

**Democrats Abroad Canada
Toronto Chapter**

Annual General Meeting

**Meeting Minutes - April 9, 2017
55 Eglinton East, Suite 502**

In attendance:

Julie Buchanan, Steve Nardi, Mari Rutka, Sue Alksnis, Annie Parry, Dewitt Lee, Martha Charney, Fred Glander, Reg Charney, Shannon Parry, Brooke Scott, Robert [Abbot \(non-member guest\)](#), Danielle Stampley, Miranda Alksnis, Nathan [Lujan](#), Paulette Kelly, J. David Markham, Edna Mueller ([non-member guest](#)), Karin Lippert, David Letteney, Beverly Faye, Ken Sherman, Ed Ungar, Virginia Smith, [Starla Goggins](#)

23 members in attendance, 2 observers

[Regrets: Allenna Leonard, Chris Eggers;](#)

Sue does Land acknowledgement for today. [t](#)hanks Hospice Toronto for having meeting at last minute. Land on which gathering is Huron Wendat, Seneca, Peton and most recently Mississauga First Nation.

Ed asks for volunteers for a by-election on Tuesday (April 11) for Congressional District that has been controlled for 50 years by Republicans. In Kansas, Wichita area. Polls look like things are close - maybe 200 vote difference. Want to contact overseas Americans who vote in Kansas. May also call Georgia voters for April 18th by-election.

Julie calls meeting to order. (2:50) Steve advises Webex is not working and will not be able to used for the meeting.

Asks for motion to approve agenda. Reg asks to add other business at end of agenda. Sue asks to add Mississauga update.

Motion to approve agenda by David M seconded by Karin. Approved.

Mari is recording for today. (Appointed as recording secretary).

Julie asks David Letteney to speak later as well.

Motion to approve printed minutes from last meeting - Miranda, seconded by Danielle. Approved.

Treasurer's Report

Reg says \$5813.13 left in bank account.

Revenue was \$29,315.77.

Expenses were \$25,890.60.

Julie says very active year last year.

Sue asks for sources of revenue -

Julie says there is more to come, about 2000, from national treasury from email fundraiser, [where David Markham matched the first \\$1000 donated](#)

Most of the rest was from election night event and other events.

The amended report moved by David M and seconded by Dewitt. Carried.

To [Do: Julie to follow up with the Country Committee Treasurer for the transfer of funds for the email fundraiser.](#)

Earned Media Report

Karin Lippert reports on earned media.

Julie says Karin did hundreds of hours of press releases [and GOTV event work.](#)

Karin says there were 24 events to which press was invited. There was a lot of interest. Saw lots of people at Caribbean Festival, Open Streets Toronto and many more. Did watch gatherings for all debates. There was a lot of attendance at the debates. Always at least 1 media camera there. Karin says it was important to be consistent in message and press and people knew who they could connect with. Karin says important to keep up events going forward and be sure that people know Democrats Abroad will be there. Many members did interviews as well.

Comment from Shannon regarding election night event. She felt it was hard to talk to anyone there. Karin says they had to change venues close to the event, so new venue had a wide array of food but didn't realize that some of the TVs didn't work in some of the rooms. There wasn't a way to address the entire group in the different places. Julie says they passed a resolution at the next meeting to not do the same arrangement again. Sue says she's seen a designated greeter used in such situations. Karin says they did have such greeters, but there weren't enough because of the challenging venue. Also sound wasn't checked sufficiently ahead.

[Karin, Julie and Chris went around as a group and apologized.](#)

Voter Registration Report

David Lettney was in charge of voter registration. Some of the things they did were to identify people who volunteered to be official voter officers. There is training available at the U.S. Consulate. The U.S. Defense Department tells how to vote [absentee](#) in every single state. Voter registration officers did great work at Pride, at the debates and other events where they encountered hundreds. Voters [from abroad are basically](#) in four groups. Some who know what to do, some who have no interest in voting. Successful with those who want to vote but don't know how. Take them through steps. Successful with those who think they can't vote. Reached out and informed them. Still left a lot of votes on table and think it could be expanded.

Julie adds that 2600 people used the Democrats voting app to register to vote. (N.B.: Julie corrects that number to about 2300 after the meeting).

Annie asks if the trainings are on-going. David isn't sure. Reg says that they ask representatives from the parties to show up. Usually they limit training to about 3 people per group. Veterans, Democrats, Republicans all asked. Julie says [the DoD is](#) revamping the FPCA Federal Post Card Application which will result in a change in our online FPCA wizard [Votefromabroad.org](#).

Volunteer Management

Julie would like to thank for their efforts: Bennett Mose, [Allenna](#) Leonard, Brian Hassett, Chris Eggers, Christopher Neddell, David Markham, David Lettney, Starla Goggins, Ed Ungar, Gabe Elias, Helen Hatton, Karin Lippert, Brooke Scott, Meg Mather, Paulette Kelly, Reg Charney..., Steve Nardi, Victoria Ramos. Starla thanks all the volunteers who persisted through much difficult weather, she maintained a much larger list of volunteers who came out on occasion throughout the election cycle

Election Results

Julie Buchanan - chair

Danielle and Nathan are vice chairs

Mari and Martha will be co-secretaries

Miranda says that she has a concern around treating some people in a friendlier matter than others. Shannon says she also finds it a bit intimidating. Danielle says let's discuss and come up with ideas to engage people. Karin says it might be good to have a social event for this purpose. Others bring up points regarding

connecting with younger people or newer members. Sue encourages those not involved in post-board meeting to gather and get to know one another.

Dewitt says that he appreciates people speaking up and that doing that will help build stronger base here and develop good relationships.

Mari suggests it would be good to discuss what people can expect to happen at meetings and Julie says usually meetings are mostly informal and brainstorming for events. Reg says there have been very impressive boards committed to succeeding. Rules include trying to be gender balanced and open to as many volunteering as possible. Getting more people involved now than ever before. Shannon thanks group for helping her feel like she can speak her mind. Most of the year the group's job and goal is to get out as many votes as it can. Every vote is important. David Markham says that's especially critical in the coming off-year elections. Can't assume results will be favorable. Must do our part.

Karin says there should be a list of the upcoming elections to be aware of. Karin points out that members were split between Bernie and Hillary supporters and that that may have contributed it to being difficult to organize with younger people because many of them were Bernie supporters. Thinks it is particularly important to get in touch with younger people. Must get into campuses, Ed says.

TO DO: send out list of upcoming elections for which people could volunteer.

Steve reports on election results. 80 ballots in total. 18 were spoiled.

Chair JB. 59

Danielle 57

Nathan Lothian 53

Mari 28

Martha 27

Dewitt

Members at large:

~~A~~ Alissa Alyssa 41

Carol 23

~~D~~ Derek Derrick 38

Dylan 36

J David

Kathleen 40

Mimi

Paulette 50

Romana 21
Steven 30
Virginia 39

~~Alissa Alyssa~~ Ages
~~Derek Rafael~~ Derrick Raphael
Dylan Clark
Kathleen Lucien Miller
Paulette Kelly
Virginia Smith
J David Markham

Susan Alksnis
Brooke Scott

Julie says there was a resolution to have a ~~Founding Members Co of Toronto Chapter Founders Standing Committee of~~ Karin Lippert, Ed Ungar, Reg Charney, Allenna Leonard~~should have included myself!~~ Leonard and Julie Buchanan.

Reg says that they were concerned that the old hands would constantly be members of the executive committee, but didn't want to lose the experience and background and this way they can be there but still makes room for new people.

Steve points out that Starla should be doing a NEC report.

NEC Report (new business)

Starla says they were appointed as the election committee of the Toronto chapter (NEC). ~~David Smith, and Steve were the teller of elections, Starla chaired and Chris Eggers was also a member~~ Starla is Chair, Steve Nardi is Teller of Elections and David Letteney and Chris Eggers are members. Kept track of all nominations and did spread sheets and sent out congratulations to new founders' committee. Put together announcements around when vote would take place and designed ballots and made everything user-friendly. Julie thanks the committee for their work. Danielle also thanks everyone and says she thought the ballots were very well done. Dave notes that there were a number of spoiled ballots and Steve says that if your e-mail address didn't match, or your name didn't match, then it was spoiled. If you aren't a member, couldn't vote. It was suggested we let people know why ballots might have been spoiled. Julie suggests it be put on a future agenda.

TO DO: Put discussion of spoiled ballots on future agenda.

Starla thanks Toronto chapter for all of their work. Dewitt also wants to extend his appreciation for being able to serve.

New Business

Under new business, discuss the national election. Annie and Sue were elected as members at large, Steve was elected as chair. Danielle was elected as consul. Ed as vice chair. Krystal and Christine and Ken are also involved. Ken points out that Toronto is the biggest chapter. Ed says that Toronto's chapters are bigger than most national organizations. He says that Adrienne and Ken worked to make several chapters across Canada. Ed says Joe Green was also instrumental in these efforts.

Steve moves to adjourn.

Attendance Sheet

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[David Letteney](#)

[Starla Goggins](#)

Democrats Abroad Canada – Toronto Chapter

Board Meeting Minutes

April 9, 2017

55 Eglinton Ave. E., Suite 502

Meeting convenes following the AGM.

Ed and Julie start with introductions:

Brooke Scott [-from Stouffville and member at large for York Region](#)

[Susan Alksnis member at large for Peel/Halton has plans for 3 events](#)

Annie Parry member at large [\(Canada\)](#), from California

Paulette Kelly, [re-elected](#) member at large for Toronto chapter

Dylan Clark, member at large for Toronto, interested in social media and hooking up with Swing Left for borderline districts (Danielle and Dylan and Brooke also interested)

Reg Charney - one of founding members

Martha Charney - now co-secretary

Virginia Smith - member at large

Fred Glander as member

Karin Lippert - wants especially to get social media info happening

Danielle wants to know if there are Twitter or Instagram accounts. Julie says were discouraged from [other pages besides the CC FB page. The Country Committee \(CC\) has Twitter and there are no Instagram accounts. Toronto does not have any social media of its own but the lion share of likes on the CC page are Toronto. Danielle says -Alyssa Ages is good with social media and she will speak to her about being on the Social Media Team for Toronto.](#)

Steve Nardi - new national chair - says that he doesn't think it is easy for a country this large. Thinks it will be important to organize in a way that people in different places don't have to slog through other areas' events etc. Think there should be caucus pages.

Bernadette, Nathan's partner, in attendance and happy to help as much as it is allowable for her to do. Not a member, however.

Nathan Lujan - new vice chair from Nashville Tennessee. Hoping to get professional scientific community involved.

Danielle Stampley - new vice chair - is lawyer ~~and also~~ as well as counsel to [Country Committee](#). From St. Charles, Missouri.

Julie Buchanan - chair

Mari Rutka - new co-secretary with Martha Charney.

David Markham - re-elected to board - does a lot of social media work

Edna Mueller, [David Markham's wife](#), was thanked for her support

Regular monthly board meetings - will usually be first Tuesday of the month. A schedule will be sent out shortly.

TO DO: Julie will send out meeting schedule for the remainder of the year

Board meeting locations - usually at 71 Charles St. E. David says he can also host meetings at his building [on Navy Wharf next to the Rogers Centre](#). Best if there is WiFi access.

Susan Alksnis is the member at large for Peel Region and says events are open for discussion. Had a turnout of about 40 people for a tax seminar and a number of people said they'd be interested in volunteering. Consider calling chapter GTA West.

Steve says you'd have to account for those outside of the GTA who are part of this chapter.

TO DO: Mari will ask if U of T space might be used.

Julie asks about organizing a **tax march** for next weekend. For Trump to release his returns. Ed says it would be in front of consulate. Karin points out that there will be so many issues for which events will be organized. Says if we are going to go with a broad stream of issues, we should hook up with the various organizations that are organizing. Reg says that these groups should be contacted and

connections made before the events so that we are plugged in to their events for participating. Danielle suggests public photo ops posted to social media.

Danielle is concerned that it is too short notice and not enough time to prepare so let's move on to next event and to doing that well. Sue says that the virtual tax march would be do-able so that pictures can be posted to Democrats Abroad website. An e-mail could be sent around to all for that.

TO DO: Send around virtual tax march information.

Danielle says that Alyssa would be interested in running an Instagram account. She will speak to her about that. Thinks Twitter would reach more people than Facebook would. Steve asks for them to await on the Instagram until the national organization figures out what to do.

TO DO: Danielle will ask Alyssa to run an Instagram account.

Science March - there is a Facebook page, Nathan says. April 22nd is date. A lot of universities and institutions are backing marches. There is a Toronto page. Nathan will try to get information and share it.

TO DO: Nathan to distribute Science March information.

Discussion on whether banner can be used. Julie asks Nathan to come up with a banner.

TO DO: Nathan to produce banner(s)

Danielle says we'll reach out to membership to participate. Looking for something to put on banner. Suggestions: science is good for your health - Julie suggests a sign making party on the Friday (day before). Annie suggests that Democrats Abroad business cards be handed out at this event. Karin says could have a booth as well.

TO DO: get more cards made.

Climate March is on April 29th –

TO DO: Dewitt Lee and [Allenna](#) said they would coordinate this event. Sue says should have someone speak at these events and that there should be a couple of people there to hand out literature.

Danielle wants to know if we could register people for Democrats Abroad right at the event. Julie says there are membership forms that could be used. Or David says just get names and contact information and follow up with them afterwards. Sue says get someone to organize the 3 people there to do the signing up.

TO DO - find out what the guidelines are for signing people up at marches.

Nathan Philips Square 11 am to 1 pm to Bay Street to College, finishing at Queen's Park. Julie wonders if there is a restaurant nearby where people could convene.

Feedback on being in the Pride Parade? Yes, should continue to participate. Always do the booth and question is whether to be in the parade. Karin and Martha feel it is important. Danielle says the visibility right now is a good idea. Steve says you should have at least 20 people. Usually get T-shirts.

Someone has to organize t-shirts. Have to register this month to be in parade. Reg says we also have to have insurance. Steve says someone needs to arrange ~~to get~~ insurance for the whole season. Nathan says it would be good to have general t-shirts that could be used more than once.

TO DO: Annie says she'll look into getting t-shirts.

Julie will send her a picture of the t-shirt she got from the DNC.

May door knocking event - at the global meeting in DC in May, they'll have the regional meeting on the 11th (Friday), then there is a global meeting on the 13th^{3th} and 14th and then on Mon and Tues, the 15th and 16th those who stay after the meeting goes to Ceongress and senators to talk about issues important to Americans abroad.

Is there a platform of issues that is developed? - yes

Who develops the platform? - the DPCA organizes that and they organize the meetings with the representatives

Sue says there is a survey on the DPCA on this. She identifies 3 issues she'd like to see: climate change, single payer health and wealth inequality.

TO DO: Sue or Danielle will send the link for this to be distributed to all members

Put out an e-mail with all the information on this and then assign one person to coordinate this - who is going and when. Mari will do this. You can e-mail her at rutkafamily@rogers.com

TO DO: Mari to create information e-mail and coordinate attendance.

Meeting adjourned