

**Boston Ward 5 Democratic Committee
May 19, 2020 Meeting Minutes**

Per the notice sent to membership, due to the declared State of Emergency, and the Governor's Order banning gatherings of more than 10 persons, and upon the advice of the State Democratic Party, this monthly meeting of the Boston Ward 5 Democratic Committee was held online via Zoom.

Sharon Durkan (The Chair) called the meeting to order at 7 pm.

Speaker: Massachusetts Attorney General Maura Healey

AG Healey spoke to the Committee about changes the Office of the Attorney General (AGO) has made in order to continue to function during the COVID-19 state of emergency, as well as new initiatives and tools they have made available to serve constituents with COVID-19 related needs and questions. These include:

- The AGO has gone virtual, which is working well.
- They have increased support to the AG's constituent hotline.
- They've issued emergency regulations and legislation.
- They've created a website intended to be a hub of information for first line workers looking for support such as emergency child care, a place to stay between shifts or to quarantine away from family, self care, finding and wearing PPE.
- They have put up information intended to support workers and small businesses.

The AGO's outreach to minority and immigrant communities has increased to provide them with necessary information and support regarding emergency related protections against debt collection, evictions, turning off utilities, and dealing with ICE.

AG Healey also spoke about her support for vote by mail initiatives, and other opportunities to make the vote more accessible, which have only become more necessary during the state of emergency.

AG Healey answered questions from Ward 5 Democratic Committee members.

Speaker: Dr. Robbie Goldstein – Candidate for 8th Congressional District Seat

Opening remarks from The Chair:

Dr. Robbie Goldstein is an infections disease doctor running for the Congressional Seat for Massachusetts' 8th Congressional District. The two candidates will be addressing the Ward 5 Democratic Committee separately, on different days.

Candidate Goldstein: He was inspired by the example of his parents to help and serve his community. He came to MA 20 years ago, and wants to care for the most vulnerable members of our community, who are left out of the political and other processes. On his

medical practice, he specializes in outreach and treatment of patients with HIV/AIDS, and to meet the medical needs of the LGBTQ community. He recognizes, however, that the challenges in these areas are much larger than he can deal with as a physician. The barriers to care and health for these communities require solutions from Washington. Healthcare is a human right and must not something you can or can't afford. Candidate Goldstein promises to bring a fresh perspective on the role of government in these areas, to bring bold leadership to take on the issues we face as a nation, from climate change to the current pandemic.

Candidate Goldstein highlighted a few differences between himself and the other Democrat in this race – Rep. Stephen Lynch. Lynch has run on a platform as being against LGBTQ rights. He's also a pro-life democrat and votes that way. Lynch voted against the Affordable Care Act. In particular, Rep Lynch hasn't taken any leadership positions or done anything to drive change for his district. The three major issues for his campaign are healthcare, climate change, fixing our transportation system. They're interconnected. Candidate Goldstein wants the opportunity lead the change we want to see.

Candidate Goldstein answered questions from Ward 5 Democratic Committee members.

Membership Report

Sharon Durkan nominated Sharon Hucul for Associate Membership, which motion was seconded by Coleman Lynds.

Sharon Durkan nominated Enid Pope for Associate Membership, which motion was seconded by Gretchen Bennett.

Diane Barry nominated Elizabeth Leary for Associate Membership, which motion was seconded by Pat Amend.

Sharon Durkan moved that we vote for all three by acclamation, which motion was seconded by Gretchen Bennett. Motion passed. Sharon Hucul, Enid Pope and Elizabeth Leary were elected as Associate Members of the Ward 5 Democratic Committee by acclamation.

Approval of Minutes

The Secretary noted an edit that needs to be made in the minutes to fix the spelling of Sandra Singer's name in the Attendees Guest list. Molly Hitt moved that the April minutes be accepted with that edit, which motion was seconded by Gretchen Bennett. The minutes were adopted.

Speaker: Gretchen Bennett on Nationwide Project to Protect the Vote

Vote suppression activities are on the rise because the GOP believes that putting a ballot

in every voter's hands will put them out of office. They want all of the elections to be like the recent primary in Wisconsin – choose between your health and your vote. Give up and don't vote.

GOP official Justin Clark has revealed the GOP's plan to expand and fund voter suppression efforts in our country. The GOP plans to take over local legislatures and election supervisors and act on a state and local level to increase the barriers to voting by Democrats and communities of color. What they have discovered, and intend to target, is that the further down the list of election officials they are able to exert influence or control, the more vulnerable the process is to interference without visibility. The GOP hasn't been able to do this yet in a coordinated way, but there are a multitude of fake non-profits, which are working locally to weaken access to the vote in their areas. What's new is that the groups are now beginning to coordinate with the POTUS campaign and the national and state GOP infrastructure.

Fair Fight is doing a great job. It has a great opposition research team, and they've been able to uncover and explain the three part campaign the GOP is undertaking to suppress the vote: (1) Policy, (2) Litigation and (3) Message Amplification. They have targeted 15 states for concerted vote suppression activities, and to make those activities less noticeable to the public. They're working to re-arrange voting sites so that white communities voting in 15 minutes and communities of color take all day. They've filed lawsuits at making voting more difficult and have put 19 law firms on retainer for this purpose. The RNC and fake nonprofits all use the same lawyers.

Fair Fight is focusing on Arizona, Colorado, Florida, Georgia, Maine, Michigan, Minnesota, North Carolina, New Hampshire, New Mexico, Nevada, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Virginia and Wisconsin. If you'd like to help, please email the Chair.

Announcements

- Phone Banking – we'll email about opportunities.
- Kathy Judge – post cards to Florida. Bob Binney and Kathy are hosting a virtual post card writing party. Vote by mail and remote volunteer initiatives – the purpose is to send post cards to registered voters in Florida to encourage them to enroll in the Florida Vote By Mail initiative. Sponsored by Step Up and Swing Left. Looking for people to join the effort! Packets of 30 stamped postcards plus instructions and an address list. Cost of a packet is to be covered by the volunteer: \$26 for each packet. Contact Kathy or Bob if you'd like a packet.
- The EC is going to work on a strategy for Ward 5 for election activities now that things are virtual.
- Pat Amend: phone bank to support voter registration.
- Rob Whitney & Pat Amend: Depending on what's going on in October, we should consider doing some in person canvassing in Maine and New Hampshire. Those are both swing states. If it's possible and it's open the Committee might get a bus or two and go help. We could do a phone bank up there. Kathy Judge: we could also car pool rather than take buses. It might be more economical.

Markey Regional Field Director Willie Burnley

Senator Markey is trying to do as much as possible to see that people are healthy and safe. He co-sponsored a bill with Senator Sanders for a basic income during the pandemic of \$2000. He is working to create community through virtual means, and to do that as locally as possible.

Rob Whitney: BBA and Constitution Society – Panel Discussion on June 18th or the 25th, on Protecting the Right to Vote during the Corona Virus Pandemic: The speakers will be Quentin Palfrey, Brenda Wright of DEMOS, Sofia Hall of Lawyers for Civil Rights; and Genevieve Nardot of Protecting Democracy. This event will be free and open to everyone via Zoom.

Bob Binney – Treasurer’s Report

Ward 5 Treasurer Bob Binney reported that we have about \$3500 in the bank. He has sent notices to members regarding payment of dues. If dues are an issue, waivers are available, or a cost adjustment to let you pay what you can. Ordinary dues are \$60. Dues for first year members and students is \$25.

Motion to Adjourn

Bob Binney moved that we adjourn this meeting which motion was seconded by Diane Barry. Motion passed and the meeting was adjourned.

Attendance

<u>Members</u>	<u>Guests</u>
Pat Amend	
Hillary Bacon-Gabrieli	
Diane Barry	
Gretchen Bennett	
Bob Binney	Lauren Brody
Alex Bok	Megan Gallagher
Kenzie Bok	Juan Gallego
Olivia Cifrino	Robbie Goldstein
David Crossman	A.G. Maura Healey
Jeremy Cushman	Tara Healey
Sharon Durkan	Deborah Holt
Jason Ewas	Matt Maddalo
Kate Gallivan	Steve Owens
Natalie Heer	Sandra Singer
Molly Hitt	
Sharon Hucul	

Kathy Judge Cindy Korb Carol Krupa Elizabeth Leary Jay Livingstone Julie Livingstone Coleman Lynds Dan Lyon Pat McDonough Kristen Mobilia Michael Pizziferri Enid Pope Dan Smith Susan Smith Rob Whitney David Xiao Adrienne Zak	
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