

**Marlborough Democratic City Committee Minutes
Hybrid Meeting-Zoom/In-Person
New Horizons
420 Hemingway Street
Marlborough, MA
Monthly Meeting March 11, 2023**

Officers: Dan Caruso, Chair; Barbara Allen, Co-Chair; Debbie Doucette, Secretary; George LaVenture, Treasurer; Rosalind Baker, Affirmative Action Chair

Attending Members: Debbie Doucette, Elaine Chont, Bob Burke, Alex Williamson, Alice Wertheimer, Michelle Bodin-Hettinger, Diane Stevens, Babs Fenby, Carmine Gentile-State Rep 13th Middlesex District, Samantha Perlman-City Council

On-Line: Dan Caruso, Ed Pastor, Teria Ellis

Attending Non-Members: Kara Le Treize, Cathy Niski, Chris Lorant

Speaker: Stephanie Nakajima, Exec Director, Medicare for All/Mass-Care

Time of Meeting: 10:02am

Minutes: Both February & March Minutes will be approved at the April 8th meeting

Stephanie Nakajima became interested in Mass Care due to a pre-existing condition (asthma) of her own and could not get insurance because of this.

Some Stats: 41% of MA residents struggle for health care coverage

27% have high deductibles

31% of average household budget and keeps going up. Increasing faster than salaries.

Many people go into bankruptcy because of the high health costs.

House Bill #1239 Medicare for All is in congress. Jamie Eldridge is leading bill #S.744 thru the Senate

Both our State Rep, Carmine Gentile and our State Senator Jamie Eldridge are supporting this bill. As of March 11th our other State Rep Danielle Gregoire has not spoken in support. Babs Fenby motioned that we write a letter of request to Danielle to support the Medicare for All-Mass Care. Michelle Bodin-Hettinger 2nd the motion. (ACTION-Dan?)

Announcement: Tony Badman passed away 2 weeks ago. He was a member of MDCC and chair of the MDCC a dozen years back

Treasurer Report: No Report

Membership: The chair, Barbara Allen, is still in Australia, but was able to send in her report. Her main point is to have Ward 5 voter list sent out to our members to see if any of us have connections to the democratic voters. (Action)

Political Action: Roz Baker may step in as a temporary chair of Political Action. Roz and Dan Caruso will meet regarding future plans for Political Action (**Action**). There is a need to have more speakers. Anyone who has friends or contacts who may be involved in government or politics is welcome to come in to speak to our group. Doug Pizzi, a member of MDCC, is involved with Massachusetts conservation land and would be informational to our group.

MDCC Caucus will be held at Kane School on 6/17/2023 at 10 AM assuming that it is available.

Mass Democratic Convention on 9/23/2023 at Tsongas Arena in Lowell

Public Relations: Alice W. and Alex W. are working on MDCC website, updating content. Needs new ward map. We need to be connected to the Dispatch for meetings and events.

Other: Michelle Bodin- Hettinger will have the MDCC Mission Statement at our next meeting

Statehouse Round-up:

Carmine Gentile – Is currently Vice Chair of the Higher Education Committee.

The supplemental budget will have a hundred million dollars for free meals for kids at school. Additional Education money will be allocated to pay for free tuition for all Community Colleges.

The method of remotely using the Notarization Stamp will continue with a new stamp which will include the beginning and end date of their commission.

Governor Healey received \$1 billion in Housing for the entire state.

Carmine has joined the Progressive Caucus Steering Committee.

A week before April School vacation State Budget will be available with amendments to the budget made in the following 2 weeks.

In May the Senate will go through the budget.

City Hall Round-Up:

Samantha Perlman – This coming Monday, March 13th, there will be a vote in Urban Affairs Council to require Affordable Housing.

---- 15% of new housing to be affordable

---- 20% if over 18 houses are built by developer

Funeral Home property downtown Marlborough has been bought (?) by developer to build 99 Units with 28 parking spaces & space for mixed use on first floor. Parking is a major concern. Units are all rental apartments.

McGee Farm Condo construction is going forward.

School Dept:

Michelle Bodin-Hettinger – Beginning school budget.

The following areas in our school require “High Needs”

- Special Ed/Non English speaking kids
- Hire a Business Manager
- High Poverty

The plus is that Marlborough has a high tax base

ADJOURNED: 11:50AM

Next Meeting 04/08/2023