

Boston Ward 5 Democratic Committee

March 18, 2025, Meeting

The Boston Ward 5 Democratic Committee was held in person and online via Zoom.

Bob Binney called the meeting to order, giving notice, per MA law, that the meeting was being recorded.

Membership Matters

Meeting Minutes Review & Approval

The January and February minutes were sent out by Shari Franzetta, as part of the meeting packet. Noting that they had been carefully reviewed by him, Shari, Rob Whitney and Pat Amend, Bob Binney called for a vote to approve the January minutes, and then the February minutes. The committee approved both. Kathy Judge didn't recall receiving them, and thus, could not vote. Bob said he would indicate she was abstaining, send them to her, and update them as necessary.

Associate Member Nominations **Elected Member**

Shyam Gopaladesikan, who is eligible for membership, was nominated. Next month, the committee will vote on his status as an associate member. Separately, Rob Whitney nominated Mark Mantell to be temporary Deputy Secretary, (or note-taker) in Shari's absence. The committee approved by acclamation.

Treasurer's Report

Rob Whitney reported the following

General Financial Status

-Current Balance (Citizens Bank Account): \$4,236 (As of 3/18/25)

Membership Financial Activity

-No. of Members who have paid 2025 Dues: 12

-Dues Payments for 2025: \$840.

-Dues for 2025 are payable now

-Members can pay via links on the website, or by check, additional donations are always welcome

-Can't pay the full amount: contact Bob and/or Rob or Hilary

-THE WARD 5 WEBSITE LINK FOR PAYING DUES SECURELY ONLINE:

-Visit the Home Page at <http://bostonward5dems.org>

-Click on the link "How to Pay Your Dues if You're a Member," to connect with ActBlue

-You'll see "Donate to Boston Ward 5 Democratic Committee"

General Membership Dues: \$60 First Year Membership: \$25; Student: \$25

-There's no \$60 option at ActBlue, but there's an "Other" category

-Sharon Durkan will fix the link to include a \$60 option

-Ward 5 pins are available for members who want them

Other Items/Events

Ward 5 Caucus, Saturday, April 5th, at the Old South Church, 645 Boylston Street

- Begins at 9 a.m. (not 10 as in previous years). Doors open at 8:30
- We will elect delegates to the MassDems Convention, September 13th, in Springfield
- Bob Binney: encourage others to come, as we did not meet our delegate quota last year
- His wife encouraged him to go to a caucus, and that's what inspired him to join Ward 5
- Rob Whitney: the notice has appeared in *The Beacon Hill Times*
- Pat Amend: It's also posted on the website
- Afterward: head to Boston Common for the Hands Off! Demonstration

Mayor Wu Testifying Before Congress

- Bob Binney: the Mayor did an amazing job

Key Upcoming Elections

- The Wisconsin Supreme Court election, and three special elections—two in Florida, and one in New York
- Bob Binney: show support, with postcards, or in any other way

Local and National Organizing

- The Boston Ward Dems Coalition in Action is being organized with Wards 5, 1, 4, 10, 11, 13, 15, 17, 19, and 21
- Gretchen Bennett: there are many ways to get involved
- Bob Binney: will send out more information and updates
- Kate Gallivan: the Ides of March postcard campaign continues
- The idea is to inundate the White House

Guest Speakers

Will Brownsberger, MA Senate President Pro Tempore

- Asked members what they want to talk about
- He's been hearing "make it stop"
- Feels sanguine about protecting rights to the people of MA—but immigrants ...
- Major concern: funds MA has will be drastically reduced—15% to 20% of the budget comes from the government
- Support special election candidates, and help the Democrats win back Congress in 2026
- Gretchen Bennett: are the MA House and Senate working together, now that there's a "common enemy"
- Answer: The last session was rough, but most things got done, including bills on housing, climate, economic development, maternal health, liquor licenses
- Pat Amend: his website, WillBrownsberger.com, very useful
- Sharon Durkan: inspired her to start her Substack posts; thanks for being so accessible

- Bob Binney: explain the position he took on the Mayor Wu's proposal to push a greater share of the city's property tax burden onto commercial owners
- Sided with commercial real estate, not his constituents?
- Answer: Like other cities, property tax assessment has been a "disaster" in Boston for 50 years
- Little connection between valuations and assessments; politically powerful neighborhoods had lower assessments
- Currently: residential properties assessed at 100% of valuation; businesses up to 175%
- The state audits valuations every five years
- Voted against the measure to stick with that model, as residents would see about a 9% increase

-Cited two posts on his website

-Bob Binney: what should Democrats be doing ... change the way they engage people?

-Answer: There are some difficult issues where we need a course correction

-One may be climate change; pursue it with less friction from high gas and electric bills

-Abigail Gabrieli: concerned that people sell location data, with respect to those traveling out of state for reproductive and gender affirmative care

-Sharon Durkan: as a City Councilor, she supports that protection

-Answer: Historically, sociopaths and people with no empathy are voted in sometimes

-Our job is to get them out of power

-The larger group wants to work together and respect differences so we can get back on track

-Kristen Mobilia: we need a clear message

-People are hungry for one

Sharon Durkan, City Councilor District 8

-Signature season starts April 30

-Thanked the committee for previous support

-Serves as chair of the Council's committees on Planning, Development and Transportation, and COVID Recovery

-She is running for reelection; asks for the committee's support, once again

-Shared how she ended up on Fox & Friends, and had to report death threats to police

-People like AOC and Representative Crocket, who are trying to shape our message, are dealing with this

-There's a cost to speaking up

-Community is especially important right now, when people lose their housing or assistance

A motion was made to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried, meeting adjourned.

Attendance

Members	Guests
<p data-bbox="180 405 305 432"><u>In Person</u></p> <p data-bbox="180 436 391 768">Pat Amend Gretchen Bennett Bob Binney David Crossman Sharon Durkan Kate Gallivan Mark Mantell Lucy Rivera Rob Whitney Kelly Zeilman</p> <p data-bbox="180 806 269 833"><u>Online</u></p> <p data-bbox="180 840 550 1171">Abigail Gabrieli (she/her) (Me) Hilary Bacon Gabrieli Patrick Hickox Sharon Hucul Katherine Judge Kristen Mobilia Hermal Sampat Susan Smith Nancy Street (she/her) Bridget Williams</p>	<p data-bbox="773 369 891 396"><u>In Person</u></p> <p data-bbox="773 401 1016 564">Julian Achatz Will Brownsberger Mary Garippo Syam Gopaladesikan Anthony Baez</p>