Sandy Spring Civic Association

Ross Body Community Center, Sandy Spring, MD 20860

(Meeting Virtually by Zoom during Covid-19 Pandemic)

April 11, 2022 (by Zoom, for 23rd meeting in a row)

**Attendance**:

Board Members – Dr. Daryl Thorne, President; Basile “Whit” Whitaker, Vice President; Christine Hill Wilson, Treasurer; Douglas Farquhar, Recording and Correspondence Secretary

General body – approximately 11

Guests: Elaine Apter, Montgomery County League of Women Voters; Judy Hruz, Greater Olney Community News

Attendance Total (approximate): 17

**Meeting called to order**: 6:37 p.m. by Daryl

Minutes from the March 2022 meeting were not available and were deferred until the May 2022 meeting.

The meeting began with a PowerPoint presentation by Elaine Apter, representing the Montgomery County League of Women Voters. She began by stating that one of the first things to do, in considering how to get more people to vote, is to look at the reasons people don’t vote. In Montgomery County, she said, more than 80% of registered voters voted in the 2020 election, a very high number. But, in an off-year primary, that number is definitely going to drop. She said that Sandy Spring is in Congressional District 4, state legislative District 14, and councilmanic District 7. Since Maryland only permits voters registered in a political party to cast ballots for candidates running in that party’s primary, and more than 20 percent of registered voters are unaffiliated, the number of those voting in the primary will definitely be less than 80 percent of registered voters.

She said that the steps that could be taken to encourage people to vote include demonstrating how voting machines works (she has done that at Sandy Spring Friends House), and making sure people know about getting mail-in ballots, about early voting (July 7-14), and about the last day to register (June 28) and vote in the primary (July 19). She said that people need to be educated that if they don’t vote in the primary, they are “going to let someone else decide” for them. Elaine was asked how to get the League of Women Voters to attend functions like the Juneteenth celebration at the Sandy Spring Slave Museum and encourage people to register, and she provided a contact. She also said it is a good idea to try to coordinate with public and private high schools to ensure that eligible teenagers know how to register and vote. Elaine encouraged those attending to think creatively: she said she had gone to professional baseball and football games and registered the players, assistants, and coaches. Asked about ranked-choice voting, she said that the League supports it, but it hasn’t been adopted in Maryland yet.

We thanked Elaine for her presentation, and proceeded into Committee reports. Christine delivered the Treasurer’s Report, attached. Christine delivered the report for the scholarship committee, and said that two applications had been received for scholarships, and the deadline for applying was April 15. We talked about the last Candidate Forum, which was schedule for and held on April 18, and included two candidates for the new County Council District 7 seat. There was a discussion about whether the Forum should be virtual, in person, or a hybrid. The vote was 6-4 in favor of another hybrid, with candidates and some attendees in person, and a Zoom link available for those who couldn’t or chose not to attend.

The SSCA monthly meeting in May will address voter registration efforts, and in June will hear a legislative update from our representatives in the state Senate and House of Delegates.

Announcements included Peter Austin’s report of an accident in which he was involved but not seriously hurt in which a car crossed the center line and crashed head-on with another car, killing a passenger in the car that had crossed the center line and causing serious injuries to the driver of the other car. Peter noted that he was fortunately paying close attention and managed to avoid the oncoming car.

A further announcement suggested that those who wanted to contribute to the relief effort to support Ukrainians in the war with Russia should contact St. Andrew’s Ukrainian Orthodox Cathedral on New Hampshire Avenue.

The meeting adjourned at 7:44 p.m.

 Respectfully submitted,

 Douglas Farquhar,

 Recording and Correspondence Secretary

Approved: May \_\_, 2022