**The Lakewood Democratic Club**

**Minutes of Regular Meeting held on June 27, 2019**

**Woman’s Club Pavilion at Lakewood Park**

**Erik Meinhardt, President**

CALL TO ORDER: The meeting was called to order at 7:09 p.m. by President Erik Meinhardt. The Pledge of Allegiance followed.

Officers present were President Erik Meinhardt, First Vice-President Maureen Dostal, Secretary, Matt Kuhns and Treasurer, Cindy Strebig. The President chaired the meeting. The Secretary took minutes.

APPROVAL of the previous MINUTES of the meeting held May 30, 2019.

Housekeeping items noted by the president:

* The hospitality table is providing water in paper cups rather than plastic bottles
* Members are free to get up and e.g. get refreshments during the meeting
* Request to silence phones during the meeting

RECOGNITION OF NOTABLES (7:12) –

Officials and candidates for office were recognized. Current officials in attendance: Laura Gallagher, Dale Miller, Emma Petrie-Barcelona, Tom O’Malley, Linda Beebe, Emanuella Groves, John Litten

Candidates for 2019-20 in attendance: Rick Bell (Assistant county prosecutor), James Satola (8th district court of appeals), Jeff Wise (Lakewood City Council Ward 3), Laura Rodriguez-Carbone (Lakewood City Council Ward 1), Brad Presutto (candidate for Lakewood City Council Ward 2), Lindsey Grdina (Lakewood City Council Ward 1), Emma Petrie-Barcelona (Lakewood board of education), Jason Shachner (Lakewood City Council Ward 2), John Litten (Lakewood City Council Ward 3), Linda Beebe (Lakewood board of education), Andy Meyer (Lakewood board of education), Mike Callahan (Lakewood board of education)

The president recognized, as groups, members of the county party central and executive committees, and new club members.

Introduction of evening’s program: The president introduced Elizabeth Bonham, Ohio ACLU staff attorney. (7:15 p.m.)

**GUEST SPEAKER – Elizabeth Bonham**

Bonham described the history of partisan gerrymandering litigation in federal courts. Began in the 1980s; *Davis* case suggested plaintiffs may eventually win relief when the problem becomes bad enough; subsequent rulings maintained this theme. The Gill case suggested that voter advocates were near achieving relief from the judiciary.

Bonham summarizes how partisan gerrymandering works through “packing” and “cracking.”

Bonham noted three recent cases: *Rucho v. Common Cause*, *Lamone v. Benisek,* and *APR v. Householder.*

Bonham summarized the claims pursued in recent litigation:

* First Amendment claim: right of expression and association are infringed by partisan gerrymandering; you can’t organize effectively because people know the results are inevitable
* Equal protection claim: gerrymandering dilutes individual voting rights

The morning the Supreme Court ruled against plaintiffs in *Rucho* and *Benisek*

Evidence presented in Ohio lawsuit, *APR v. Householder*

* League of Women Voters and Common Cause began work, years ago, assembling information on how Ohio districts were gerrymandered in 2011
* Ohio GOP carried out the process with secret e-mails and meeting spaces
* Described heavily African American areas of Franklin County as “dog meat territory”
* At the same time they were relatively upfront about the overall intent, claiming “Democrats did this when they had the power now it’s our turn”
* Proved that even with 2008 voting—which was heavily Democratic in Ohio—the 2011 maps would have produced a 12-4 Republican majority among Ohio’s congressional delegation

Plaintiffs won all of the recent cases in lower courts, and today the Supreme Court’s Republicans reversed all those decisions and declared that federal courts can never hear partisan gerrymandering litigation again. Kagan’s dissent said that a circumstance like this is the entire point of the federal judiciary—a means of relief when people have nowhere else to turn.

The prospects for Ohio redistricting in 2021 under the reforms passed by initiative

* We will have to show up
* We will have to keep the pressure on
* We must expose the gerrymandering further; the people who did it are still active in Ohio politics

**QUESTION AND ANSWER** (7:34)

Question about where to get informational literature: we’ll send it out.

Question about whether the ballot issues mattered: They do matter, however they were compromises.

Question about the 2018 court-ordered redistricting in Pennsylvania: This still stands because it was ordered by the state supreme court.

Question about communicating these issues effectively through sensationalist and shallow media: media coverage is not ideal, and e.g. exaggerated the ruling against a Census citizenship question

Question about the electoral college: Gerrymandering does not have any role in this.

Question about future actions based on state constitutions: Yes, conversations are now emphasizing litigation in state courts, and ballot issues. (7:43)

Question about how to support messaging efforts: We are committed to this project, and if you donate, it will be used for that.

Question about positive federal legislation: Yes this is theoretically possible.

Question about states which have successfully resolved this: About four or five have so done so, for both state and federal legislative districts.

Question about 2011 gerrymandering, was it seven by Republicans and two by Democrats: That is probably accurate.

The president mentions the Debate Watch Party at Around the Corner, to follow this meeting, and that WKYC is expected to attend.

New candidate remarks: Mike Callahan (7:52), Jeff Wise (7:56), Andy Meyer (7:59), Judge Groves, for 8th district court of appeals (8:03)

PRESIDENT’S REPORT given to discussion of party affairs and recent media coverage (8:08)

FIRST VICE-PRESIDENT’S REPORT- Upcoming activities. (8:19)

* Book club event on mass incarceration, date to be determined
* July 4 parade
* July 25 discussion of special counsel Mueller’s report, with Steve Dettelbach
* Sept 21 yard cleanup with LakewoodAlive

SECOND VICE-PRESIDENT’S REPORT- Jesse Schmidt gives update on Summer Supper in 2nd vice president’s absence. (8:23)

TREASURER’S REPORT- The Club has $5,560 in the bank (8:34)

SECRETARY’S REPORT- None

Councilman Tom Bullock delivers a warning about House Bill 6, noting that in the Ohio House 10 Democrats voted to bail out big utilities and decimate support for renewable energy, asks for help contacting Ohio Senate Democrats to unite against it. (8:26)

Dale Miller reports that MetroHealth is now fully in charge of healthcare at the Cuyahoga County jail (8:30).

Linda Beebe provides an update on Taft School (8:31)

Lakewood City Leader Karolyn Isenhart reports on Cuyahoga County Democratic Party endorsements of Sam O’Leary, Lindsey Grdina, Jason Shachner, John Litten and Dan O’Malley; and a training event in Lakewood scheduled for July 27. (8:33)

Andrew Craig talks about voter engagement role in Ohio Democratic Party summer fellowship (8:34)

Dave Nader talks about why now is a good time to sign up the a solar co-op program which the county department of sustainability helps promote (8:35)

NEXT SCHEDULED MEETING – August 29, 2019.

ADJOURNMENT – Adjourned at 8:38 p.m.

Minutes prepared by Matt Kuhns, Secretary on June 29, 2019.

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Secretary Approval: sign date

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President Approval: sign date