

Minutes
Special Carlisle Democratic Town Committee Meeting
Thursday, April 17, 2025, 7:00 PM via Zoom

Attendance: Michael Ansara, John Ballantine Jr, Dan Cook, Dave Erickson, Bridget Ferrari, Nancy Kronenberg, Bonnie Miskolczy, Rebecca Morris, Betsy N., Dan Scholten, Betsy Quarry Walker, Bob Wallhagen, Elizabeth Weinberg

1. Michael Ansara

Michael Ansara said that everything we had feared is happening. Trump is destroying our democracy but we are seeing an upswing in opposition and for once he is proud of Harvard, they are doing the right thing. Ansara is talking to Indivisible--they have seen a growth in new chapters for the first time in 3 years. December saw many new chapters, February saw twice as many, and March saw more than December + January and April seems to be following. We need to fight on all fronts. We need to support our Attorney General who has organized other states to sue Trump repeatedly. We also need to continue street protests, boycotts, and continue the Tesla boycott. We must learn from what happened after the George Floyd murder: 20 million took part in protests but because they did not organize it did not become a movement. We need to organize 20 million people. People need to start forming groups, many say I am in a group, what should I do? Reach out to others, the only salvation for 20 or 30 million of us to get organized. No one knows how far Trump will go, the only political power we have is the power of organized people; we must have enough people to fight whatever happens. We have upcoming elections in Virginia and New Jersey. There are already post card campaigns. If we have midterms in 2026, we cannot wait, we have to get going now. There are 35 Republicans that won by less than 10 percentage points; if we can make that shift in 25 districts we can take back the house decisively, we can put as much pressure congress members as possible, maybe we can break some of them off but if not, we can try to defeat them in 2026. There should be more protests, "Hands off" is a good start with 2-2.5 million, we have to make 4 million and then need to add another 4 million. No one is coming on a white horse; the only way to do it is if we do it.

Bridget asked what had the most impact at Harvard, Ansara said pressure from the faculty, alums, and students. Trump's demands were so over the top they could not do it; if demands had been lower Harvard would have caved but standing up sends a message to others that you can stand up and fight. Trahan has been supportive of resistance but she needs to be more supportive; when she does do more, we need to applaud her. Our Attorney General is doing great work and Healy is taking strong positions but she can do more. Rebecca imagined 30 yr old Carlisle women who is angry but does not have much time, what could she do most effectively? Ansara said spend 2 hours/week thinking about anyone you know or have ever known and reach out to them and ask them to sign up with Activate America, or Third Act or other organization. Phone bank 1 hr./week. 1 hour/week is sufficient, the goal is to keep being steady in the fight. We have to fight continuously. Once every 1-2 months join one of the demonstrations. We have to fight everywhere, lawyers need to do lawsuits, journalists need to be more effective.

Ballantine reminded us of Kent State, people were motivated. Ansara said we need to mobilize everyone and we need people that we did not have in 24. Target the 19 million voters that voted for Biden in 2020 but did not vote in 2024, we will not get them by talking about pronouns.

Every month there will be more people unhappy with Trump's policies. Veterans have been particularly hard hit, 30% of people who work in government are veterans and they largely supported Trump, but we will see more and more people who are unhappy with Trump's policies and his disregard for courts extrajudicial kidnappings and disappearances.

Dan Cook said few democrats are speaking up. Ansara said most elected democratic officials do not know how to respond; they are trying to do politics as usual but this is not politics as usual. Chuck Schumer represents one of the most affluent states and that begins to color his outlook. The moment has come for bold leadership but you have a dilemma. We must defend against Trump but the overwhelming majority want change and democrats have been seen as custodians of the status quo. Ansara said that the democratic leadership in the Senate had a day of action but no one knew about it. The democrats are operating in a media system they have failed to grasp. People are not listening to NPR; most are getting their news from social media. Trumps base get most of their news from social media; they live in a separate universe.

Cook, congress members can do insider trading, which is outrageous. Ansara, you have to be willing to change the status quo and fund raising is a real issue. Corey Booker had great content in his filibuster but

then the next day he made a deal with 10 PACS; Ansara said you should not demean what you just did by reducing it to a fund-raising opportunity.

Erickson asked if Trump become weaker might it be possible to enlist Republicans. Ansara seemed to agree; the most liberal democrats vote in primaries and the most conservative (fascist) republicans vote in primaries. That is why we are homing in on those 35 districts. It must be a combination of their mistakes and our unrelenting pressure; taking back the house would be a major step but it is not automatic. We are in a new period of politics in which we need to get enough voters out so that republican election fraud in the form of disenfranchisement and invalidating ballots will be insufficient to swing the elections.

Betsy asked whether it matters if she protests in Boston or Billerica. Ansara said that most of the time it does not matter but a time will come when it is important to have large numbers and then going to Boston will be important.

Betsy N asked whether you should register or just show up. Ansara said it is most important to show up although registering is good except you will then be bombarded with fund raising. The most important thing is to show up and bring people with you.

Bridget asked about concerns of the administration grabbing those lists. Ansara says that you know they will come after Indivisible, they will break any law if they think they can get away with it. They are fascists and but all of us are pretty safe, although not absolutely safe but compared to people of color or people from foreign countries we are relatively safe and we need to show up.

Morris asked whether there were any groups doing these things. Ansara said that in NC there are a couple or organization but there are not enough. In any movement what made things happen was person to person conversations, and taking one step and then another. It is the organizing process that is so critical. We need to talk to 100 people in Carlisle about what is going on in the country and what we need to do for our children and grandchildren. -trump is destroying our country.

Morris called our representative and asked her to put her body between thugs and my data. Congress people live in an insular world, for someone who is not in leadership-, what should she do?

Ansara, sign up for the Indivisible email, they go through what democrats in the house should do.

Get 10-15 people and see Lori Trahan. Go into that meeting with a clear list of what we want them to do and thank her for what she has done. Indivisible is the best source, every week they list what should be done.

Morris asked about groups focused on SS. Ansara said there are many groups, not just AARP and unions.

Medicaid is an interesting dilemma for house republicans. There are many who say they cannot cut Medicaid but 1/2 will not vote unless you cut 1.2 trillion from Medicaid. Ansara thinks they will go after Medicaid and Trump voters will feel it.

2. Treasurers Report

There is currently \$1321.85 in the account. Dan will send a note to everyone reminding them of dues.

3. No minutes

4. Caucus

The caucus will be held at the May 15th meeting. Bridget will submit a post every week until the 15th.

5. Organizing

Nancy said that we have about 20 friends of the DTC now and she is trying to reach out much as Michael has suggested. She also recommends looking at key races, state as well as national elections. Nancy noticed that people are very hungry for things to do but we have not been offering enough concrete actions. We need a strategy; she has been using one but has not articulated it. There is not a lot to do in 2025 aside from demonstrations and state elections.

6. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 8:53pm, the next meeting/caucus will be May 15.