

THREE PARKS INDEPENDENT DEMOCRATS

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May 8, 2013

FEATURED TOPIC &

SPEAKERS: Candidates for the 6th Council District

DATE: WEDNESDAY, MAY 8TH

TIME: 8:00 PM

PLACE: The Youth Hostel
891 Amsterdam Avenue at 103rd Street

ROOM: Chapel/Ballroom

AGENDA

7:45 PM Sign-in
8 PM Call to Order

1. Speakers for candidates to be endorsed
2. Endorsement voting
MAYOR
COMPTROLLER
PUBLIC ADVOCATE
DISTRICT ATTORNEY FOR MANHATTAN
MANHATTAN BORO PRESIDENT
DISTRICT LEADERS
3. Speakers – City Council District #6 candidates
4. Adjournment

CALENDAR

Wednesday May 8, 2013
Three Parks Meeting, 8pm
CITY COUNCIL FORUM - 6th Council District
Youth Hostel, 891 Amsterdam Ave at 103d St.

Wednesday May 22, 2013
Board meeting, 7pm
Three Parks Meeting, 8pm
CITY COUNCIL FORUM - 7th Council District
Youth Hostel , 891 Amsterdam Ave at 103d St.

Wednesday June 12, 2013
Three Parks Meeting, 8pm
Pizza and Petitions
Youth Hostel , 891 Amsterdam Ave at 103d St.

Wednesday June 26, 2013
Board Meeting
Youth Hostel , 891 Amsterdam Ave at 103d St.

President's Column

By Elizabeth Kellner

Tough Times for True Blue Believers

For those of us who participate in and care about politics at any level, it's been a tough couple of years to keep the faith. Journalists from every media outlet, academics, pundits, good government reformers, prestigious law enforcement officials, and our friends, neighbors, and family are only too ready to provide constant demoralizing reminders of the embarrassing string of scandals which have come to light in The Empire State. Whether it's sexual, money or power lust, those of us who continue to believe that democracy can work, that we do have honest hard working elected officials and candidates, can be hard pressed to defend civic engagement against this barrage. "Why do you bother?", "They're all crooks", "It makes no difference who is in there" are frequent refrains we may be called upon to respond to, and all too convenient excuses to tune out and turn away.

There is plenty of blame to go around, and the solutions and reforms are complex and varied, but one thing is sure. Nothing will change overnight, and nothing will happen unless masses of voters are mobilized to demand that change. However, one thing a person has pretty much total control over is whether they vote, but voter turnout in New York State is dismal and declining, despite our solid "blue" credentials. "We" elected these disgraced politicians, especially downstate Democrats, and yet that "we" is just a tiny fraction of those eligible to vote. In 2012 only 49% of eligible New York State voters turned out, compared to 59% in 2008. In 2010, when every statewide office was contested, only somewhere between 32% and 40% voted. Only 13% of registered Democrats participated in the 2010 primary. Turnout for the 2009 city elections was a scant 29%. This year is one of wholesale change throughout city government, coming on the heels of an especially ugly series of indictments. The connection between corruption and voter turnout is obvious, even if not directly cause and effect. Our system of voting is far from perfect, and no doubt there are hassles and inconveniences, but while we wait for upgrades so to speak, we can't stop trying.

Even if it takes time to get campaign finance reform, better legislative ethics oversight and transparency, or an end to certain budget practices vulnerable to abuse, we can register people to vote, get them to sign nominating petitions and motivate them to go the polls all on our own. For better or for worse, we have our opening to start the conversation -- the rogues gallery of New York politicians where more portraits are sure to hang. It's the silver lining, glass half full response to all the bad news.

District Leader's Report

By Bob Botfeld

This month I will discuss the candidates for the offices we will vote for in the May 8 and May 14 endorsement meetings. While I hope, of course, that you share my views, until the club votes, these are my opinions and not the club's.

6th City Council District

In this contest there are five immensely qualified, intelligent, sincere, knowledgeable candidates who have been actively involved in our community and its issues for years: Debra Cooper, Noah Gotbaum, Mark Landis, Helen Rosenthal, and Mel Wymore. Each of them is an important part of the fabric of our Upper West Side community and has helped make this a better place to live.

Both Helen Rosenthal and Mel Wymore are past chairs of Community Board 7. Helen was an outspoken proponent of the 2007 contextual zoning bill and for years has been an important supporter of progressive local and state candidates and issues. Mel shepherded the innovative Retail Zoning through the Community Board with nearly unanimous approval that was crucial in getting City Planning to adopt the final plan. Also without Mel's support for the extension to 110th street, the original plan would not have been modified.

Mark Landis as an activist, organizer and pro-bono attorney has been the classic engaged West Side activist whether representing tenants, opposing the West Side stadium, monitoring elections in El Salvador, protecting Riverside Park or simply doing the mundane tasks as a long-term Democratic District Leader.

Debra Cooper is one of the most passionate advocates for economic justice, women's issues, and progressive causes that I know. She would be a driving force in the council.

Noah Gotbaum has a strong background as founder of NY Cares and president of our local Community Education Council and is a compelling proponent for preserving our public schools from erosion by the charter school movement.

Our district will be well served by any of these long-time West Side activists.

7th City Council District

In this newly shaped district that stretches from 96th street to 165th street on the west side of Manhattan, there may be as many as seventeen candidates. There is only one candidate, Mark Levine, who is running a district-wide candidacy and who is also familiar with the issues in our Manhattan Valley neighborhood. Mark's intelligence, organizational skills, drive,

bilingualism, and long history of effective activism including creating a credit union for low income residents and founding a successful progressive organization make him by far the best candidate for the 7th Council District. We can work with him and I support Mark Levine.

Manhattan Borough President

We have four excellent candidates for Manhattan Borough President -- Councilmembers Gale Brewer, Robert Jackson, and Jessica Lappin and former Community Board 1 (CB1) President Julie Menin.

Robert Jackson and Jessica Lappin have been effective Councilmembers for their districts. They are both intelligent, articulate spokesmen for their communities and a progressive view of government. Jackson is best known for his critical leadership in obtaining equitable state funding for New York City schools through his work with the Campaign for Fiscal Equity. On the City Council Lappin was very helpful when the West Side zoning bills were under discussion. All four candidates have expressed similar views on the recent hot issues of stop and frisk and infill development at NYCHA.

In her tenure as Chair of CB1 Julie Menin deftly handled a number of serious and potentially divisive issues including the Park 51 Mosque controversy. Under her leadership, CB1 and her downtown community's support of the mosque made a unified statement against anti-Muslim prejudice. She also resolved separate controversies over the use of public space first by Occupy Wall Street and second by a religious group. Finally she created innovative programs to help small businesses in her community.

But there is only one tireless Gale Brewer. She has supported and served our community for many years. While not officially the Councilmember for Three Parks Independent Democrat's district, she has served many in our community with an efficiently staffed office, somehow attended every public meeting, and knows everything about the district and Manhattan. She initiated and for two years pushed through the unique Upper West Side Retail Zoning bill. Recently she was the key sponsor of the Paid Sick Leave bill.

For these and many other reasons, I support Gale Brewer for Manhattan Borough President.

NYC Public Advocate

The effectiveness of the Public Advocate's office has been greatly diminished since Mayor Bloomberg and Speaker Quinn joined forces in 2009 to cut the Public Advocate's budget by 40%. One of the primary functions of the Public Advocate is to be a watchdog over the performance of City agencies and to

be the public's advocate when we have difficulty dealing with these City agencies.

To watch over the City agencies it is better to know them. The two candidates that have the most experience in government are State Senator Dan Squadron and City Councilmember Letitia James. Squadron is a young, articulate, and knowledgeable State Senator who has sponsored needed state legislation on ethics and campaign finance reform.

City Councilmember Letitia James passionately opposed the Atlantic Yards mega development. An attorney, James previously worked both for Legal Aid and as head of the Brooklyn office of the State Attorney General under Eliot Spitzer. Currently she has several attorneys working in her city council office both to aid constituents and to continue to monitor the promises made to the community by the Atlantic Yards developers under the Community Benefits Agreement.

I am supporting Letitia James for Public Advocate because I believe that her passion for her constituents and her inclination to use legal tools, as Mark Green in his term effectively did, are the best use of the diminished resources of the public advocate's office.

NYC Comptroller

This is an easy decision and not just because there is only one candidate for Comptroller, Borough President Scott Stringer. Scott has been an excellent Borough President and he will be a fine Comptroller. The Borough President has helped kickstart the anti-fracking movement in New York City; anticipated and helped create a blueprint for the Upper West Side retail zoning bill; and documented the need for and fostered additional green markets particularly in the lower income districts of Manhattan. Scott has also reinvigorated Community Boards. While the Comptroller's office requires some different skill sets, I am confident that Scott will be a fine Comptroller because one of his key talents is his ability to find and manage effectively intelligent, energetic staff that is enthusiastic about serving the City's best interest.

NYC Mayor

This is the most difficult to evaluate because no candidate could ever have the equivalent experience of managing and administering a government as large and complex as New York City. My endorsement selection is arrived at by process of elimination. Speaker Quinn adheres too closely to many of the misguided development and pro-charter school policies of Bloomberg and is insufficiently sensitive on issues important to the marginally employed such as Paid Sick Leave. I like Sal Albanese but I do not think he has sufficient resources to run a full campaign.

John Liu and Bill De Blasio both have been vocal on working class issues such as minimum wage and worker's rights. Bill Thompson is smart and thoughtful but was not as aggressive in differentiating himself from Bloomberg's policies during Thompson's tenure as Comptroller. Bill De Blasio appears to have the deepest understanding of problems of income inequality. De Blasio supports an income tax surcharge on the wealthy. At the same time, De Blasio's positions on minimum wage, affordable housing, and economic development seem to me to be the most measured and thoughtful and recognize both the complexity of administering the city with the overriding need to provide a financial base for working class. In addition, because of the fundraising controversy, Liu has potentially less chance to surpass Quinn in a runoff. For these reasons, I support Bill De Blasio for Mayor.

Lastly, it is been a privilege to serve as District Leader these past years. Cynthia and I are both running again this year and I hope you will again support us.

NEW YORK CITY LABOR CHORUS
ANNUAL CONCERT
SATURDAY MAY 18TH, 8PM
TRIBECA PERFORMING ARTS
CENTER
Contact Judy Wood for tickets

Alliance for Global Justice
By Erl Kimmich

At the end of March my fifteen-year-old son and I traveled on a peace delegation to Colombia sponsored by the Alliance for Global Justice. We are both pacifists and were enheartened that the Santos government and the FARC-EP had begun to hold meetings to arrive at a negotiated peace. We knew that Colombia was extremely troubled, suffering from years of conflict fueled by billions of dollars of US aid and meddling. We knew that the so-called drug interdiction program known as Plan Colombia not only failed to slow the flow of cocaine to the United States, but also caused:

- A) the dislocation of between 3-5 million people from their homes;
- B) heinous environmental damage from spraying with round up and other toxins;
- C) the murder of untold thousands of civilians;
- D) the torture and imprisonment of thousands of civilians, this continues to the present day, with 5000 more political prisoners now than when Santos took office;

E) Colombia to have the worst human rights record of the hemisphere;

F) the forced transfer of millions of hectares of land that belonged to family farmers to private mining; agri-business; oil extraction; drug trafficking and ranching interests; this is also ongoing under the current government

G) the formation and proliferation of death squads called "paramilitaries";

H) and the murder of union organizers and any others who are seen as a threat to the interests of large corporate interests.

In a village in the Tolima province we wandered up the hill from the town square to the church. The soldiers came and quizzed us. What were we doing there? Who brought Christianity to Colombia? The Conquistadors? Wrong answer! It was the missionaries. The soldiers carried automatic weapons slung across their shoulders. Just then, the union organizer, I'll call Jose, we were riding with told us we should walk back down to the square.

To my surprise people had gathered. Mostly men. Some in work clothes, some in after work clothes, some with cowboy hats, some with machete on their waists, and some with the popular towel thing the men carry folded over one shoulder. They brought some plastic lawn chairs for us to sit facing them on the basketball court. We formed a row of fourteen opposite about thirty villagers. We introduced ourselves as US citizens come to learn from Colombians about their peace process and to learn what if anything we can do in support of their efforts.

About a half dozen soldiers had followed us down from the church. Now they took turns walking around the perimeter of the basketball court. One of them was taking pictures of everybody. It kind of gave me the creeps, like when the cops take pictures of us at demonstrations here in the states. Soon families with children started joining the coffee farmers and banana growers. Slowly, one, two and then three men started talking about what was going on.

Things are difficult said the first man.

Another man agreed. It is difficult.

Yes its true, the third one said.

What are the specific things that are bothering you? asked Jose the union organizer.

We continue to produce crops and we cannot get them to market.

The government had promised school books and teachers and the books had not materialized and neither had the teachers.

The hospital near the church is not equipped. We don't even have an ambulance.

The government has promised, but has not lived up to their promises and now they are going to flood our valley for hydro-electric power they will sell to the cities far away from here.

One after another the men would stand and state their concerns:

We would be forced to buy Monsanto seeds.

We have problems with garbage and sewage. You have to see the river of garbage that flows down our hillside into the river. You have to bring your cameras, said one excited guy.

OK, but before we go, what is it that these people from the United States can do? asked Jose, What is that we Colombians can tell them they can do when they get back to their hometowns?

They can tell the people in the United States that the aid that they are sending to Colombia is not being used for anything good for the people. Said one guy.

Tell them to support us in our struggle to end the war. Tell them to let their government know we do not need Plan Colombia.

We don't want free trade agreements; and genetically modified seeds. said another.

We want the right to determine our own destiny without interference from the North. We want to thank you for making the trip to visit with us.

We thank you first of all for coming here and being with us.

To learn more about supporting the peace process in Colombia please visit: AFGJ.org.

Any fool can pull a gun trigger and blow out another human life.

A gun is much better at killing than an arrow, a club or a knife.

Hurrah, hurray for the N.R.A.

Another kid was shot today.

The little kids were playing in the school when in came this gun-toting fool;

He shot them: bang, bang; they cried and bled till twenty of them were stone-cold dead.

Hurrah, hurray for the N.R.A.

Another kid was shot today.

WALKERS OF THE WORLD UNITE
THE GREAT SAUNTER around
Manhattan Island – 32 miles
Saturday, May 4th
Register @ shorewalkers.org

CITYCOUNCILMEETING.ORG
The website of a political satire
Our own Barbara Lee is one of
the stars
Tickets are free, just go to the
website

HURRAH, HURRAY FOR THE N.R.A

By Cy Adler

It was play time at Sandy Hook School
in a quiet New England town one morn;
the winter sun shown on the green lawn
when in burst a gun-packing fool.

Hurrah, hurray for the N.R.A.

Another kid was shot today.

Taller, shorter, smaller or bigger
all any fool needs is loaded gun
to go bang, bang, bang and have some fun.

Any fool can pull a gun trigger

Hurrah, hurray for the N.R.A.

Another kid was shot today.

District Leader Report Cynthia Doty

Endorsements for City-wide and Borough-wide Races

In May Three Parks will be voting to endorse candidates for the September Democratic Primary. On May 8th we will vote for Mayor, Comptroller, Public Advocate, Manhattan Borough President, and District Leader. On May 22nd we will vote for the 6th and 7th City Council candidates. I have worked with many of the candidates and am impressed with their credentials and record of service. In many races the choice is a difficult one, but I have decided to endorse the following candidates.

MAYOR

I am endorsing John Liu for Mayor. He has done an excellent job as Comptroller and in that office has proven to be an aggressive and vocal counterweight to Mayor Bloomberg. His audits have exposed Bloomberg's wastefulness and abuse of power, from his overuse of consultants for city contracts to the scandalous City Time contract to the warehousing of apartments and mismanagement by NYCHA administrators. Having worked as Comptroller and dealt with all the complex financial aspects of city government, John has developed an invaluable perspective on how to address the city's problems.

John's proposals show a complete understanding of the city's economy, believing that New York's growing income disparity is our number one problem that can and must be addressed by government actions. He has called for raising the minimum wage to \$11.50 an hour and indexing it to the CPI since the cost of living in NYC is so high and higher wages will provide a real way to lift people out of poverty. He has also proposed raising taxes on the wealthy, ending corporate tax loopholes and eliminating "corporate welfare" currently given out by the Economic Development Corporation. John has outlined specific detailed programs to create jobs and support union workers and their families, including major initiatives to rebuild our infrastructure as we rebuild after Super Storm Sandy that would create thousands of jobs. As Comptroller he has already developed a capital

acceleration program that will create 8000 jobs and has reached out to the Clinton Global Initiative to fund more jobs programs. John also supports the creation of "real" affordable housing, the restructuring of NYCHA management and the preservation of public housing. He has been a vocal opponent of stop and frisk and has called for a moratorium on the closing of schools and the collocation of charter schools. John is a strong supporter of public education and has proposed free CUNY tuition for the top 10% of NYC public high school students and for allowing more parent and teacher involvement in school governance. He has also committed to hiring an educator to head our schools and a housing expert to chair NYCHA.

As for the questions concerning the possible missteps of his campaign treasurer, I believe they in no way reflect on the ethics of John Liu who has committed to very high standards and strict limits on his campaign donations: he has pledged to not accept any donations from anyone doing business with the city or anybody who wants to do business with the pension funds or any money from Wall Street. After three years of an investigation that has wiretapped his phone, reviewed 1 million documents and messages and interrogated thousands of his supporters, there are still no charges filed against John himself. This case feels like a politically motivated witch-hunt, and I am convinced that the court case will show no corruption or wrong doing by John Liu.

John Liu will make an excellent Mayor for all New Yorkers (especially the 99%) and his election will be an historic one, being the first Asian American mayor of New York.

PUBLIC ADVOCATE

While there are many good candidates for this office, I am endorsing Letitia James. Her initial election to City Council was an upset that had the support of Labor and progressive groups, and her record of service has been true to those roots. I first worked with Tish years ago in the fight against the developer Ratner and the Atlantic Yards project and Tish was a supporter in the fights against eminent domain and Columbia's Manhattanville expansion. Tish is an articulate and passionate supporter of the

99% and will be a wonderful public advocate.

MANHATTAN BOROUGH PRESIDENT

I am endorsing Gale Brewer for Borough President. Gale has dedicated her life to public service and gained a wealth of experience far beyond that of any of the other candidates. Gale has dealt with and negotiated solutions to countless issues from preserving neighborhoods through land use and zoning, to promoting public education and neighborhood schools, to fighting for small businesses, to expanding technology for government operations and underserved New Yorkers, to fighting for fair rents, affordable housing, and homeless services, to promoting community and roof top gardens, to supporting senior centers and social service programs. Gale is a tireless worker who attends every community function, hires an excellent staff (including a successful internship program), and tries to help all of her constituents. She will bring this same work ethic to the office of Borough President and thereby successfully serve all of Manhattan.

COMPTROLLER

Scott Stringer is running unopposed on the Democratic line for Comptroller, so my endorsement is unnecessary, but I am proud to do so. He has excellent credentials and experience and is well suited to be our next Comptroller. His record as Borough President has shown he understands city government and the financial workings of this city. He has undertaken many investigative reports exposing government problems and mismanagement that will prepare him for the Comptroller audits. Plus he has initiated many progressive programs and convened innovative conferences that demonstrate his willingness to bring new ideas and approaches to government. Scott may face a Republican opponent in November, and we will be well served with him as our candidate.

Eligible Voters List

Voting for candidates will take place - the ballot box will open at 8:30pm for one hour only so that ballots can be counted with time for runoff balloting if necessary. Before the ballot box opens, club members will be recognized to speak on behalf of candidates as follows: one minute per speaker, and no more than two speakers per candidate.

Eligible Voters List for May 8, 2013

Cyrus	Adler
Susan	Andrews
Mollie	Bailey
Emily	Baldwin
Susan J.	Baldwin
William	Baldwin
Robert	Bardin
Samuel	Bartos
Bobbie	Beck
Margret	Beels
Shoshannah	Benmosche
Marcia	Benowitz
Bob	Botfeld
Marla	Brunker
Isabella	Calisi-Wagner
David	Camacho
Theresa	Canter
Joyce	Cashman-Selig
Daniel Marks	Cohen
Melissa	Cohen
Alex J.	Colgan
Margaret	Collins

Wendy	Dannett
John	Davenport
Sydney	de Jongh
LaMae	de Jongh
Wendy	Diller
Betty Jean	Dixon
Cynthia	Doty
Renna	Draynel
Gerry Ann	Fifer
Alan	Flacks
Ellen	Flax
Ernestine	Gallagher
Mariana	Garcia
Mary J.	Geissman
Daniele	Gerard
Louisa	Gilbert
Robert	Ginsberg
Pilar	Gomez
Noah	Gotbaum
Bonnie	Gould
Robert	Gumbs
Janet	Harvilchuck
Margot	Herrera
Jacqueline	Huey
Marsha	Jacobson
David C.	Kaplan
Rita	Kardeman
Michael	Katz
Elizabeth	Kellner
Krob	
Erlend	Kimmich
Kenneth	Laufer
David	Lazarus
Barbara	Lee
Gail	Leinwall
Estelle	Levy
Thomas	Lopez-Pierre
Marie	Lunn
Betsy	Malcolm
Bruce	Markens
Mary Ann	Marks
John	Martinen
Lynn Bender	Max
Stephen	Max

Merle	McEldowney
Abigail	McGloster
George	McGuinness
Alex	Medwedew
Minda	Meister
Gail	Meyers
Jonathan	Miller
Christopher	Mooney
Brenda	Morgan
Derrick	Mullins
Bradley	Muro
Forrest C.	Murphy
John	Newell
Joan	Ogden
Josh	Pepper
Hank	Perlin
Wilhelmina	Perry
Annie	Petrus
Corine	Petty
Geraldine	Phillips
Nicole	Polier
Florence	Puccetti-Hepner
Zead	Ramadan
Carol	Reisner
Eve	Remba
Suzanne	Samelson
Katherine	Samuels
Milivoy	Samurovich
Carl Joseph	Scalise
Doris	Schreiber
Ray	Schwartz
Irene	Shrier
Rachael	Smit
Mildred	Speiser
Allan	Spitz
Roschel	Stearns
Holland	
Michael	Stearns
Clara	Taylor
Stephanie	Tegnazian
Lynn	Thomas
Deborah	Thomas

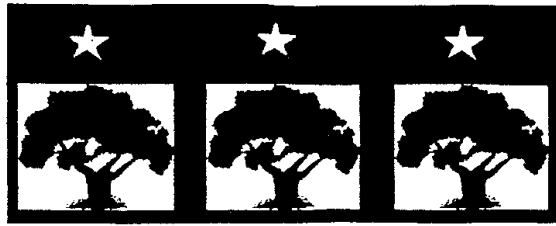
Jane	Thompson
Ken	Tulloch
Ruben	Vargas
Franz	Vila
George	Voorhis
Tim	Walsh
Edith	Weil
Jonathan	Weil
Lauren A.	Williams
Judy	Wood
Vernita	Worrell
Lorraine	Zamora
Gloria	Zeche
Ariel	Zucker-Brull

Voters Eligible if Paid

Thomas	Goggin
Marnie	Hall
David	Kogelman
Marguerite	Lavin
Judith	Medina
Antonine	Momplaisir
Martin	Morand
Rose	Podrasky
Liz	Samurovich
Jacob	Sher
Judith	Solomon
Natalie	Weinstein

To be eligible to vote in the Club election, a member must have attended at least one meeting in the previous six months and have paid 2013 dues. New memberships do not become effective for thirty days, after which a new member must attend at least one meeting to be eligible to vote.

Reminder: Members may not vote at Three Parks if they also vote at other Democratic clubs.



THREE PARKS INDEPENDENT DEMOCRATS
Cathedral Station P.O. Box 1316 • New York, NY 10025 (212) 539-7602

Please pay your 2013 dues by filling out the form below and bringing it to the next meeting or by mailing it with your check to:

*Three Parks Independent Democrats
Cathedral Station P.O. Box 1316
New York, N.Y. 10025
Attn: Treasurer*

2013 MEMBERSHIP FORM

New Member _____

Renewal _____

Membership Category -- Check One

Individual (\$25) _____

Family -- two adults in the same household (\$40) _____

Low Income (\$15) _____

Low Income Family (\$20) _____

Sponsor (\$50) _____ Patron (\$100) _____

Name _____ Date _____

Address _____ Apt. # _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone

(H) _____ (W) _____

Email _____

Check here if you prefer to receive the newsletter via email.

****Please pay your dues with a check or via PayPal – cash and money orders are far more difficult to process. Thanks in advance for your cooperation! Please make out all checks to “Three Parks Independent Democrats - Dues 2013****

Three Parks Independent Democrats
Cathedral Station P.O. Box 1316
New York, N.Y. 10025

NEXT MEETING

**Wednesday, May 8th
CITY COUNCIL CANDIDATES, 6TH DISTRICT**