

Reporting Meeting of 30 January 2012

Calendar of Events

Last Week: 1/23: Solo Cross-country Bike Trip – Bill Kornrumpf
This Week: 1/30: State of New York State – Mark Streb
Next Week: 2/6: BHBL HS Athletic Program - Gary Bynon
Coming Up: 2/13: What's New in Finance – James Davis
2/20: No Meeting – Presidents' Day Holiday

1/23 Meeting Attendance: 18 members; 1 speaker

Note: Regular meetings are held Monday Evenings at 6:15 PM in the William E. Sewell Memorial Room at the Ballston Town Hall

Please give suggestions for future programs to Bob Youmans

Announcements

- * George Bailey delivered the invocation.
- * Harold Townley collected Happy Dollars.
- * Walter Grattidge and Laura Linder were welcomed back from recent hospitalizations.
- * Laura Linder discussed *Radical Schenectady: The Industrial Workers of the World at G.E.*, a talk to be presented at 6 PM on Thursday 2 February 2012 by Dr. Gerald Zahavi, and described *Celebrating the Life and Legacy of Hendrick Meese Vrooman*, a program to be held at 2 PM on Thursday 9 February, both at the Schenectady County Historical Society.
- * Peter Sawyer announced that *The Beer Diviner* is now open for business.

Program: State of New York State – Mark Streb

Mark was introduced by Peter Sawyer. He is the Director of Intergovernmental and Regional Affairs, NYS Department of State, and is Capital District Regional Representative of Governor Andrew M. Cuomo. His region contains 8 counties including Saratoga and Schenectady. Mark occupies a non-civil-service position. His degree is in political science. He has held a number of jobs within state government with the Assembly, the Senate and Department of State. He frequently meets with service clubs like Rotary and Kiwanis. Two-way communication is an important part of his job. At his meeting with us he presented information on the governor's plans and initiatives and solicited comments to be fed back to the governor

regarding individual and regional concerns. For example, Mark needs to keep the governor informed about the issues currently arising out of public housing in Saratoga Springs, the unused Saratoga County landfill in Northumberland and with the Working Families Party.

Time with us was too short for presentation of the governor's 2012 - 13 *Executive and Budget & Reform Plan*. Hard copies of the governor's 126-page 17 January PowerPoint were left for further consideration. (It can be found on line at <http://www.governor.ny.gov/assets/documents/201213BudgetPresentationGovernorCuomo.pdf>).

Discussion, sometimes heated, followed on a number of topics:

- The revision to the tax code to replace the expiring surcharge on large earners with a permanent "millionaires' tax".
- The 2% cap on real estate tax levy growth, its exceptions, and the need for state mandate relief.
- Capping the portion of Medicaid growth passed on the counties.
- The value of sharing services among various entities such as counties, towns and school districts.
- Marriage equality (No opinions were expressed).
- One of our member's difficulties in obtaining a state ID due to living in one county with an address in another.
- Discussion of teacher evaluation to qualify for federal reimbursement (a hot topic within our group).
- The question of programs benefiting the city of Buffalo, but not other regions.
- The introduction of casino gambling to reduce the leakage of gaming money to surrounding states.



Bob Youmans presents the coveted Rotary mug to Mark Streb at the end of his discussion.

Reported by Fred Bailly

Serve with us – the world is waiting