

CDCC Meeting Minutes [DRAFT]  
September 10, 2020, 7pm

- I. The meeting was called to order by Chair Warren Behr. The rules were suspended by voice vote to avoid calling of the role, and minutes of the April 7, 2020 meeting were approved.
- II. Officer reports: Warren made the obvious point that the 2020 election is upon us, and it's time for us to get to work. Vice-chair Elizabeth Baldwin told us that phone banks are already up and running, and encouraged us to sign up for phone banks that will initially be on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays from 6:30pm–8:30pm.
- III. Treasurer Bill McAvinney presented the proposed budget for the year ahead. He told us that we have raised \$11,600 to date from our fundraiser, and we expect to reach around \$14,000 when all pledged donations are received. Given that we raise around \$15,000 in a normal year, this is an exceptional result during the pandemic. Bill proposed an operating budget of \$3,900, which is the same as spent in 2018, the last election year. Fundraiser printing and mailing expenses will also be similar to 2018, but campaign-specific expenditures will be quite different this year than previously because we can't set up an office. What we would normally spend on an office and infrastructure support will instead be spent more directly on volunteer and campaign support. So far these expenses include Zoom costs for phone banking, and postcards and postage for mailings to voters. We might be able to provide office support for parts of the country that are able to open physical offices, and we might be able to support travel costs for physical GOTV workers in Pennsylvania and elsewhere. We are also exploring what we can do legally to support campaign volunteers and coordinated party activities in other states. All told, we hope to have election expenditures of \$35,500, so our total expenses will be \$39,450.

The budget was approved unanimously.

- IV. A resolution in support of House Bill H.3924, An Act Enabling Local Options for Tenant Protections, was introduced. After a thoughtful debate, the resolution was adopted by a large majority, with one vote in opposition.
- V. Our speaker and esteemed Chair Emeritus Brian Corr, speaking on the topic "Systemic Racism and Politics During the Pandemic," shared with us some of his family history, including the amazing fact that his grandmother's grandfather was born in Africa around 1845 and was captured and enslaved. Decades after the end of the legal slave trade, he was transported by slave traders in a slave ship to this country and was sold to a judge in Alabama. Thus slavery, which seems so long ago, is in some ways quite recent — Brian grew up knowing his grandmother who grew up knowing her grandfather, a captured

slave. We need to keep in mind then that systemic racism, rather than being an abstract concept or a narrow label for specific actions, actually lies at the core of our recent history and our entire society.

As the immediate past president of NACOLE (the National Association for Civilian Oversight of Law Enforcement), Brian has spoken in the last few months with people around the country about civilian oversight of their police departments in Baltimore, Philadelphia, Washington D.C., Chicago, Madison WI, and elsewhere. Clearly the pandemic has intensified these conversations around the nature of policing and public safety.

Brian's approach is rooted in the following framework: Our society is driven by a deep-seated fear, sense of scarcity, and Dr. King's "giant triplets" of racism, militarism, and extreme materialism; and our response can be understood in terms of the "three faces of power," conceptualized by the [Grassroots Policy Project](#) as

1. Immediate change (voting, lobbying, implementing concrete projects)
2. Building the infrastructure to achieve these things
3. Worldview and ideology (changing how people think about the nature of the world).

To understand why we are where we are in this present moment of confronting societal racism, we need to understand the past. In the recent past, we have seen a larger movement for police reforms and an increasing national consciousness about structural racism. In a broader historical context, disparate racial treatment in this land is a story going back at least 400 years — as Dr. King said, our nation was born in genocide. So as we think about where we go from here, we need to think about where we are today; and where we are today is influenced by this deep past as well as by more recent movements, and also by the current climate of intense concern about many other factors such as the pandemic, climate change, everything that flows from the occupant of the White House, and much more. It is all connected.

When we look at systems of oppression, we can take a couple of different approaches — we can recognize that this is a very old story, will take a long time to fix, we need to keep working; and/or we can recognize that this can't wait, we have to do it today, too many lives have been lost. Given that these are both true and valid approaches, how do we think about what to do? We need to look at the idea of disrupting oppressive systems, but also recognize that government, for all its failures, is an expression of our common goals and needs, and a mechanism for achieving these common objectives. So, mindful of a White House currently occupied by a Disrupter-In-Chief, we must ask ourselves how we can disrupt systems of injustice without disrupting systems that actually take care of people and make a difference. Seeing government as an oppressive force that must be

dismantled only addresses one side of the equation, neglecting the objective of coming together to support one another.

So how do we create a society in which what we do is help people to be better, and not by telling them what to do, but by supporting them? In a recent article “[...But does my Black Life Matter](#),” Brian pushes against the notion that, in order to be “authentic,” one must believe or act in certain ways. No one gets to define how someone else can be authentically who they are. But as we think about structural racism in politics in our society today, this defining of others is so much of what we’re seeing — primarily from people who want to tear things down, tear down the legacy of President Obama, tear down the legacy of the civil rights movement, tear down the legacy of women’s suffrage, of Stonewall, of equal marriage. We can’t inadvertently support their destructive work by using destructive tactics. We can’t out-disrupt them. We have to live and work in the way we want things to be — if we want a peaceful and just society, we have to treat people in a peaceful and just way. We get angry, we confront injustice — but we do not dehumanize people. We have to be fierce, but we have to be kind and do it from the heart.

For us to reclaim a politics of hope, peace, and justice, we have to find a way to create more peaceful and loving ways of challenge injustice in a way that is respectful and that builds community by bringing people together, not tearing them apart.

- VI. Announcements: Nancy Alach, Cambridge captain of the Biden/Harris campaign, filled us in on the campaign’s progress. Phone banking out-of-state will be the major focus in this pandemic-campaign, and is ramping up fast. To get plugged in, visit (also share & like) the campaign’s [Facebook page](#), and/or email the campaign at [cambridgeforbidenharris@gmail.com](mailto:cambridgeforbidenharris@gmail.com). [Nicolas Suarez](#) of the Markey campaign talked about unification after a hard-fought primary, and the importance of not only winning the general election against Sen. Markey’s Republican opponent, but also assisting Sara Gideon’s campaign in Maine and helping down-ballot candidates in Massachusetts. The Markey campaign will also be coordinating with the Biden campaign in New Hampshire. Lesley Phillips brought us up to date on the state party’s investigation of the Massachusetts CD1 race. Councilor Patty Nolan reminded us of the importance of Mass. Question 2 on [ranked choice voting](#). Gerry McDonough raised concerns about general election voting in Cambridge.
- VII. Adjourned.