

Monday, November 5, 2001

Members in Attendance: Michael Gove, William Rooney, Kathleen Houle, Helen Garrow, Domingos Alves, Leonard Robbins, Gail LeBelle, Brian Connery, Alexander Simao, Juliann Rooney, James Thompson, Mary Gurski, William Mahoney, Irene Kimball, Kathleen Ouimette, Anthony Mole
Associate Members: Dennis Gove, Susan Galvin Richard Devine

Chairman Michael Gove opened the November 5, 2001 meeting at 7:35 P.M.

Reports:

Officers

Chair: The chair reported that he spoke with the chairman from the State Democratic Committee and interest was expressed in integrating the State and local committees to a greater degree. The State Committee will also be publishing a quarterly newsletter.

Vice-Chairman – no report

Treasurer: Helen Garrow reported that our previous balance was \$1,440.64. The account earned \$1.44 in interest, giving the committee a balance of \$1,442.08. Motion made and seconded by James Thompson and Alexander Simao to accept the report as read. All in favor. Motion carries.

Secretary's Report: Motion made and seconded by Leonard Robbins and Helen Garrow to accept the minutes. All in favor. Motion carries.

Committees:

Awards Committee – members were given a copy of the report prepared by the Awards Committee.

Members agreed that the sub-committee was thorough in their review and recommendations, but were in agreement that section IV, b. Selection, ii. ["meet-and-greet"] was not necessary.

Motion made and seconded by William Mahoney and Helen Garrow to strike section IV, b. Selection ii. All in favor. Motion carries.

Motion made and seconded by James Thompson and Alexander Simao to approve the report as amended. All in favor. Motion carries.

The chair will make arrangements to have the nomination form published in the "Ludlow Register".

Alexander Simao will confirm reservations for the breakfast on March 10, 2002. He will check on prices at other establishments and make a decision. The committee can then review the ticket costs.

By-laws Committee: Members reviewed the recommendations of the By-laws Committees.

Motion made and seconded by Irene Kimball and James Thompson to discuss the "Twenty Year" service proposal. Members were concerned with the number of present members who would be eligible for this type of membership. It appears that there would be between 2-4 members. Irene Kimball suggested that these members could be recognized at the breakfast. Motion made and seconded by Irene Kimball and James Thompson to approve the amendment to the bylaws. All in favor. Motion carries.

Political Action Committee: The chairman reported on the "Register to Vote Drive". Approximately 13 people filed forms at Randall's Farm and the Ludlow Post Office. Motion made and seconded by James Thompson and Alexander Simao to accept the report. All in favor. Motion carries

Correspondence:

The Longmeadow Democratic Committee will host a Candidates Night Forum on November 14, 2001.

Old Business – the breakfast and the amendments were discussed during the reports from the committees.

New Business:

Hampden County Democratic League: The chairman indicated that he is involved in an effort to organize a county democratic group and had contacted other communities. Irene Kimball suggested that he contact Jim Fleming.

Banner: Members indicated that this is expensive. Kathy Ouimette indicated that she would contact a friend who sews to discuss costs.

Motion made and seconded by James Thompson and William Mahoney to send condolences to the family of Edward Boland. All on favor. Motion carries.

MCAS: Anthony Mole stated that he would like the committee to go on record regarding the use of the MCAS as the determining factor for graduation. Mole stated that although he initially believed that the use of MCAS testing would serve to better educate students, he believes that the opposite is occurring. He indicated that he believed that a student who fails the MCAS should be given the opportunity to obtain a diploma through the educational process (i.e. summer school). Also, the Ludlow Democratic Committee should take a position whereby it would make a recommendation to the commonwealth on how problems could be corrected.

A motion was made by Anthony Mole: To return the educational process and the awarding of diplomas to the educators who should be the final authority and to submit an alternate plan to the governor and legislators on how a diploma could be granted if a student fails the MCAS (i.e. summer school).

Mole indicated that he believed the current plans to tutor students are not sufficient and that the Ludlow Democratic Committee should take the stand that the current plans are not acceptable. Dennis Gove stated that there are honor students who are unable to pass the test.

The chair asked if members felt a letter should be sent to the governor on this matter. Motion made and seconded by James Thompson and Alexander Simao to send a letter.

Irene Kimball stated that she believed that the committee should get some advice on this matter from the school committee and superintendent. William Rooney agreed and indicated that the latest reports show that the Ludlow School system showed improvement. Rooney indicated that the committee has already taken the stand that the test should not be used as the determining factor for graduation. He indicated that he did not believe it to be within the purview of the Democratic Committee to propose solutions, as the committee does not have the expertise to do so. Rooney stated that he believed such action would be irresponsible.

Mole asked that the question be moved. The final motion proposed by Anthony Mole is as follows:

- Draft and send a letter indicating that the Ludlow Democratic Committee takes the stand that the educators should be the final authority in determining who receives a diploma; and
- Propose an alternative method for providing students an opportunity to graduate
- The letter to be mailed to the Acting Governor, Speaker of the House, President of the Senate, Representative Petrolati, Senator Lees, and the MTA.

Vote taken. Motion fails.

The chair indicated that if members want to discuss this matter, we could meet with the School Committee and the Superintendent. A meeting will be set up in the coming months.

Next meeting will be December 3, 2001.

Motion made and seconded to adjourn by Alexander Simao and James Thompson. All in favor. Meeting adjourned at 8:35 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,
Kathleen J. Houle