

Voter Engagement Committee Meeting
Wednesday, August 12, 2021

Present: Linda Biemer, Charlie Compton, Sharon Exley, Vaughn Golden, Margaret Goodfellow, Carla Michalak, Giovanni Scaringi, Darin Schmidt, Alison Twang, Karl Wokan, Sara Wokan

1. Meeting called at 3:04pm

Linda welcomed and thanked everyone for attending today's meeting.

2. Minutes from June 23, 2021 approved with one correction. The Democratic Mayoral Candidate is Joseph not John Burns. Minutes were corrected and accepted.

3. County Clerk Race:

- Sharon and Carla met on August 2
- Sharon shared her expertise and Carla took notes, then developed a draft ppt to be used the night of the Meet and Greet. Please review the ppt sent earlier today (8/12) and send any comments to Carla
- The Meet and Greet will be on October 7th, in Decker 201 at 7pm
- Carla will contact MARCOM and request a press release. Gio will also reach out to his media contacts to promote this event. Charlie will share with WSKG and get on the Community Calendar
- Carla and Sharon will develop questions for the candidates. Committee members are strongly encouraged to also send Carla and Sharon questions for the candidates
- Carla will request microphones for the candidates and make copies of the finalized ppt for those in attendance
- Sharon and Carla will contact Joe and Harris respectively to confirm the date with a follow up letter requesting that they sign the invitation letter committing to October 7th

4. Family Court Judge Race: Veronica Gorman and Brett Noonan, Republicans, v. Mara Grace and Sandy Monachino, Democrats. Joshua Shapiro dropped out even though he was elected in the June 22 Primary on the Working Families Party line (We decided not to offer any event.)

5. NYS Supreme Court Race: Molly Fitzgerald, Democrat incumbent and Broome County resident v. Elizabeth Ahearne, Republican and Ithaca resident (We decided not to offer any event.)

6. **Binghamton Mayoral Race:** Republican Jared Kraham v. Democrat Joseph Burns. Kenneth Butler, the People's Party candidate, had to withdraw because he did not have the required number of signatures on his petitions: some signatures were ineligible and others were of non-registered people.

- a. Reviewed possible locations and decided on WSKG.
- b. Gio will contact the candidates, Margaret will follow with the formal letter
- c. Alison will have a Mayoral debate at BU in addition to what we are hosting at WSKG
- d. Time will be 8pm – 9pm, TV and Radio broadcast and will also archive it to watch later
- e. Discussed whether to have an audience or not, will wait to decide in September to make a final decision
- f. Sara and Karl will serve as time keepers
- g. Committee's role is to promote this event
- h. Citizens can send questions through the WSKG website, can also submit questions via Twitter as did previously

7. **Educating the Electorate:**

- Limited success with voter registrations this summer (Sara tabled at farm share sites, Margaret at the BC Library's July book sale)
- Margaret indicated that the Voter Guide Part II is published and has NYS's Ballot Information in it
- Alison: BU will engage in registration efforts, Constitution Day. She discussed the change to the absentee ballot request. One can now request via the online portal at the BOE. The request is due by October 18th, request must be received 15 days prior to Election Day. Can only bring absentee ballots to your home county.
- SUNY Broome: "Right to Vote" event on September 28th which is National Voter Registration Day. Will be offered at 11am, and again at 6:30pm on campus in TH 101. BTLVW will table and conduct Voter Registrations for both events.
- Constitution day: September 17th, who has plans for Constitution Day?
- How does the BOE get the word out on changes?
- SUNY Broome anticipates presenting a program on "Misinformation and Fake News" in October.
- WSKG has more reporters, hopes to increase its coverage on elections/local news. Cannot do radio talk show right now, due to limited staff and equipment.
- How can this committee focus more on ballot issues?
- Gio proposed partnering with the BOE? Is there a way to help them promote elections, voting, etc?
- Margaret mentioned the Civic Readiness badge: Chenango Valley, Binghamton High School, Harpursville and ME are all participating this year.

Meeting concluded at 4:30pm. Gio will send a Doodle Poll out for our next meeting.

