the Membership Committee, called for volunteers to help make phone calls to increase the Democratic ranks within the town. Democratic voter registration reached a record high as a result of last year's Presidential election. Inga Marowitz, Art Shulman and Jon Tan volunteered.

6. Finance Committee

The next fundraiser will be held on the second or third weekend of April. It will be a Saturday morning breakfast with the theme, 'What it means to be a Democrat'. The current thought is that it be a panel discussion made up of the following people: George Jepsen, Diane Farrell, Jim Maloney among others. Suggested moderator is Bill Collins. Alice Ayers will call Bill to see if he is interested.

The Wilton DTC is soliciting naming ideas for the event. Pls email Sharon Grace with ideas.

The November 6, 2004 minutes are approved unanimously. The December minutes will be distributed at the next DTC meeting for approval, together with the January minutes.

Old Business:

Paypal will be implemented as a vehicle for fundraising on the www.wiltondems.org website, as was unanimously agreed in the May 11, 2004 Wilton DTC meeting.

Guest Speaker: Dan Malloy (Democratic Mayor, Stamford)

Dan Malloy has been the Mayor of Stamford for the last 10 years and is running for Governor next year, 2006.

Dan has been in public service most of his life after college. Prior to assuming the position of Mayor of Stamford, he was on the Board of Finance and before that, the Board of Education. He was an Assistant District Attorney in Brooklyn for 4 years before that. As the Assistant DA, he had 22 convictions out of 24 trials.

Dan's focus will be on crime prevention, education and transportation, with an emphasis on having gotten things done in Stamford.

Stamford, in the first 6 months of 2004, was named the safest city in the United States.

Stamford has improved education and increased capital investment for education infrastructure. Through the program Stamford Achieves, it has closed the educational achievement gap for the disadvantaged. Today's annual average investment is between \$22-\$46m, compared to \$5-\$6m average investment 10 years ago. This has been accomplished while having reasonable property taxes. Educational reform requires the governor's leadership and education has fallen in the last 20 years—since a Democrat was last in the Governor's mansion.

Dan commits to a transportation focus, a need at the CT state level, if we want to fix the transportation issues. Stamford lengthened the entry/exit ramps at Exit 8 on I-95 (one of the 16 identified choke points on I-95), decreasing commutation time by 7 minutes in the area. These 16 choke points were identified 20 years ago and today, only Stamford has addressed this. Dan proposes to have a 30-35 mph average speed on I-95 and the Merritt Parkway by easing ingress/egress, in order to improve productivity by decreasing everyone's commutation time. On the rails, Dan will expand and replace fleet cars and have the Federal government mandate electric power. Finally, Dan will change the Department of Transportation's (DOT's) mindset from viewing its riders as a bureaucratic constituency to viewing its riders as a customer.

His philosophy in public service is that complex issues are solved through a series of many actions. There are no quick fixes and if there are candidates that propose quick fixes, like so many of the past elected officials, they are not speaking to the issues. Dan Malloy will always give a straight answer.

The Connecticut Democrats must choose as strong Democratic candidate to retake the Governor's mansion in 2006. Likely Republican contenders are Chis Shays and Nancy Johnson.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:47 pm.