

Minutes
Carlisle Democratic Town Committee Meeting
Thursday, May 19, 2022, 7:00 PM via Zoom

Attendance: Simon Cataldo, Dan Cook, Maureen Cosgrove-Deery, Dave Erickson, Robert Kearney, Nancy Kroonenberg, Rebecca Morris, Carrie Patel, Kate Reid, Dan Scholten, Serigne-Abdoulahads, Abby Stockmal, Francis Tacardon, Bob Wallhagen

1. Simon Cataldo

In 2009 he was taking students from Harlem to West Concord and as they were driving in one of the students turned and said it smelled weird, it smells like nothing. This helped increase his concern about the deep inequities in our society. While much has changed since 2009, he woke up in August to see the air polluted by western forest fires. Simon is deeply concerned about health, environment, and our fraying democracy. He would like to eliminate PFAS from our water supply and he wants to see us bring in leaders who serve the people rather than trying to amass personal power. He would like to help restore our trust in government. Simon grew up in west concord as the son of a Social Worker and an Economist. He went to the Thoreau school and Concord Carlisle High School. In college he majored in Environmental Science and decided to become a chemistry teacher at Frederic Douglass Academy in Harlem, but as it turned out he became the special education math teacher for seventh and eighth grades. After some difficulties in connecting with his students he built a sports team with some of his students which helped improve their self-image so that they eventually earned the highest scores ever for special ed students in the school. He founded the Harlem Lacrosse which now works in five cities with sixty full time employees and an annual budget of \$8 million annually.

He also fought Trumpism, he went to law school, he clerked for an Obama appointee in Harlem worked in the Department of Justice's team that successfully prosecuted Joe Arpaio for criminal contempt. He says from abolition to marriage equality the rest of the nation has often looked to Massachusetts for leadership and he would like to help continue that tradition.

In terms of direct actions, he would like to improve the permitting process for offshore wind, which could provide at least 50% of Massachusetts electrical use. He would also like to remove some of the red tape involving solar to allow more people to easily install solar. He also feels that we need to be improving the grid and retire the natural gas infrastructure. Residential energy use is another piece of low hanging fruit. He did his thesis on residential and we have the technology to produce zero emission residences. He also feels that we need a moratorium on new fossil fuel dependent residences. He would push that through a bill to encourage towns to enact such moratoriums. He also noted that there is pending legislation to significantly increase solar incentives which would greatly help hyper local renewable.

Carrie Patel asked about what legislation could make Carlisle and Concord more accessible. Simon said that the legislature needs to make investments in new affordable housing as well as maintaining existing affordable housing. There was also significant legislation passed that reduced the required vote for affordable housing from 2/3 to 1/2, making it easier for towns to pass affordable housing initiatives. The state is not currently investing in maintaining affordable housing and it needs to start looking at this.

Dan Cook said flow batteries and thermal storage systems could help in the development of renewable energy, he asked Simon for his thoughts on this. Simon noted that as in many other areas, we have more than our share of energy storage experts in Carlisle and Concord and while he is no expert in energy storage, he appreciates that it is important for the legislature to keep up on this.

Robert Kearney said that you will be dependent on getting legislation passed but you will be the new guy how will you encourage you colleagues. Simon said that is going to be difficult but he has had experiences that show his ability to work with others, mentioning prosecuting Arpaio under Trump, overhauling the special education curriculum in Harlem. He is already reaching out to people on the Hill and will do everything to possible to build consensus and find allies.

Maureen asked if he were not interested in a higher position and how long would he like to stay as a state representative. Simon said that this is the job he wants. He did not consider running until his family had moved back to Concord and Tami Gouveia decided to run for Lieutenant Governor. He wants to serve and the hyper local nature of the office appeals to him. He thinks that it is through local leadership that we can build back trust in government. His experience with Harlem Lacrosse shows him that it takes a few years for people to build up steam but then around year 10 they may start to become a bit stale. He thinks you need to be in a job like this for at least several terms.

2. Minutes for 4/21/2022 were approved.

3. Treasurer's report: current balance \$1141.45 with no income and no expenses.

4. CDTC leadership changes

Nancy Kronenberg said she will continue for three months. She said that there is a lot of work, with her job has getting larger. She has written a list of the things she has done and this needs to be rebalanced. Secretary and Treasurer will remain unchanged but Kenneth Deitch has indicated he will only remain on the nominating committee for one more year. There was also a long discussion of the fact that chair/cochairs must be of different genders, which could create issues about who could be a cochair. It was suggested that gender problems could be avoided by having the chair appoint an assistant who would presumably be in line to become a chair but could be the same gender as the current chair. It appears that the state allows this, although it is unclear whether we would need to change our own by laws to allow this. Robert Kearney was asked if he would become chair if Nancy left and he said that he would. There was a motion made that this committee will be led by four elected officers (Chair, Treasure, Secretary, and Affirmative Outreach officer, but it was later withdrawn in view of the fact that there is no real requirement for a cochair so no vote was needed.

5. Picnic

Nancy asked if the picnic should be in August. Carrie Patel said that if it were August 6, she could take care of the food.

6. Adjourned at 21:37