



Meeting Minutes: March 16, 2023

- I. **Welcome New Members:** Glenda called the meeting to order at 7 pm and welcomed a few new members. She also indicated that, in honor and recognition of March as Women's History Month, we have women as guest speakers representing a variety of groups and causes.
- II. **Treasurer's Report:** Nina provided the report, as follows: The checking account balance is \$1285.50, and the savings account balance is \$1100.75, for a total of \$2386.25. This total includes the January and February deposit of \$590 and expenses of \$291.75. We have 68 paid members to date for 2023, and we had over 100 in 2022. More members and funds are needed to mount events, help PDs with materials for voters, and other Voter Mobilization Committee needs as we gear up for 2023.
- III. Our guest speaker from **Mothering Justice** was **Nkenge Browner**. Mothering Justice is a grassroots policy advocacy organization that provides mothers of color in America with the resources and tools to use their power to make equitable changes in policy. They are dedicated to improving the quality of life for families in America by empowering mothers of color to encourage action and to act on American policy on behalf of themselves and their families. Nkenge provided powerful insight into the work of the group. "Being a Black woman is a political experience" (Nkenge). There are several issues that are the highest priorities of the group, and political action is needed: affordable child care, paid time off, basic needs, Black maternal health, and Black moms' death after childbirth. Members go to Lansing to lobby, and they take their children, making it possible for moms to participate: family friendly lobbying. Members are also involved with patient advocacy in hospitals, access to doulas and midwives, helping women in shelters with access to good medical care, and countering bias and racism. A lively Q/A followed. Nkenge indicated that she can be contacted for additional information or involvement.
- IV. **Lauren Jasinski** from **End Gun Violence Michigan** provided us with a comprehensive and powerful view of the work that she and others do in this collaborative organization of many participating organizations--secular, spiritual, local, state-wide, etc. The goal of End Gun Violence Michigan is to consider and decide whether a gun safety ballot initiative is possible in 2024. The issues involved in the numerous bills that have been passed and those still to be passed are multi-disciplinary, involving education, economics, social justice, psychology, criminal justice, etc. Among the bills that will give us more security and hope going forward are: the security storage bill, the background check bill, red flag laws, weapon-free

zones, etc. The MI House and Senate have been hard at work to pass a total of eleven different bills—a true legislative win. Write to JoeTate@house.mi.gov and SenWBrinks@senate.michigan.gov to thank them! Additional bills for the future may include age restrictions, magazine capacity, etc. Appropriations must happen to implement current and future laws. A lively Q/A session followed.

- V. **Michelle Elder & Jessica Jacobs Steinhart** are candidates for the Huntington Woods City Commission. Michelle has been on the Commission since 2019, so she has 4 years of experience already; the only woman on the Commission currently, she hopes to be re-elected. Jessica, currently on the Parks and Rec Advisory Board, is a first-time candidate for the Commission and hopes to earn a seat. They spoke about their perspectives on the future of the city, which they hope will be a bright one to which they will contribute. Michelle advocated for a good local infrastructure, intergenerational programming, and a strong anti-racism committee. Jessica strongly supports transparency in city government and an anti-racism policy as well. A lively Q/A session followed.

VI. **Committee Reports:**

Acknowledgement of **Aarolyn's House of Hope** "Baskets of Hope" donations (you can still contribute: go to aarolyn@houseofhope.org)

American Red Cross Blood Drive volunteer & donor recruitment: both are needed.

By-laws Committee: data and suggestions have been collected; they will be ready by the April meeting.

Membership Committee: list of members is being revised; will be ready by the April meeting.

Voter Mobilization Committee: the new chairs are working on the April report.

Communications Committees: strides are being made to place events on the website and to post on Instagram.

Programming Committee: programs are set through August; details TBA.

Finance Committee: we need more paid members, and donations are welcome.

Community Service Committee: Events are TBA.

VII. **Elected Officials reports**

Both Rep. **Regina Weiss** and Rep. **Natalie Price** provided updates on all that is happening in Lansing. They expressed gratitude to the Club for being so active in achieving a House and Senate majority as well as the trifecta (Governor, AG, Secretary of State). Much gratitude was expressed to them and their colleagues in the House and Senate, especially for recently passing gun control bills (see info

under IV. above). In addition, the repeal of the right to work bill passed, as did the expansion of the LGBTQ+ rights bill and, looking ahead, the repeal of the 1931 abortion law.

Marian McClellan reported on progress in Oak Park with several issues: saving small businesses, helping minority business owners, curbing speeding on side streets, helping people who may be subject to foreclosures, providing safety measures on 9 Mile Road, more art works in outdoor spaces (murals) in OP, and more. Oak Park is hip!

Bobbie Lawrence, for Speaker Joe Tate: Bobbie expressed appreciation for working as Special Assistant to the Speaker and also to the Club for its support and hard work.

- VIII. **Good and Welfare:** Glenda recognized Club members who served on Oak Park's Boards & Commissions, those who served on the voter registration drive (to register high school students), those who have been going to Lansing regularly to represent us, and Sarah who provides tech support.
- IX. **Adjourn:** 9:00 pm; **Next Club meeting** is on Thursday, April 20, at 7 pm, in the OP Community Center.

Respectfully submitted,

Roz Schindler, Secretary