

PORTSMOUTH NAACP, BRANCH 2070
MEMBERSHIP MEETING, November 7, 2011
1 NEW HAMPSHIRE AVENUE, PEASE INTERNATIONAL TRADEPORT

The meeting was called to order at 7:05 pm by President Fred Ross, with an invocation by Chaplain Irving Heughan.

President's Report

President Fred Ross, Nina Jordan, Ryan Tarr, Juan Cofield, and Bill Davis from the Manchester Branch attended a very encouraging meeting with Governor John Lynch. They discussed issues such as

- Federal money coming to the state but not being distributed with transparency and outreach
- The need for diversity training for members of the police force
- More diversity in hiring
- Programs for sensitivity training for teachers, and training in the implementation of the Bully Law
- The need for the Chamber of Commerce to be more inclusive in hiring and practices.

Fred reported that the Governor was receptive to their ideas, and showed initiative with ideas of his own for dealing with these concerns.

The Durham Police Department is planning a training seminar for officers. Because officers rotate, Phyllis Killam-Abell has suggested putting into place a plan to provide for periodic training on a regular basis.

Racist graffiti that have appeared in Concord have been denounced by Governor John Lynch, the New Hampshire Attorney General, the Assistant Attorney General, and various churches in the area.

Legal Redress

Co-Chair Nina Jordan reported that a hospital intern has contacted the committee complaining of discrimination in employment. Because she was late in filing her claim with the Human Rights Commission, the Commission cannot address the complaint. Nina will send her our list of attorneys willing to work pro bono, on a sliding scale, or on a contingency basis.

Fred has received photos showing injuries sustained by a young man who suffered a police beating after he asked the police to show their identification. The US Department of Justice is investigating the incident.

Veterans Affairs

Fred Ross has distributed, to Executive Committee members who are veterans, copies of a recently published booklet on veterans' benefits. Problems facing returning veterans were again discussed, and members were encouraged to look for ways to help veterans and their families.

GUEST SPEAKERS

Following a reminder by President Ross that the NAACP is a non-partisan organization and will welcome any legitimate political candidate who wishes to speak to the members, Carol Shea-Porter, candidate for Congress from the 1st District, and Jacqueline Cilley, who produces the weekly "Legislative Action Alert" and plans to announce officially in January her candidacy for the governorship of New Hampshire, addressed the meeting.

Carol Shea-Porter recalled growing up with discussions in her family about how much spending the government should do. These discussions assumed a role for government. Now, she says, discussions center on the question of whether government *has* a role. She spoke of programs that are under attack by the far right, such as Medicare and programs to help the needy with heating and food stamps. She emphasized that we *are* the government, and we want a government that represents all of us. She pointed out that although we can streamline government, we must spend and we must pay taxes in order for government to function. She noted that 27,000 millionaires in NH are “catching a free ride.” Those of us in the bottom 99% need to stand together.

Carol said that members of Congress shouldn’t meet other members “halfway to wrong.” We have to win with moderate Republicans who believe government still has a role. She says that we need to “rebuild, restore, and reinvest.”

In response to a question regarding high suicide rates amongst veterans, Carol said that the military has been exhausted and that we have to do better. She noted that there are proposed cuts to benefits for veterans. Another member asked how the proposal to require official IDs would affect the vote, and Carol said that the proposal is aimed at reducing the Democrat vote.

Carol distributed position papers on a number of issues.

Jacqueline Cilley described the respect shown to her working class father as he walked down the streets of Berlin, NH. Today, she said, the hopes and desires of NH people like her father are under assault. Jacquie noted that in the most recent elections, dissatisfied voters swept incumbents out of office wholesale, including those working hardest for them. She emphasized that as the “bosses” of our politicians, we need to pay more attention and take responsibility for whom we send to Congress and for how they vote while they are in office.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Frances Elsemore

Secretary