

**Gratiot County Democratic Party**  
**General Membership Meeting | January 20, 2025 Minutes**  
Meeting Held at our Office on Wright Ave. Alma, MI

The General Membership meeting was called to order by Chair, Christie Freestone at 7:07.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited and The Indigenous Land Acknowledgment was read by Christie Freestone.

**Leadership Roll Call**

- Christie Freestone (Chair) - P
- Scott Mackenzie (Vice-Chair) - A
- Lisa Gregory (Secretary) - P
- Brent Devries (Treasurer) - P
- Nancy O'Brien (Parliamentarian/Governance) - P

**Committee Reports**

**Secretary's Report:** The secretary's report was accepted as submitted by unanimous consent.

**Treasurer's Report:**

- Brent discussed our finances
  - Since we are a nonprofit, whatever we bring in goes back into what we are doing
  - Our disadvantage is an unpredictable revenue stream, therefore, we need fundraisers targeting both large and small donors
  - Our mission requires money - so we must continue raising funds
  - Our goal now will be more than filling positions, but also getting someone elected
  - Christie and Brent are working on targeting those who have given large donations in the past
  - We are developing a presence in the county - we have a good base to build on!
- By unanimous consent, the treasurer's report was accepted.

**Executive Committee Reports:**

- Michigan Democratic Party Update
  - The Michigan Democratic Party state convention will be held Feb 22 at the Detroit Marriott.
  - Rural counties feel they have not received any help from the MI Dem Party. We are hoping newly elected officials will be more inclusive of rural counties and work on communication.
- 2nd Congressional District
  - One candidate is running to chair the 2nd Congressional District. We think he will be good.

- Gratiot County DEMS Update
  - We have new motivational signs to decorate our windows. Christie will ask Arthur to put them up.
  - Nancy O reported that we will get back into postcard writing. We have 300 postcards to write and we will need to find donations for postage. A postcard writing party will be held soon, and more information will be sent.  
Postcards to Swing States-(<https://turnoutpac.org/postcards/>)
  - Nancy also talked about 5Calls (<https://5calls.org/>) which is a great resource to help us stay up to date on current legislation and how we can get involved to make a political impact.
  - Masonic Pathways will present the film “Join or Die” this Friday.
  - Christie and Nancy O’Brien met with Angie Thompson to request she do a poll worker training. She wants to wait until we are closer to elections. Caroline DeGraaf will have an informational meeting Jan 30 at 4PM at our office to explain the process of becoming a poll worker for anyone interested.
  - Takeaways from the Executive Committee meeting:
    - We would like to establish a presence at county meetings including township, school board, and county commission meetings.
    - Getting people elected and not just running will be our focus going forward.
  - Guest speaker, Kathy May, discussed issues affecting rural Michigan voters and how we can connect with them.

#### Book Club | Nancy O’Brien -

We will discuss *The Frozen River* by Ariel Lawhon at our February 1st meeting.

All of the books chosen for 2025 are listed in the newsletter.

We also have many books available for loan in the office.

#### Candidates/Elections | Bobbie Renshaw/Al Bartholomew

- Bobbie asks each of us to think of friends, neighbors, or family members who would be good to run for office. We need candidates!
- We will meet Friday to honor and say goodbye to Bobbie as she embarks on her new adventure.

#### Community Outreach | Nancy Gott (Renee Faustman)

- We will be collecting pet supplies for the Humane Society through March 31st.
- A Valentine Retro Wreath craft party is scheduled this week.
- We will have another craft-making event in February to make frosted candles.

#### Events/Logistics | Renee Faustmann - no report

#### Fundraising |

- Bottle and Can Drive (ongoing) - Thanks Liz and Bill!

Membership | Caroline DeGraaf

- Membership letters will go out soon. Please be sure to fill out a membership form, even if there are no changes from last year.

Public Relations | Marc Raycraft

- No report

Reid-Knox Forums | Ed Lorenz - We are looking for a new chair

Resolutions/Petitions | Betty Apple - no report

### **Unfinished Business**

- Reid-Knox forums - we are looking for someone to work with Alma College on these forums.

### **New Business**

- Greater Gratiot Chamber of Commerce
  - We would like to join The Greater Gratiot Chamber of Commerce for 2025. The cost is \$325
  - We hope to gain a presence in the community and get some advertising with this membership
  - Al Bartholomew motioned that we join - Michael Lynch supported.

Meeting Adjourned at 8:47

Next Meeting: Monday, February 17, 2025

Respectfully submitted by Lisa Gregory