



New Haven Democracy Fund

"To ensure that all the citizens of New Haven have a fair and meaningful opportunity to participate in the election of mayor."
New Haven Code of General Ordinances, Chapter 2, Article XI, §2-821 • Established in 2007 • democracyfund@newhavenct.net



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DEMOCRACY FUND BOARD MEETING

6:00 pm Wednesday, August 23, 2023

Mayor's conference room #1/ Virtual via Zoom

New Haven Democracy Fund Board, Sergio Rodriguez, Chair; William Wynn, Vice Chair

Members: Aaron Goode, James O'Connell, James Bhandary-Alexander, Lesley Heffel-McGuirk, Sarah Ficca.

Democracy Fund Administrator: Alyson Heimer

To join the meeting please use one of the options below:

Web Browser: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82382679039> ; Meeting ID: 823 8267 9039

Phone: Please dial by your location

+1 301 715 8592 US (New Haven, CT) Meeting ID: 823 8267 9039

+1 312 626 6799 US (Outside New Haven) Meeting ID: 823 8267 9039

Minutes:

- I. Call to Order 6:08pm. Bhandary-Alexander, Goode, Wynn absent.
- II. Review of the Minutes from July 19, 2023. Motioned by Rodriguez, unanimous
- III. Public Comment - none, though a representative from the Elicker Campaign was in attendance. Tom Breen from the Independent was also in attendance and helped clarify what had occurred in court that day as a result of the Abdussabur Ballot Access Denial.
- IV. Chair's Report
 - A. Ballot access - The Abdussabur campaign has filed suit to gain ballot access. The case will be heard virtually on Monday August 28th. The City has filed a motion to drop the case due to jurisdiction issues - citing the Purcell Doctrine which advises the disallowing of courts interfering in elections once voting has started. The absentee ballots have been printed, according to the Town Clerk. Once a verdict is rendered we will know if Abdussabur will be able to collect his Primary Election grant. If he is not approved to be on the ballot then he will be able to collect the General Election grant once two people have raised \$5,000 or more for that race, and the Primary is completed. The board members discussed this issue at some length but no action was taken.
 - B. Debate for the primary is scheduled for September 5th at 7pm at Career High School. New Haven Independent is moderating (Paul Bass), along with someone from La Voz and one



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other media person. Questions will alternate between candidates and may be submitted by members of the public. Ficca volunteered to organizer the google form to gather questions.

V. Administrator's Report

A. Summer Projects Update

1. Project 2 Update: Zoe Becker presented a final set of data analysis from the historical NHDF files gathered this summer. Primarily the data show that contributor participation from New Haven is vastly improved when the candidate is participating in the Fund.

B. 2023 Election Update

1. Participating candidates - Primary Election

- a) Grants have been delivered to the Elicker and Brennan Campaigns. Abdussabur is eligible for a grant in the general election (not the primary unless he is added to the ballot pending outcome of his suit).
- b) Justin Elicker matching funds request #3 and #4 totaled \$9,700.00.
- c) Liam Brennan matching funds request #2 totaled \$3,021.68.

The Board approved the distribution of these funds. 3-0-1.

2. Participating candidates - General Election

- a) Shafiq Abdussabur matching funds request #3 is being held for the general election. It's around \$1,000 in funding and does not meet the \$3,000 request threshold.

VI. New Business

- A. O'Connell suggested that the General Election Debate should be two weeks before the election.