

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN REFORM DEMOCRATIC CLUB
MEMBERSHIP MEETING, Wednesday, June 8, 2022
Via Zoom Electronic Communication

President Virginia Krompinger opened the meeting with remarks about the excellent staff that Assemblyman Jeffrey Dinowitz has pulled together. She cited two examples: Randi Martos, his chief of staff, who assisted an elderly constituent in getting \$9,000 that had been stolen from her account returned, and Teri Colon, who got a tenant's toilet repaired by her landlord who had refused to do the work. She also remarked on his Puppy Mill bill. This excellent work is why we should continue to support Assemblyman Dinowitz.

Vice-President Helen Morik raised the issue of gun violence. She believes the club should issue a statement about it. This topic will be taken up during New Business.

President Krompinger continued with her remarks. She spoke about the mailer recently sent by the Board of Elections about the June 28th primary. Many election districts have changed, as well as some polling locations, so this mailer should be reviewed before voting. She noted that early voting begins on Friday, June 18, 2022. She encourages club members to patronize businesses and support organizations whose views or actions on public issues align with those of the club. She mentioned the Riverdale Neighborhood House pride event at 11 am on Sunday and the Blackstone Grill's upcoming oyster event.

Mark Marinkovic, the new field director for the Dinowitz campaign, was present and made a call for volunteers. Folks are needed for phone banking, street visibility, door knocking, and postcard writing. An email with full information and a space to check off activities and dates for which you are available will be in the email. Randi added that many of the activities can be done from home or at the campaign office.

President Krompinger then opened the floor for questions. Bonnie Smyer asked about polling sites. Polling sites can be found on the website vote.nyc. Randi noted that the Board of Elections mailer tells you where your polling place is; Virginia held hers up to the camera and pointed out where the polling location information is listed. Ned Klein asked if there was any particular activity where the campaign needed help. Randi and Mark said all the activities need volunteers. Neil Dick pointed out that the postcards are very effective and he had enjoyed doing them. Daniel Barnett asked if there was a need for data entry. Ms. Martos reported that the phone banking is computerized and is automatically recorded, and Mark said he would look into whether any other areas needed data entry.

Campaign Reports

Sara Liss, endorsed district leader candidate: Sara has been doing a great deal of engagement with folks she knows from her synagogue, phone banking, and giving talks to high school students. She will ask Neil for his advice on post cards! She has noticed that public safety and COVID are topics on voters' minds. Vice-President Bruce Feld asked Sara if people know that there is a primary and about the party positions on the ballot. Generally, before the Board of Elections mailer, people didn't know about the primary, but they do now. The more politically engaged knew of the primary all along, but didn't know about the two dates. She's doing a lot of educating about the party positions.

Bill Weitz, endorsed district leader candidate: Next Tuesday evening the NY Philharmonic will be at Van Cortlandt Park. This is a good opportunity to attend and hand out Jeff Dinowitz's literature to the crowd. Petitions for the state senate and congressional seats are due on Friday. If you didn't petition, you must file by Friday with the Board of Elections. Bill also mention a *Daily News* political article he had read.

Johanna Lujan Edmondson, endorsed state committee candidate: made remarks regarding her activities and observations during her campaign.

Michael Heller, : Mike spoke briefly about his campaign efforts including making calls on Tuesday nights at the campaign office. He then went on to explain how phone banking works and how easy it is. He encouraged others to volunteer. He also encouraged people to campaign at the concert next Tuesday, June 14th at the concert.

Legislative Update

Jeff Dinowitz reported that he held a Zoom town hall meeting on Tuesday, June 7 . A few of the items touched on at that town hall were: gun laws were passed that not a single Republican supported; women's reproductive rights; expanded hours for speed cameras; a bill stopping landlords from charging for air conditioners even though tenants are footing the bill for all expenses related to them. Unfortunately, the NY Health Act did not pass.

Jeff also thanked everyone who has volunteered for his campaign. He further noted that the Working Families Party is sending out primary literature even though they are not Democrats. He opined that club-endorsed candidates would do well. The League of Women Voters wants to overturn the district lines even though they are a good government organization. Residents of the Whitehall are now voting in Knolls Crescent because they were added to the Palisade Avenue election district. Whitehall residents used to vote at JHS/PS 141. Michael Friedman said he used to walk 10 minutes to his polling place (he lives near Sedgwick Avenue), now there's a staircase in his path. People now pass by the old voting place on their way to the staircase. Michael also raised the issue of the removal of school superintendents by the mayor.

Helen asked about the potential for the Supreme Court to overturn current NYS gun laws and whether or not any of the gun laws that passed recently do anything to anticipate this possibility.

Miguelina Camilo State Senate Campaign (33rd District)

Sam Liedtka, Ms. Camilo's campaign manager, then made some brief remarks. He asked for the club's help in promoting her. He asked club members to let him know of any events that Ms. Camilo should attend to get her name out to the public. He pointed out that she was running in Riverdale where she has lived for the past ten years. Her campaign plans to ramp up engagement after the assemblyman is re-elected. Mr. Liedtka will put his contact information in the chat box.

Various club members then discussed whether and what kind of statement the club should make on gun issues. A motion was made to write a statement on the issue of gun control, particularly including a ban on assault rifles. Helen seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. President Krompinger asked Ms. Morik to draft a statement and circulate to a few members for their thoughts on it.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:38 p.m.

Minutes taken by Recording Secretary Nona Louise Dunbar