



Falmouth, Cape Cod, MA

The Falmouth Democratic Town Committee Newsletter, October 19, 2016

Megan English Braga, Chair of the FDTC, opened the meeting by noting that the GOTV (Get Out The Vote) push would begin four days before the election. There will be plenty of volunteer opportunities available. We will need phoners, canvassers, New Hampshire workers, and people to drive voters to the polls. Many of these efforts are ongoing now and stand out schedules and phoning lists are at the Democratic Headquarters, 180 Teaticket Highway, phone: 508 540 9020. Many standouts are planned for the coming weeks and early voting begins next week.

Treasurer, **David Barrat**, reported that we have \$4823 in the Treasury after paying rent for the Headquarters. We received a \$500 donation from the Cape and Island Democrats; \$3126 is in the **Thelma Goldstein Fund** and we raised \$3400 with the August Fundraiser in Thelma's name.

Mary Pat Flynn, running for County Commissioner, spoke about her campaign and that of **Mark Forest's** for the County Commission. They are running against two Republicans and she noted that Barnstable is very Republican, although the rest of the Cape is Democratic. **Matt Patrick** reminded us that he is



Mary Pat Flynn

running for State Representative for the 3rd Barnstable seat. He has personally knocked on 6000 doors. He discussed solar energy progress in the state and noted that he had created the legislation which paved the way for this expansion. The FDTC presented **Matt** with a check for \$500 to help with his campaign. **Dylan**

Fernandes spoke about his Day of Action this weekend in

Falmouth.



Megan English Braga and Matt Patrick

Megan announced that the remainder of the meeting would be presentations and discussions on the four state ballot questions.

Ballot Question Number 1 concerns Expanded Slot-Machine Gaming. Nobody was ready to speak on this question, but **Richard Latimer** noted that this ballot questions would create yet another way to take money away from people, and that the town of Revere had voted already 2 to 1 against creating such a facility.

Ballot Question Number 3 came next and **Brigitte Laukien** from Lincoln presented on this issue. She urged a “Yes” vote on this question which will help prevent animal cruelty. The ballot would prohibit any confinement of pigs, calves and hens that prevents them from lying down, standing up, and fully



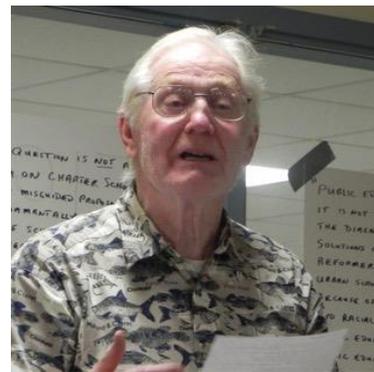
Brigitte Laukien

extending their limbs, or turning around freely. It prevents these farm animals from being immobilized in a cramped cage. Nobody spoke against this question but some questioned how this would work with animals shipped in from out of state, and why it was necessary if most animal producers are headed in this way anyway. All of the main grocery store chains in MA are against animal confinement as mentioned in this question. The speaker noted that California has enacted this kind of legislation without any excess cost to the consumer, or any problems implementing it. No excessive bureaucracy

has been created.

We then skipped to Ballot question 4, the recreational marijuana question. **Kirstin Moritz** presented on this issue. The proposed law would permit the possession, use, distribution and cultivation of marijuana in limited amounts by persons age 21 and older and would remove criminal penalties for such activities. There would be regulatory agencies set up to tax, regulate and govern the implementation. Towns would have some local say in what retail stores could be set up and where. There are many complicated issues and regulations in this question. Four states, Colorado, Oregon, Washington, Alaska and the District of Columbia now allow recreational marijuana and five states, Massachusetts, California, Arizona, Maine and Nevada are voting on a similar question in November. Many of our state legislators oppose the ballot question as do **Baker, Healey, Keating, and Walsh**. Colorado reports substantial income for the state from their decriminalization efforts and some people look to that added income as important for the state. The state can regulate the quality of the marijuana which is already being used in the same way as alcohol is regulated. **President Obama** says that marijuana and alcohol are the same so why penalize people who use it when they are not penalized for drinking. **Clinton, Trump** and **Johnson** have differing views on the issue. There are important questions about the effect on the developing brain and more research must be done on this question, but supporters contend that if marijuana is already in widespread use why not decriminalize what is already being done, regulate it, improve safety and gain state income. There are questions about whether the taxes collected would cover the public health implications and what kind of control could be used on edibles for children. There are also questions about local control limits and how the federal law which makes marijuana illegal would mesh with state laws which would decriminalize. This is a contentious issue with many views pro and con.

Finally we got to the Ballot Question 2 which is on Charter School expansion. First **Lou Turner** presented an argument against this



Lou Turner

question which would lift the cap on the creation of new charter schools and approve up to 12 new charter schools or enrollment expansions in existing charter schools each year. He noted the value of school choice for parents who are searching for the best public school for their children. Charter schools are public schools which offer longer school days and can offer specialized topics. There are many inner city children waiting for entrance into charter schools. By lifting the cap on enrollment, more children could attend these public schools, especially in the state's lowest performing school districts.



Peter Waasdorf

Peter Waasdorf presented the case against this question. He characterized this as a move toward privatization of public schools. He stated that there is “dark money” behind this question with business interests pursuing profit. He noted that 180 school committees statewide have voted against the question, including Falmouth’s school committee. He said that there are currently empty seats in charter schools so why the need for expansion. This question will not impact the Cape as we have not reached saturation. Richard Latimer spoke about the union busting nature of charter schools as unions are not allowed. There was dispute over how much money

local school districts lose as a result of losing students to charter schools as the transitional state education aid for each student lost lessens over the years. Money and effort should go to fixing local public schools he urged.

The meeting was adjourned quickly so that we could get home to watch the last Presidential debate

Submitted by **Kirstin Moritz**, Newsletter Editor and photos by **Martha Gillis**, FDTC photographer .

Calendar:

November 8th: Election Day. Please contact the Democratic Town Committee Headquarters at 180 Teaticket Highway to help with the GOTV. Call the office at **508 540 9020** to connect to opportunities.

Nov. 16th: Monthly meeting of the FDTC at the Gus Canty Center at 7 p.m. Tentative topic planned is the Millionaire’s Tax.

FDTC Officers:

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Annual membership Fiscal Year: April 1, 2016 to March 31, 2017

Name: Address:

Precinct:

Email Address:

Phone:

Elected Committee Member: \$25 a year

Associate Member: \$15 a year

Newsletter by U.S. Mail is \$10 extra a year

Total Donation: Please mail to FDTC, PO Box 312, Falmouth, MA 02541