

DOWNTOWN INDEPENDENT DEMOCRATS MEETING

Tuesday, November 29, 2006

MINUTES

Present: Sean Sweeney, David Reck, Diane Lapson, Jean Grillo, Adam Silvera, Jim Stratton, Richard Lehrer, Tom Goodkind, Peter Gleason, Julie Menin, Wylie Stecklov, Harold Donahue, Catherine McVay Hughes, Peter Pastor, Diane Stein

David Reck reported on tonight's County Democrats meeting. Discussed the issue of Judicial Delegates for next year. There was a lawsuit that resulted in throwing out the system for picking New York State Supreme Court Judges, and having judicial candidates run for election. The potential problem is that this process requires funding and that only wealthy people would be able to run for SC judge. Several other ways to revamp the system were discussed, including moving the vote to May, or having each Judicial candidate have a slate of Delegates which the voters would vote for, or using this year's Judicial Delegates which would leave DID at a disadvantage since DID did not push for JDs this year and only won a couple.

The next issue on the agenda was voter registration, possibly to be coordinated with NYPIRG. It was suggested that NYU students be targeted for voter registration, but most club members felt that this population would be too transient and would not have a positive impact on local issues.

It was suggested D.I.D. have two mailings in January 2007:

1. Thanking people for voting
2. A mailing for new voters

Opinions were mixed, since some felt it was too far from election time, while others felt it would keep us in the voters' minds.

Jean Grillo said that polling sites are understaffed and there are long lines and the club needs to encourage competent people to work in the polls. Club members discussed the need to have good people both inside and outside the polls on Election Day.

Diane Lapson suggested there could be a Town Hall Meeting for Young People, sponsored by Scott Stringer or some other local politician, to get the youth to register to vote and involve them in local community issues. It was suggested that the Community Center, which should be opening in 2007, could be a venue for registering young people.

Targeting captive audiences in Town Hall forums, PTA meetings, when parents are taking their children to school, etc., could be another way to get people to register to vote.

Sean Sweeney suggested encouraging people to register for a specific Party and not as an Independent in order to vote in the primaries.

David Reck suggested that when we register people, we photocopy the cards and send these people reminders to vote.

There was some discussion about having the DID mailings come later than January, closer to the next election because people may forget about the club if the mailings come too soon, but others thought it would be worth trying this strategy.

Ian Dutton is working on a D.I.D. website which should be mentioned in the Dnotes, since so many people are on the internet now. It was suggested the website could include D.I.D.'s past accomplishments so people could see what we have done for the community.

Peter Pastor from Council Member Alan Gerson's office spoke about two upcoming issues:

1. Resolution 131: Paper Ballots, due to the problems with electronic voting machines
2. The Lower Manhattan Pulmonary Clinic. Luis Reyes, the Deputy Chief of Staff, was inviting people to a meeting on Thursday, November 30, 2006 at 6:00 p.m. at 250 Broadway, to discuss this.

The need for tracking to supplement the WTC Health Registry was discussed.

Jean Grillo mentioned that CERT was conducting its own Health Registry to find out who had special needs in case of an emergency.

The next D.I.D. meeting will be at The Hallmark, on January 29, 2007 at 7:30 p.m.