



New Haven Democracy Fund

"To ensure that all the citizens of New Haven have a fair and meaningful opportunity to participate in the election of mayor."
New Haven Code of General Ordinances, Chapter 2, Article XI, §2-821 • Established in 2007 • democracyfund@newhavenct.net



DEMOCRACY FUND BOARD MEETING

6:00 pm Wednesday November 16, 2022

Mayor's conference room #2

New Haven Democracy Fund Board, Sergio Rodriguez, Chair

Members: Aaron Goode, James O'Connell, William Wynn, James Bhandary-Alexander

Democracy Fund Administrator: Alyson Heimer

To join the meeting please use one of the options below:

Web Browser: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82382679039> ; Meeting ID: 823 8267 9039

Phone: Please dial by your location

+1 301 715 8592 US (New Haven, CT) Meeting ID: 823 8267 9039

+1 312 626 6799 US (Outside New Haven) Meeting ID: 823 8267 9039

Meeting is in person with online attendance possible.

AGENDA:

- I. Meeting was called to order at 6:18pm.
- II. Motion to approve minutes from October monthly meeting moved by Bhandary-Alexander.
4-0-0.
- III. Report from the Administrator
 - A. Alder Hererra's proposal:
 1. Candidate committees must inform contributors of any processing fees for online or credit card donations. Websites and forms must make those costs and who will pay those fees clear before collecting contributor's information

Alder Claudia Hererra joined the meeting via Zoom to explain the intent of her proposed addition to the 2023 candidate contract. She expressed concern that during her campaign people who wanted to donate to her campaign were surprised at the end of an online contribution form to learn that there were additional processing fees that would be tacked onto a contribution. This potentially pushed people to not donate, or to wait to donate until an in person event where cash or check could be written. This delay slows the cash flow to a candidate. Adding the disclaimer at the beginning of the form would

be a transparency measure designed to provide all the information to the contributor before collecting theory personal information.

Members of the board, including Rodriguez, Wynn, and Bhandary Alexander expressed support for the concept.

O'Connell, who referenced his service multiple times as a treasurer for campaign committees, expressed concern over the burden of this cost being shifted to a campaign. Many times the cost is built into the billing to the contributor as a way of keeping reporting clean. Should the cost be shifted to the campaign instead of a disclaimer that may have the negative consequence of discouraging contributions altogether.

Goode provided insight that this is an issue that might be better discussed, and possibly only could be discussed, at the state or municipal level and was not something the Board would have sole discretion to demand of candidates. The topic seems to have come up in prior years in Hartford and there may be a bill in the state legislature this year going through GAE. Goode recommended that the board see how that bill advances before the Board makes a decision.

Administrator Heimer offered to submit testimony in favor of the concept if Alder Hererra were to bring a similar bill to the New Haven Board of Alders for their consideration, as it is fitting with the pro-campaign finance transparency that the New Haven Democracy Fund seeks to uphold.

At the Advice of the Chair, the measure was tabled.

B. 2023 documentation approval.

Documents were presented by the Administrator at the October meeting with a review and comment period now closed. Motion to approve 2023 election documentation made by Wynn. 5-0-0.

C. 2023 calendar approval.

The calendar for candidate filings with the NHDF was submitted in October and left to the Board for their review. Bhandary-Alexander motioned to pass the calendar as presented. 5-0-0.

Point of clarification, the calendar for the monthly board meetings will be presented and voted on at the December monthly meeting.

D. The NHDF Holiday party will be Tuesday December 6, 2022 at 5:00pm at Trinity on Orange Street. Alders, Community Management Team chairs, department of the City

Clerk, Finance, and the Mayor's office will all be invited to attend. A budget of \$600 for food has been set.

IV. Report from the Chair

A. **Executive Session** to discuss personnel matters and the RFQ results

V. Meeting will adjourn following the executive session.