**The Lakewood Democratic Club**

**Minutes of Regular Meeting held January 26, 2023
Lakewood Women’s Pavilion & Online space at zoom.us**

**CALL TO ORDER**: The meeting was called to order at 7:09pm by President Erik Meinhart. Officers present were First Vice-President Maureen Dostal, Second Vice-President Jeff Pigott, Treasurer Catie McMahon and Secretary Nicole Parke. The President chaired the meeting. The Secretary took notes.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** The Club said the Pledge of Allegiance together.

**APPROVAL of the MINUTES**: The body approved the minutes from the November 17, 2022 meeting. Maureen Dostal moves. Grant Mackay seconds.

**HOUSEKEEPING:** We have a packed house. We are no longer putting the Zoom attendees up on the screen or allowing them to ask questions. If you’re on Zoom you can see us but we can’t see you.

We do not have refreshments tonight. We will be sending out a survey in the next week to get your input on meetings, food, etc.

The club will be socializing at Sauced after the meeting.

**RECOGNITION OF NOTABLES -** Lakewood School Board Member Mike Callahan, Lakewood School Board Member Nora Katzenberger, Lakewood City Councilperson Jason Shachner, Lakewood City Councilperson Kyle Baker, State Representative Mike Skindell, Lakewood City Councilperson Tristan Rader, Lakewood City Councilperson Cindy Marx, State Senator Nickie Antonio, Judge Thomas O’Malley, North Olmsted Councilperson Chris Glassburn.

**CANDIDATES: For first hello, say a few words, up to 3 minutes.**

Grant Mackay - lots of open seats in 2024, people aging out of system, over 70 can’t rerun. I was club officer for 10 years, passed out thousands of sample ballots. I am criminal defense attorney but have represented in all aspects of law. I am empathetic individual, Guardian ad Litem, against death penalty, “No Bill”: need to remove from record when people are found not guilty/dismissed of charges.

Kira Krivosh - Magistrate by day, nonprofit leader by night. Lakewood part of home. Husband raised here, graduated from Lakewood schools, family businesses here that have supported many Democrats and nonprofits. I used to be on Citizens Committee for Lakewood Animal Shelter. With Senator Nickie Antonio, I started “Giving Tree” project which provided protective masks at no cost. Being invested in community is part of being a judge. I am published author, have published over 10 articles & publications. I teach CLEs. Under Judge Thomas O’Malley, I was able to look at outstanding warrants and make sure they were represented by public defender. I’m looking at General Divsion. Really excited!

Carl Mazzone - I was last here in person in 2019 when we were reorganizing Ward 17 Dem Club. I’m currently president of Ward 17 Dem Club. I was previously on [CCDP] Central Committee, currently on [CCDP] Exec. Committee, I am assistant prosecutor, live in westpark with fiance Kim, and two kids. I coach baseball in puritas league. My daughter loves gymnastics. It’s really important that we as a county pick the right people to fill seats in 2024. After that election we will have turned over almost half of bench. We need people who are young, passionate, experienced. Will be entrusted to handle the county’s most sensitive cases. Next group of judges will be making critical decisions about county. Justice Center? Jail? I am active in community, sharing programs and what the court is doing. If you are on Exec Committee, you should have gotten letter from me in mail.

Molly Murphy - currently Magistrate in juvenile court, worked at public defender’s office in law school, then prosecutor. I have prosecuted in front of 31 of 34 judges. I am passionate about mental health and drug docket.

Jennifer McTernan - criminal defense attorney in Cuyahoga County, have my own practice, this year will be a decade! Grew up on the east side, went to Brush High School, have been resident of lakewood for many years. Also considering common please judge.

Ray Tarasuck - (rhymes with Jurassic), grew up in Youngstown in Canfield, had stay-at-home mom & dad was industrial tool salesman, grandfather was steelworker. I was first in family to go to college, only one to go to law school. Looking to run for Common Pleas Court, been practicing law for 28 years. Started practice as criminal defender in Youngstown, went to drug courts in Mahoning County, moved to Cleveland to do civil litigation and government affairs. Career spans everything, have argued in all kinds of courts. Been involved in politics for 30 years, was in Young Dems of Mahoning Valley as Treasurer, became Treasurer of Mahoning County Democratic Party, has been on [CCDP] Executive Committee here.

**WELCOME NEW MEMBERS:** Colleen Carlyle, Mike Krause

**CLUB BUSINESS:** Moment of silence for club member Barb Bingle, who passed away after a brief bout with cancer.

Sam Salim: I met Barb here at this club. She passed less than 3 months after diagnosis with stage 4 cancer.

**PROGRAM: Update from Local Electeds**

**State Senator Nickie Antonio -** we have boxed water! hi to everyone, hi to those on Zoom.

Just drove here from Columbus.

Will try not to take thunder from Rep Skindell, lots happening in Ohio House.

Even when we serve in minority, good things can happen. Stay positive.

We are on the frontlines of being defenders of democracy. This is not hyperbole; it’s the truth. Please know this and do your best to stay engaged, stay involved, educate your friends and family.

Everything thats happening right now is intended to discourage us, to make us walk away.

With like-minded folks, we can join together and we can make a difference.

Benjamin Franklin said “you have a republic if you can keep it.”

I just finished two days of meetings with my caucus in the [Ohio] Senate. We went over our priorities. We’re figuring out how to strategize. We had a very positive two days. We have 7 members out of 33 people in the Senate. Some are calling us the “Magnificent 7.”

How can we possibly get anything done? [Ohio] House Minority Leader Russo & I have been talking over the last few days. Very honored that my colleagues decided to make me Senate Minority Leader. She has 32 members. Hoping we can be 39 members by standing together. Raise our voice united.

A few years ago, we all stood against budget that included anti-labor elements. We knew the Senate President wanted to say it was “bipartisan.” I believe our strong stance was what got him to come back to the table.

We have started working on the budget, even though it technically starts in the House.

I have a few legislative priorities:

* end death penalty; Ted Celeste was already working on this when i joined the House in 2011. Last General Assembly, had one of the most bipartisan efforts. I had Republican cosponsor in House and Senate. We ran out of time. We have momentum. We have not had executions under Gov DeWine’s watch. Executions nearly impossible b/c can’t get the drugs. Drug companies do not want their drugs used for this.
* end statue of limitations for rape and sexual assault; we were able to move the needle from 25 to 30 years for some cases. Discussion has been productive but haven’t accomplished yet.
* LGBTQ Fairness Act; somehow, things feel more contentious and dangerous for LGBT folks now. Small factions of extremists have decided that another way to divide and conquer is to create fear and spread myths of LGBT folks. Especially Trans people, who are most at risk for violence. This is exactly the time to introduce this legislation! We need to have conversations that in a democracy, everyone should be able to be their authentic selves without fear. Ohio Chamber of Commerce and Ohio Manufacturing Association supporting the bill, and more than a thousand companies, who already have LGBT protections in their entities. This is also about economic advancement. If we pass Fairness Act, we are a lot closer to saying we are open and welcome in Ohio, as Gov DeWine likes to say.

These are my priorities; we have other priorities as well.

Ultimately, we want a budget that works for everyone.

**State Representative Mike Skindell -**

It was great listening to all the work that Senator Antonio is doing, and how we can work together.

I want to recognize Former First Lady of Ohio Dagmar Celeste is here with us tonight.

When Dick Celeste was Governor, Dagmar was one of the strongest advocates for mental health, addiction services, and ending capital punishment. They made profound changes in delivery of human services. Republicans have tried to undo a lot of what the Celeste administration did.

We can also learn a lot from the organizing efforts of the Celestes! They worked to increase Democratic turnout. They won many elections when other Democrats were losing in ohio.

We had interesting beginning in Ohio House! At end of December 2022, we had lame duck. Republicans were working on really bad bills, like anti-CRT, anti-trans, pro-guns, anti-abortion. They have proposed constitutional amendment that would make it harder for citizens to pass a state constitutional amendment. Currently, all you need is 50% +1. They wanted to make it one of the strictest in the nation at 60%. They wanted to prevent minimum wage, reproductive healthcare, redistricting amendments that could be coming forward. Also wanted to consolidate education legislation under the Governor, and not under the state schoolboard. There are efforts to make “backpack” bill which would erode public education by giving kids money to go wherever they want. A lot of it was driven by 12-14 extremist Republican members of Ohio House. Other Republicans didn’t even like it.

Republicans get to select Speaker of Ohio House. Most Republicans would rally around one person. In caucus, nominated one of the most extreme/far right members, Derek Merrin (from Toledo area). He wanted to attack labor organizations, reproductive healthcare. One of proposals this week was that only type of prayer that could be said in Ohio House is Christian prayer. Their “christianity” is nothing like the Christianity that I was brought up with. Also had initiative to allow members to carry guns on House floor. Other nominees for Speaker were Jason Stephens (from Lawrence County) & Phil Plummer (corrupt sheriff). Plummer joined with Merrin, who got the votes in caucus. He had 43 of 67 votes. There was outrage by Democrats, partners. Effort started to see if Stephens would join with Democrats to be elected as Speaker. Has not happened ever? Jason Stephens got 22 Republican votes & 30-some votes from Democrats to become Speaker. Merrin would say “Republicans should not work with Democrats at all, no matter what.” Jason Stephens would always be friendly with Democrats and work with Democrats. Have worked with him on bills/resolutions previously. Difference in personality and respect. With Stephens as speaker, have been able to block extremism. Stephens is allied with labor. Believes we should be working for the people and not pushing extremist agenda. Stephens wants to strengthen programs that we like.

Pleased with how things are going. I know we will have challenges but hope we can join with Senate Dems. Stephens has to work with Democrats or he could lose is Speaker seat!

I will be on Finance Committee (now 16 years), ranking on two finance subcommittees (infrastructure, transportation), civil justice committee, government oversight, JCAR, power signing board.

I have been working for 21 years on LGBT Fairness Act. Republican Brett Hillyer has been co-sponsor.

I have been working on Ohio Earned Income Tax Credit. We have one of the weakest in the nation. We didn’t have one until a couple years ago. It should be refundable but it’s not. It incentivizes work and provides tax credit to working poor.

I’m working on bill that promotes democracy. “permanent voter absentee list”. People will automatically get absentee ballot application mailed to them 45 days before election.

I have a bill on workers’ rights - deals with predictive scheduling in the workplace. Some workers don’t get schedules until 1-3 days before schedule begins. Then they can be canceled at last minute.

Some people may have heard that I have applied to Public Utilies Commission of Ohio. This would be to fill vacant “Democratic seat.” The Commission has authority to approve or disapprove utility rates. We’ve had very corrupt Public Utilities Commission. 4 of us nominated (including Jeff Crossman), Governor will make appt. Probably long-shot that Jeff or I will get it. Someone from Consumer Council would be good. I don’t anticipate leaving General Assembly.

**Tristan Rader, Lakewood City Council At-Large -**

I’ve been on Council for 6 years, but 4 in covid, so this is really only 3rd year right?

lakewoodoh.gov - pay attention to it. We have ADA survey on how to make city services more accessible to everyone, and bike & scooter survey!

I’m Chairman of Public Works & Sustainability, also work in sustainable space.

Lakewood tree canopy had suffered. Currently at 20% tree canopy. Need to get to 33%.

Will be hiring urban forester this year. Doing applications for grants, trying to be biodiverse.

Climate Action Plan. Spent the last year working on it. Will be before Council in February. Will be before my committee in March.

NOACA committee - folks showing up to those meetings who believe climate change is a hoax. Need people to come and show support for us. We have clipboard to collect names and get you info to get you invited to committee.

**Kyle Baker, Lakewood City Council Ward 1 -**

Ward 1 is roughly from Woodward to Rocky River.

Public Safety Committee - enforcing speed limits. Seems like people are driving faster. Data showed that speeding tickets were down in 2020. In 2021 still pretty low. As parent of young child, worry about kids. People fly. Gathered data on school zones, especially on Clifton. Over 25% of people in Lincoln school zone were going more than 10 mph over limit. At Emerson, 40%. One option to have dedicated patrol for speed enforcement in school zones; could also install cameras but need to figure out legalities.

Can nominate your street for Traffic Calming. Also looking for more signs to show how fast you’re going.

Increasing residents & homeowners’ access to solar power.

How to slow people down? enforcement, and street planning.

City of Cleveland recently passed complete & green streets ordinance. Have to give public opportunity to comment.

Working with Councilmen Bullock & Rader to help cities to make it easier for homeowners to get solar panels. Working with planning dept to help map out how people can get solar panels.

**Jason Shachner, Lakewood City Council Ward 2 -**

Nice thing about Council now, the Ward Councilmen go in descending order by height.

Chair of Finance Committee.

Heard from everyone from every dept on budget.

Lakewood has budget of $209 million. Only 20% of funds come from property tax. 58% comes from income tax.

Lakewood has dedicated revenue streams to pay for our debt.

Highlights of budget: finishing Foster Pool, might actually finish on time; potential upgrades to WiFi system in parks & at City Center (possibly installed this summer), lots of work with ADA compliance, last year of 10-year sidewalk replacement program, getting two new audible pedestrian signals, planting trees, got a study that proved we need crosswalks between woodward and revelry.

**Cindy Marx, Lakewood City Council Ward 4 -**

Was appointed to council in June 2022.

Ward 4 best ward in lakewood!

City purchased historic Victorian home on Lake Ave. Will not come down. Land was purchased so city could install storage tanks between the home and the Carlyle. Will get rain & sewer overflow.

City got grant for master plan for Madison Park. Madison Park is enormous asset to Birdtown neighborhood. Will be looking for public meetings. Councilman Baker is strong proponent of parks here.

Studio West 117 is beautiful new addition to Ward 4. Will be taking down NTB building. Temporary parking lot to support overflow. Then lot will become mixed-use.

Birdtown! Home sold in birdtown recently for $260,000! Want to keep it as home for immigrant community. Lots of development happening - took over old Birite building. Korean restaurant & grocery store coming!

Lakewood Animal Safety & Advisory Board - working to create ordinance that would limit number of pets each house can have.

I’m running for re-election this year!

**Q&A:**

Q: Chris Glassburn - heard Phil Plummer on conservative radio. Called Speaker Stephens some bad names. How will they work together?

A: Skindell - Stephens support increasing rapidly especially as we move into session. will continue to have 12-14 dissenters as we did last General Assembly.

A: Antonio - had opportunity to be in establishment where conservative dissenter group was gathering. Said hi but they were not happy to see me! Someone said something about having 7 members. I said, I’ve been serving in minority for many years and i know how to get things done. This is new for you all? In Senate will have to work around them to get the good public policy over the finish line.

Q: What’s the update on the former Lakewood Hospital site?

A: In late fall/early winter did some work to level out the site. It was sending water to sewer system that wasn’t supposed to be there. ARB & ? have given approval of plans. Administration working hard with school district to develop plan. We’re told Council will see something soon.

**REPORTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

\*Swearing-in of Club Officers by Senator Nickie Antonio\*

President: Erik - regular adult membership increasing from $20 to $25 on February 1st. In order to be voting member of the club, have to have paid dues, be resident of Lakewood, registered Democrat per Board of Elections, and have to have attended 3 meetings in person in prior 12 months. Hoping to get rid of Zoom interaction at meetings. Thank you to everyone who helped in 2022 with GOTV effort.

First Vice President: Maureen - always looking for speaker ideas. February is Black History Month, will be getting African American speakers. March is Women’s History Month, April is Earth Day.

Political Activism: Initiative to get signatures for protecting reproductive healthcare. VoteRiders working against Ohio Voter ID law, will help people get Voter IDs.

Book Club: Carol - Tuesday February 21st at Bottlehouse in Lakewood, reading first half of “And There Was Light: Abraham Lincoln and the American Struggle,” watching Slay the Dragon on Hulu. (Nickie - that movie is awesome!)

Second Vice President: Jeff - My family adopted beagle from group of rescued Lakewood beagles. Name is Penne, she’s 5!

Treasurer: Catie - $820 in bank account. Spent a lot of money on GOTV.

Secretary: No report.

**LEGISLATIVE UPDATES**

Lakewood School Board: Mike Callahan (President) - succeeding Betsy Shaugnessy as President. Linda Beebe will be Vice President. Working with contractor on Facilities & Program Usage study. Looking at programming & how spaces are used. Continue innovative education as needs change. Recently had Literacy Night, received information around new guidelines with dyslexia. Lakewood Project turning 20 this year! School Board rotates meetings to different school buildings. Vacancy on Lakewood Public Library Board of Trustees. Night at the Races March 4th. Thanks to Rep Skindell & Senator Antonio for raising awareness on threats to public education. “Backpack Bill” is extreme threat to public education.

 Nora - district doing a lot to help transitions between schools. Hosted 8th Grade Parent & Student Night to learn more about high school. Lakewood Project welcomed 8th grade orchestra to play with them. Looking at high school curriculum, excited for diversity of courses available, including AP African American Studies courses.

ODP/CCDP: Karolyn (given by Erik) - Exec & Central Committee need to pay dues; meeting February 5th.

**GENERAL UPDATES:** N/a

**NEXT SCHEDULED MEETING** - February 23, 2023.

**ADJOURNMENT** - The meeting was adjourned. Motion by Maureen, seconded by Jeff.

Event notes prepared by Nicole Parke on January 26, 2023.

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Secretary Approval: sign date

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President Approval: sign date