

## Barack Obama Democratic Club of Upper Manhattan

### Meeting Minutes

<b>Subject:</b>	First General Meeting
<b>Date:</b>	Thursday , March 12, 2009
<b>Time:</b>	7:00-9:00pm
<b>Location:</b>	Armory Track & Field Center
<b>Meeting Manager:</b>	Mark D. Levine
<b>Speakers:</b>	Councilman Miguel Martinez (10); Senator Bill Perkins (30); Manhattan Borough President Scott Stringer; Councilman Robert Jackson (7)

### Meeting Discussion:

#### **Mark Levine, Democratic District Leader:**

- 1) The Obama Connection: Name and origins of Democratic Club
- 2) “[we are] seeking to pull levers of local politics” to advance our community agenda
- 3) Changing policy at local level: Role in upcoming elections
- 4) Member introductions

#### Welcome speech by **Councilman Miguel Martinez:**

- 1) Issues of late include Upper Manhattan bridge tolls, payroll tax on commuters

#### **Mark Levine:**

- 5) Club Mission and Goals:  
*“Obama” club need not be in 100% agreement with President’s policies*
  - a) Five-point mission (read aloud)
  - b) Endorsing, and petitioning for, candidates
  - c) Running candidates for Democratic County Committee
  - d) Selecting judges (civil, supreme, surrogate)
  - e) Selecting people to work at polls
  - f) Voter registration, policy forums, demonstrations, etc. (activism)
- 6) **Interim Officer Introductions:** Obie Bing, Vice President; Wangui Maina, Co Chair, Youth Committee; Nicole Monegro, Vice President; Fathima Torres, Vice President; Rich Cipolla, Treasurer; Lyana Fernandez, Secretary

#### **Mark Levine:**

- 7) Club agenda in coming months:
  - a) Recruitment / Dues
  - b) Candidate interviews (Public Advocate, Comptroller, District Attorney, etc.)
  - c) Endorsement elections
  - d) First Annual fundraiser – time, place tbd
  - e) Petitioning drive commencing in June
  - f) Drafting by-laws – call for volunteers

- g) Youth outreach
- h) Community structure – member sign-up:
  - i) Youth Committee
  - ii) Community Affairs
  - iii) Fundraising

Welcome speech by **Senator Bill Perkins:**

- 1) This club should be example to other organizations
- 2) More participation, inclusion necessary in local politics
- 3) Q by Sara French re: status of MTA hikes: no consensus yet on increases

Welcome speech by **Manhattan Borough President Scott Stringer:**

- 1) Hold elected representatives accountable
- 2) Emphasis should be on collective – intergenerational, interracial

**Member-suggested Action Items:**

- Address Community and Economic Development
- Environmental “green” issues: gardens/parks, infrastructure, energy, transit – should get ad-hoc committee
- “Bottom up” structure: committees, liaisons with elected officials, discussion
- Candidate forums
- Agenda for improving public schools
- Roles for members aged 16 years or younger
- How to enforce accountability of elected officials?
- Educational campaigns (i.e. against littering)
- Affordable housing
- Meeting location: can we find larger, less expensive?
- Public health: nutrition, exercise, cycling campaigns, availability of quality produce, etc.
- Housing: Displacement of long-term residents
- Retaining ties with and working alongside State, National Democratic Party
- Communications strategy
- Promoting financial literacy
- “Make a lot of noise” to effect changes
- Liaise with other pro-Obama groups to promote agenda on broader scale
- Leadership structure: Do we like organizational model? To whom do we address questions?
- Outreach committee to undertake petitioning
- Strategy of ad-hoc committees: Will each decide its own, seek full-member consensus?
- Website (<http://www.obamadems.org>): Online payment of dues to be implemented; Facebook link
- Central mission statement should include accountability and progressivism
- Spread the word on Obama’s mission for Change
- Club should be “radical” to effect policy changes
- Address police brutality in the community

- Mission statement should be more visionary as opposed to just strategic; government responsibility should be emphasized
- LGBT issues
- Prioritizing all the above

**Next Meeting:**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Place</b>
April 15 <sup>th</sup> – Endorsement Interviews, Part I	TBD	Armory Track and Field Center