

Wilton Democratic Town Committee
Minutes
December 1, 2009, Meeting Room B, 7:30pm

PRESENT: John Kalamarides, Deborah McFadden, Kelly Franklin, Carol Ball, Ted Hoffstatter, Paul Burnham, John Gardiner, Fred Herot, Ernie Loser, Charlie Lewis, Dan Troph, Tom Burgess, Sharon Grace,
GUESTS: David Franco, Ellen Murphy, Carol Young-Kleinfeld, State Representative Peggy Reeves (143rd), Louise Herot, Donald London

Chair John Kalamarides calls the meeting to order at 7:45pm

APPROVAL OF THE NOVEMBER MINUTES

1 amendment: change lead to led

Motion to approve and second. Motion carries unanimously.

TREASURER'S REPORT

John Kalamarides gives the report: the DTC has approximately \$750 in the bank.

CHAIR'S REPORT

1. January is the DTC caucus and in March we select officers
2. John Kalamarides wants to improve our email list and asks for submissions from people of Democrats.

Kelly suggests we run something in Wilton Patch to get more emails

- keep our name out there.
- Sharon suggests we link it to events we have as part of ads letting people know about what is coming up

SELECTMAN'S REPORT

Ted Hoffstatter gives the report.

1. Plastic Bag ordinance that Ted has been working toward will be taken up on Feb. 1 at the Board of Selectmen's meeting. This ordinance would ban retail plastic bags, but not what you get from the cleaners, the art store, or what you use to put your fruit in. The idea is to switch to cloth reuseable bags. Bill Brennan and Hal Clark are now interested. This will establish Wilton as a leadership town.
2. Troop boxes at town hall and trackside.

DEMOCRATIC STATE CENTRAL REPORT

Ted Hoffstatter gives the report.

With 5 races it is a big year. Sen. Chris Dodd has been a leader on health care.

UPCOMING SPEAKERS

Nominating Committee Report

Paul Burnham gives the report – these are positions to be filled in December.

Nominating had 4 appointed town positions that had to be filled as well as about 4 others to be filled by incumbents if we were to support their reappointments. John Gardiner adds that we had a lot of good people stepping forward to serve, more than one qualified person for each assignment.

Social Services

On Commission on Social Services Judy Zucker is term-limited. She has served with distinction and Steve Lanza's term is up and he has expressed an interest in continuing to serve.

After deliberation, the nominating committee decided that we should recommend Steve's appointment for another 2 year term. He is a valuable addition to that commission in his tenure.

The other candidate is an outstanding young man – Nathaniel Shipp; Betty and Doug Jones are his in-laws. He is about 40, born and raised in Norwalk and has lived in town for 6 or 7 years; he has 2 children. He has been involved in a number of volunteer community organizations: Trackage; Project Return; Development Fund; Fair Housing Advisory Commission for Norwalk; Faith based initiative home ownership program. He is a lawyer (no longer practicing) who works for a title company. We think he would be a tremendous addition.

Deb Moves that Steve Lanza and Nathaniel Shipp be nominated to fill vacancies to social services. Second. Unanimously carries.

Conservation Commission

The nominating committee met with several outstanding candidates. We selected someone new to Wilton: Jeff Coppelman. He moved to Wilton 6 months ago and is married; he grew up in Danbury and is an engineer. On Conservation Commission we don't have too many technical people and that he would be of great service on that commission. His father is a civil engineer and so he is familiar with such aspects of engineering. He would be taking Kate Throckmorton's seat; Kate is term limited.

Deborah McFadden moves to nominate Jeff Coppelman. Second. Motion unanimously carries.

Council on Public Facilities

The nominating Committee recommends three people for renomination:

Rob Sanders

David Waters

Jim Evans

Deborah McFadden nominates all three. Second. Motion unanimously carries.

Historic Property District Commission

(5 members & 3 alternates)

One alt. is a Dem whose term is up today and she is not presenting his name for further term.

They met a number of qualified people. The unanimous view of the nominating committee is that Colleen Fawcett is their choice. She works for social services in Wilton and we don't think there is a conflict. She has a significant interest in Historic Preservation matters.

Deb Nominates Colleen Fawcett for nomination. Second. Unanimously carries.

Parks and Recreation

Jamie Van Acker's term is up. He will have 1 more year and has done a fine job and we have no reason to suggest another name.

Deborah McFadden nominates Jamie Van Acker. Second. Unanimously carries.

In certain cases the Board of Selectmen just reappointed incumbents. Paul Burnham was reappointed to the Employees Retirement Board. Ginny Benin was reappointed to the Council on Ethics. Richard Creeth and Ronald French were reappointed to the Energy Commission.

The Nominating Committee members deserve a hearty congratulations on a job well done.

GUEST SPEAKER

Ned Lamont has put together an exploratory committee to run for governor.

Ned is in this race because the state of CT is bankrupt and Hartford does not seem to know it. They think the recession will end and it will be okay. We've been in a recession before this recession; we will be in it beyond when it ends. But we need to fundamentally change the way we do business. Bob Genario, Gov. Rell's budget director, said CT is in a world of hurt – billions of dollars of deficits as far as the eye can see and that is after the higher tax on the wealthy.

Chris Healy – Republican State Chairman – “Connecticut is an Economic Dead Zone and has been one since 1991”. It has gotten worse in the past 5 years according to John Rowland.

Young people are leaving the state.

Ned has started up a business and created jobs in CT. We don’t need more taxes; but more taxpayers; more jobs.

Issues

1. We are being out smarted and it starts with the governor. Ned thanked a businessman whose family business had been in the state for generations. The businessman said he appreciated that and he never heard that before and used to have a few thousand more people on the payroll; he didn’t threaten to leave send press release like Pratt – it just happened slowly.

Spoke to small business man with small manufacturing plant. Gov. Rick Perry of Texas is calling him urging him to move to Texas. Meanwhile CT is sitting back passively.

2. There are opportunities in this crisis – energy efficiency moneys; high speed rail that could interconnect Springfield, Hartford, Meriden, and NY.

3. Race to the Top – federal education money for the most creative and entrepreneurial states that can fundamentally reform education. The governors of other states are in Washington fighting for that money right now. Our governor is not ambitious.

4. We need to focus on jobs – transit, training, education, energy, and affordable housing must be the focus of a strategy for long term growth. We need to put incentive moneys in a long term job plan to make CT as competitive and entrepreneurial as it has been.

With respect to the other Democrats who are exploring running for governor, we do have good candidates – a great bench as Democrats. Ned likes the guys who have managed something. But one thing you know about Ned is that he isn’t afraid to take on the political establishment. There are problems on both sides of the aisle in Hartford. Ned says we need a little of the “we are in this all together” spirit.

Ned started a policy center with business and labor leaders; they talked about a strategic plan, what is the next economic engine and then the bottom fell out of market. At the end of the day we are all CT citizens. Labor and Business was ready if summoned to come together and make tough choices to get our mojo back.

Deb – CT leads the nation in disparity between suburban and urban areas.

Economics as well as education:

What kind of changes can governors make to create a structure for jobs, asks Fred Herot.

Ned Lamont says it starts with a CEO – start with the universities, not for profits, businesses and labor leaders. Then you have to prioritize; you can't just have a wish list.

Between New London, Yale and UCONN the life sciences and healthcare are strong in Connecticut, as well as financial businesses in this area. Yale is doubling the size of its campus with bio tech – there is an economic cluster growing in bio tech.

Carole Young Kleinfeld asks if Ned will participate in public financing and about the future of citizens election program in CT?

- A. Ned is in exploratory phase and sometime early next year he has to decide whether to file as a candidate – Ned hasn't made up his mind. There are issues:
1. the courts have challenged & and law is up in air;
 2. state finances and we are in trouble;
 3. Got to see what Rs are going to do.
- B. That said, strong believer in Campaign Finance Reform, we don't want Rowland's pay to play, and lobbyist problems. Public Financing is good for democracy because it allows competition.

NedLamont.com

John Kalamarides says Ned had a tremendous groundswell when running for Senator, and asks Ned if he can recreate it.

Ned says it is different. It isn't just about the war and Iraq, but that war affected all other decisions in America. His job now is to focus on what is happening to our state and kids in the cities.

Ned is asked if he has heard from Sen. Lieberman? He called Sen. Lieberman and Sen. Dodd.

Ned says that the foreign policy for CT is trade; we need to be a trade-oriented state. But a tax free port in places like New London, which lost many Pfizer jobs, can be an important piece of our trade if we can integrate rail.

Ned lamont – President Obama is speaking on Afghanistan tonight and Ned thinks we must work with tribal factions, find allies and focus on civil affairs more than armaments.

Ned's campaign contact is Mark Bradley.

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CAMPAIGN COMMITTEE

Deborah McFadden says that there is a meeting on Dec. 8 at her house for everyone to report on what worked and worked didn't. A list of recommendations will be made.

NEW BUSINESS

Carole Young Kleinfeld says Common Cause has a forum Monday night at Norwalk City Hall at 7pm about the citizens election program.

Speak Up Wilton, is Sat. January 23, at Trackside, 9-11am. This is a chance to ask officials and department heads in this town the questions you have.

Adjourned 8:40.

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon Grace, Secretary

Approved, February 2, 2010