



MINUTES OF MEETING ON SEPTEMBER 4, 2007

After signing-in and socializing, the meeting was called to order at 7:15 pm. The minutes from last month's meeting were approved, as was the agenda for tonight's meeting.

President Joni Eisen informed us we have 3 new members, bringing club membership to 40. She also gave the Treasurer's Report, letting us know we have a bank balance of \$511.

Rebecca Shearin announced the special endorsement meeting on September 18th at 7:00 pm at The Neighborhood House where we will hear from various outside speakers, pro and con, on the November 6th ballot measures. Although the meeting is open to the public, members (only) will then vote, and the tallies will be turned into endorsements which will be published in upcoming issues of *The View*. Ms. Shearin stressed the importance of this meeting and encouraged everyone to attend. She reminded us that there are only two more months for voter registration and asked for volunteers to do 2-hour shifts at either the September 8th table outside the Terrace Market or September 22nd in front of The Good Life on 20th Street.

Agendas for upcoming meetings were announced:

Sept. 18: (Special meeting) Speakers on the local ballot measures and endorsement vote by Club membership

Oct 2: D.A. Kamala Harris will be the guest speaker

Nov. 6: Coincides with Election Day; political action being planned

Dec. 4: Party? Fundraiser? Update: (Endorsement party for Feb. primary!)

The calendar on www.PHDemClub.org shows upcoming events and opportunities to participate.

Our guest speaker arrived and was announced and welcomed by Ms. Eisen.

Andrew McGuire, Executive Director of Health Care for All – California, has been actively concerned with health policy issues for the past 34 years. He has been involved in campaigns protecting the population from fires, drunk drivers and handguns. He is also an Emmy-award winning documentary filmmaker who served in the 80s as Chair of the Board of the esteemed Mill Valley Film Festival. He is an Associate at the Johns Hopkins University School of Hygiene and Public Health and Adjunct Faculty at Sonoma State. He is currently working with a San Fernando film maker on "The Cure," a follow-up to "Sicko." Although he's had an office at SF General since 1975, this was his first visit to The Nabe.

Mr. McGuire spoke to us about his involvement with and support of **SB840**, a bill sponsored by California Senator Sheila Kuehl which is designed to create a **single-payer system** to cover all

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Californians, a state-administered program that would replace private insurers with all working Californians and employers paying into the system. Coverage would no longer depend on employment.

According to Mr. McGuire, the single-payer system is supported by 60% of California voters, but opposed by the insurance industry, the pharmaceutical companies and anyone else with a vested financial interest in keeping the present system in place. He said that the general public has been brainwashed (by Fox News, for one) into thinking the government can't do anything right, thus people worry about three things: *quality*, *cost* and *access*.

Points he wanted to stress:

- One-payer is good for everyone
- All California residents would be covered, not just legal citizens, from before birth throughout life.
- The plan covers everything: "Medicare on steroids"
- It's important to start it in Sacramento and not D.C. It would be like a moving train that can't be stopped; if it starts in California, it will cross the country.

The grassroots campaigns are just beginning, but so far the bill has support from 365 city councils, The League of Women Voters, teachers, nurses, businesses, churches, and as many as 3,000 California physicians. There is strong support for it in the California Senate (including all the women senators), and Mr. McGuire encouraged everyone to call their senators to elicit their support, stressing the importance of making the opposing senators change their vote. He said that even though it's the right answer to the present health care mess, it's certain the insurance companies will challenge whatever single-payer plan passes.

The website *onecarenow.org* links to organizations in support of single-payer. He noted that the California Physicians Alliance has the sole mission of passing this bill and that many Kaiser docs are also in support. More information is readily available by searching the internet for SB840.

Before adjourning, we were reminded of the special endorsement meeting on September 18th, of the next official meeting featuring Kamala Harris on October 2nd, and of the SF Democratic Party's fundraiser on November 2nd (see www.PHDemClub.org's calendar).

NOTE: The Club's T-shirts are still available in medium and large at the cost of \$15.

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M. Kate Hilsenbeck
Secretary