

**Gratiot County Democratic Party**  
**General Membership Meeting | April 21, 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 7:03.

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) - P
- 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 the treasurer's report.
- By unanimous consent, the treasurer's report was accepted.

**Executive Committee Reports:**

- Michigan Democratic Party Update
  - MDP Rural Caucus Summit - April 10-12 in Sault Ste. Marie
    - Sue Reidel reported that the speaker on Aging was informative. Also, "Talk Less and Listen More" was a good session with the message of being civil to everyone, even when we disagree.
    - Nancy O'Brien reported that the session on "The Youth Vote" was informative and that the message was that the Republican rallies are "fun" for youth. Many well-known MI Democrats spoke. Michael Moore was good. Jocelyn Benson and Garland Gilcrest spoke - both are running for governor. Nancy also reported that she felt that leadership listened and seemed interested in our issues as a rural county in Michigan.
  - Contest Every Race Grant (from Rural Caucus) - Christie applied for this grant for \$2600 which we have received. This grant has certain requirements that we will fulfill this year.
  - Messaging for this week from MI Democratic Party
    - Curtis Hertel is our new president.
    - We need to combat the dangerous Republican agenda. Visit [Mivoter.org](https://mivoter.org) to check out protests. Go to [MIDems.com/mystery](https://midems.com/mystery) to share your story.
    - Trump's approval rating on the economy is at a new low.

- 2nd Congressional District
  - No April meeting of 2nd CD
    - Dennis Kellogg - 2nd CD candidate for U.S. Rep spoke. He is planning to have town hall meetings, and he has been on WJR 760AM radio several times. Dennis also reported that he will be spending a week in Washington DC with the National Farmers Union.
  - Empty Chair Town Hall with Moolenaar - every county is encouraged to do one of these.
- Gratiot County DEMS Update
  - Committee Chair Meeting with Executive Committee - Lisa reported.
  - Protest Marches
    - MyMichigan hospital - 4/22/2025 from 3-5PM
    - John Moolenaar office in Clare - 4/29/2025 from 3-5PM
    - Social Security march - Wright Avenue - 5/5/2025 3-5PM
  - Staffing the Dem office - We need more folks to cover the office. Please sign up either online or in the office.

Book Club | Nancy O'Brien - May 3rd book club *Becoming Madam Secretary* by Stephanie Dray.

Candidates/Elections | Al Bartholomew - no report from Al, but he and Christie are working on an informational event for potential candidates.

Community Outreach | Nancy Gott

- Pet rescue donations have been delivered. Thank you to everyone who donated.
- Nancy also shared that we should focus on "Protect" instead of "Protest."

Finance Committee - Brent is looking for someone to be a backup for him. He is also planning a meeting with his committee

Events/Logistics | Renee Faustmann - no report

Fundraising - Thank you to Bill Weaver and Reg Fleury for returning our cans. It is appreciated!

Membership | Caroline DeGraaf

- Caroline is coordinating volunteers from our party to help with Chamber of Commerce fundraisers
  - April 24th - 4 Dems will be attending Athena lunch at Masonic
  - May 1st - she will be contacting members to help out at their 90s Bash fundraiser
  - May 22nd - we have volunteers to participate in the sidewalk chalk Chamber event
  - Rural Urban Day - she will need 8-9 people to serve at Rural Urban Day June 26 and is hoping to have our new t-shirts by then

Public Relations | Marc Raycraft

- Highland Festival Parade - We are registered to be in the parade and will follow basically the same format as last year. We need candy (or toys) to throw. The parade will be Memorial Day (May 24th) and usually starts about 9AM. More information will follow.

Resolutions/Petitions | Betty Apple - no report

### **Unfinished Business**

- Marches/Protests - ongoing
- Adopt-a-Highway - Helen S. - we will do this in July.

### **New Business**

- Focus Groups
  - Education - Michele Ringle
  - Healthcare - Leyla Moosavi
  - Environment - Gary Melow
  - Economy - Michael Lynch
  - Farming/Rural Issues - Dennis Kellogg
  - Immigration - (to be filled)
  - Constitutional Crisis/Coup - Bruce Moss
- We have a committee working on updating our Mission and Goals.

Meeting Adjourned at 8:30

Next Meeting: General Membership Meeting - Monday, May 19, 2025

Respectfully submitted by Lisa Gregory