

Greater Red Bank Women's Initiative General Meeting Minutes – 3/6/17

The Red Bank Rally and Human Rights Advisory Committee meeting was well attended last Monday and there was good turnout. Speakers at the meeting were heartfelt. There were some Committee members who were against the measure to declare Red Bank a Welcoming City, which would preclude police from approaching a person solely to learn their immigration status. The measure passed the committee vote despite some opposition and will go to the Red Bank town council for deliberation.

There is a petition that is being circulated, the letter that will accompany it when it is presented to the Red Bank council was read to members and a suggestion was made to send it to the press to gain visibility. You do not need to be a resident of Red Bank but it's important when you sign it that you fill out your address.

Committee reports:

Climate Change:

Kathy Hjelle reported that the committee, eight people strong, met for the first time on Valentines Day and got to know one another. Deciding not to replicate what existed already, they went over options of existing effective groups to connect with. The committee is now 15 members strong, of whom 12 met last Tuesday with Lynn Dash from the Unitarian Universalists in Lincroft, who have been very active on environmental issues. She presented the approach of the Citizens' Climate Lobby, which they are now part of, and the Monmouth Community Climate Coalition, which encompasses many local organizations in an effort to join forces to be more effective.

The committee will meet again Wednesday March 15.

Communications:

Terrie McCoy and Lisa Iannucci reported that our website is up and running and as of the meeting date has had over 800 unique visitors in the 3 weeks it has been live. Members are encouraged to utilize the resources on the website, and to submit any events or resources that are not represented there to info@GreaterRedBankWomensInitiative.org.

Mailing list has been migrated to Mailchimp platform, allowing for member email information to remain private and giving recipients the option to unsubscribe, should they choose to do so. There were 375 subscribers at the time of the meeting. Facebook group is up and running and very active, with 220 members at the time of the meeting. Members had paid less interest to Twitter and Instagram based upon likes and clicks from group emails to visit those platforms, so they will receive less attention for the time being. Members were given "missing" flyers for U.S. Representative Chris Smith and encouraged to pass them out in public spaces.

Education/Civics:

Jill Briggles reported that she and co-chair Laraine Gaunt met to have a preliminary discussion about their ideas, pertinent issues, committee members, meetings etc.

The committee has 8 members at this time, including Katherine Neff (and hopefully others) from Indivisible Bayshore Education Committee. Katherine reached out to the committee and they will be joining forces.

The committee will meet on March 12th @ 2pm at the home of Jill Briggles, 14 Throckmorton Ave., Red Bank. They plan a lively brainstorming session and hope to identify key issues and determine where to focus our energy.

Healthcare:

Laura Jannone reported Republicans presented a draft of a health care bill to replace the ACA. Her committee has interest in sharing "common" group topics among other initiatives (indivisible, etc).

Immigration and Religious Tolerance:

Rosemary Pappa reported that ICE has not been in Red Bank but has been in Long Branch. Important to get information out so that people are aware what to do if they show up at your home. Discussion about what freedom of the press is (civics)– there is a meeting in March, members who are interested should attend. This will be at the Red Bank library.

Outreach (other organizations):

This committee did not report.

Outreach (Political):

Lisa Iannucci and Laura Jannone reported that the political outreach committee is looking into ways we can help get progressive candidates elected here in New Jersey, and how we can get them to stand up for us with policies and programs that reflect our values. We're going to get the League of Women Voters to come in and coach us on how to be better advocates for our concerns in our local communities, throughout the state and nationally. We'll also learn how to conduct voter registration, canvassing, mailing, phone banking and other activities. This will give GRBWI members the skills and knowledge they need to volunteer both for the Monmouth County Democrats and for individual candidates as we get closer to election time. We're also going to look into getting a speaker who can talk to us about how to run for public office, and how we can encourage strong candidates in our communities.

Racism:

Barbara Sturdivant reported that the committee has met twice and six people were at the second meeting. They are working on organization and are open to resources and suggestions.

On February 11th Barbara attended "A Community Anti-Racism Workshop" that was hosted at the Lincroft Presbyterian Church. The event was held from February 10th-12th. Some of several topics discussed were a deeper definition for "racism", the impact, agencies and movements to support.

Information was presented on the following resources for members who wish to get involved:

- The Red Bank Public Library on the 4th Wednesday of each month from 7pm - 8:30pm in the Meeting Room have "Let's Talk About Race" presentations. This month being Women's History Month, the discussion will be Women in the Workplace. The speakers will be a woman police officer and a Microsoft Corporation female employee. The library is located at 81 W. Front Street, Red Bank.
- Citizens for a Diverse & Open Society meetings are every 3rd Thursday of each month at Pilgrim Baptist Church, 172 Shrewsbury Ave, Red Bank. The meetings are at 168 Shrewsbury Ave. (in the building next to the church.) For parking: from Shrewsbury Ave, turn on Leonard Street to park behind the church. The Co-Founders are Sid Bernstein and Gilda Rogers.

Voting:

Marilyn Sdherfen reported Our group is concerned with all things having to do with issues of voting: Voter Registration, Voter Suppression and Voter Fraud, The Electoral College, National Popular Vote, Gerrymandering, Voter Turnout/Growing the Vote. The purpose of their first meeting was to get to know one another, to become acquainted with the issues, and to discuss the directions that we might take individually and together. Ellen Herman supplied members (there were about 10 in attendance) with a packet of information on those issues. Realizing there are a number of other organizations already in place tackling many of those issues, we did not want to duplicate their efforts. We hope to identify who they are, use their resources, as well as offer our services to them. One of the committee members, Anne Torre, is also member of the League of Women Voters (one such group) and has agreed to be our liaison between our group and the League.

Last Saturday, several committee members attended the Neighbor-to- Neighbor Workshop and received ideas about increasing voter turnout. Attendees will be receiving packets of local voter lists to work at making them current and also visit potential neighbor-voters. They also shared with the organizers issues that concerned each different local area. These ideas, in turn, will be shared with the candidates themselves. Jim Keady, who has just declared his candidacy in running against Chris Smith, was introduced to the attendees.

The committee realizes that all issues having to do with voting are important, and have chosen to focus on dealing with Voter Apathy, knowing that the key to succeeding in elections going forward is turnout!!!