RAR Minutes

Facilitators: Jay, Livvie
Timekeeper: none
Notes: Jody

Group contact information
- Website: www.riseandresist.org
- Email list signup http://eepurl.com/cCzq1X
- Twitter: www.twitter.com/RiseandResistNY
- Facebook: www.facebook.com/RiseandResistNYC/
- Instagram: www.instagram.com/risenresistnyc/
- General email: info@riseandresist.org
- Press email: media@riseandresist.org
- Meetings: Every Tuesday at 7pm at the Church of the Village, 201 W 13th St.

Meeting Notes
- Welcome/Introduction: any members of law enforcement or journalists here (none responded), put your phone down, step up/step back, introduce yourself by name and preferred pronouns, reading of the mission statement
  - Welcome of guests - students from Dusseldorf
  - Any new members - Elka is greeter - will come around with materials and info
  - Check in with Stu for new action proposals, report backs, non-RAR announcements - it will be Jamie later
  - We are discussing material that people are passionate about - we are on the same side, friends and family - please be respectful

- Civic Fair Report Back (Paul)
  - Saturday - Stu, John Walker and Paul repped RAR there. Had cards that say “Stop yelling at the TV”. About 24 people signed up for the email list. Talked to other groups - it was a good event. People looking for something to be active about but didn’t have an outlet.

- MLK March (Elka)
  - About 6 people who went to Harlem for march on anniversary of MLK assassination. People from BLM, Refuse Fascism, Peace Accelerators all there. Gave out RAR cards. Good sense of community. March went along 125th Street to Riverside Church.
  - Comment (Stu): Tomorrow Eric Schneiderman is speaking at Friend’s Seminary - is anyone going? It would be good to have someone there handing out cards at beginning or end. Yes, Mary will give out cards at end.
● Impeach Demo Report Back (Eve)
  ○ Russian themed with Russian Bot costumes. Ken as Trump and Martin as Putin. Decent turnout. Fun event - people were dancing. We still have the costumes if anyone needs them.
  ○ No impeach protest this week - NRA protest
  ○ Next week: April 19th youth caucus - will likely be postponed - will likely be doing it later on
  ○ April 26th healthcare (Mark) - in front of Harlem Hospital starting at 5:15 pm. Working with employees of the hospital. Trump has been undermining the ACA - will be covering that. Co-sponsoring orgs will also be providing speakers. Universal Healthcare, health disparities will be covered.

● Sound is really bad tonight - it sounds better in the back.

● Tax Day in Foley Square (Mark)
  ○ A week from today - April 17th. The actions this year will focus on the new tax cut law which was enacted in December. We expect that Congress will be coming out with proposals to slash programs to pay for the tax cuts. A balanced budget Constitutional amendment is expected this week. Republicans will likely vote for it - focusing efforts on centrist Democrats in swing districts. Will need a 2/3 majority. NY Area democrats are not a concern. 38 states will need to approve it within 7 years or something.
  ○ Action on April 17th - People’s Tax Day Action Festival in Foley Square 5-7 pm.
  ○ Street theater, tabling, people talking about how you can plug into different election campaigns, life size monopoly with rules stacked in favor of the rich, RAR will have a selfie Soap Box: Trump holding a big weight over your head, sign that says “Don’t Crush My…”. Stand on a soap box and tell your story.

● Rent collection

● Guest speaker introduction (Enrico)
  ○ Introducing Tanya and Juliana from UnLocal - non-profit that provides legal counseling for immigrants. Also do legal clinics and community education (like this). Invited to talk about the history of immigration in this country so that we can understand context for what is happening.

● UnLocal presentation (Tanya and Juliana)
  ○ Tanya is the education and outreach director.
  ○ Will be talking about how the US immigration history brings us to today.
  ○ Will leave questions for the end
  ○ Juliana is an attorney at UnLocal
  ○ Will go through the entire wave of history that has ended us up where we are now - hundreds of years of history
- We took over this land that we’re now on
- Farmworkers - no protections
- Eventually growers found it was more profitable to use temporary workers - program created to bring Mexican workers to work on farms
- Chicano movement
- Visa programs created to bring in “legal” workers - still allows for a lot of abuse
- Migrant workers here with legal status
- Slavery abolished - except in cases of punishment - mass incarceration
- For-profit prisons - under a tax benefit
- Bed quota - incentives to detain more people
- Core Civic and GEO - pay $1 or nothing to those who are detained to work 8 hours per day/7 days per week to staff the detention center
- Economic Migration - the US government often created incentives to bring workers here
- Chinese Exclusion Act (1880) - a series of treaties opened trade with China - allowed Chinese immigrants to come here to work
  - People reacted - too many Chinese here
  - Ping had been here for 10 years and he left; tried to come back and was told he couldn’t without certificate - courts said US could exclude whoever they want
  - This is the foundation for the US Government excluding whoever they want
- 10 years after the Chinese Exclusion Act, new act to deport Chinese residents who didn’t have a certificate of residence - if didn’t have one, needed a white witness to explain why
- Courts backed Congress up
- 1996 Reform Act - last major immigration reform.
  - Made it easier to deport people
  - Massive deportations as a result - people deported back to countries where they didn’t have any protections
  - Made it more difficult for people to get asylum
- Video about deportee (Richard)
  - Deported to Jamaica because of a conviction in 1989 - after 50 years
  - Leaves behind citizen wife and 4 children
  - Served 3 months for a drug conviction in 1989
  - Came to the US when he was 6 years old - always worked
  - He’s exiled and other people are suffering because of it
  - His children’s mother is terminally ill
  - His family here has to send him money in Jamaica so he can eat
  - Need a pardon from NY State
- Difficult to claim that you’re an asylum seeker
- People fleeing extreme conditions in other countries
In 1939, the US didn’t allow the St Louis to dock here - full of Jewish passengers who were sent back to Europe and died.

Great violence in Central America - people are coming to escape that.

Immigration Courts are part of the Executive Branch - an immigration judge can decide whatever they want. Asylum judgements vary a lot by state.

What can we do?

- Donate your money and skills - sign up sheet being passed around
- Don’t show your ID to anyone if you’re on a plane or greyhound and they’re asking to see it. You don’t have to. You can “ask on what grounds?”
- Host a family in your home
- Speak up or standby - if you see an interaction between NYPD and a street vendor - be a witness if you’re not ready to speak up
- Employ people who are losing their status (DACA and undocumented)
- Buy from immigrant businesses
- Go to immigration courts to watch - people are full of fear when they’re there - people and their kids maybe haven't eaten well - master calendar hearings - you can see how a judge decides a person’s life in 5 minutes
- UnLocal has resources - free legal help

Q: appreciate how they linked this back to the economy - do you know of organizations that are working on the economic conditions for immigrants?

A: Queens Neighborhoods United - work with street vendors, immigrant workers; Flatbush for Equality - advocates for small businesses, street vendors and residents - a lot of them are grassroots

Q: Is there a legal precedent or pushback for the census question?

A: The NY Attorney General and other AGs are filing a lawsuit. The deadline is 2020

A: Don’t answer the citizenship question on the census - stand in solidarity

Q: Has the case with Ravi from New Sanctuary influenced anything?

A: There currently is a direct attack on immigration leaders. There’s a lot of things in our constitution that can help people like Ravi on First Amendment grounds. If the courts see people standing up, they’ll notice that so direct action is very important.

Q: The idea of abolishing ICE seems to be gaining momentum - what is the first step towards that?

A: ICE didn’t exist until 2001 - it was INS before. The idea of abolishing it is very real. We need to make that a mainstream idea. No tax dollars for ICE, dismantle it. They’re kidnapping families. Get community feedback on this and make it a mainstream talking point.

- Any new members since the beginning of the meeting - talk to Elka
- Elections Committee (Harris and Laura)
  - NYS government is as Machiavellian as federal government
  - 8 IDC members - been working to dismantle for the last year
  - They've been pushed into a corner with Gov Cuomo
  - This week the IDC went back to the Democrats
  - But the IDC is doing a fundraiser for itself so they're still a thing - this Thursday, April 12th 6-8 pm
  - Jeff Klein is keeping the war chest - using it to get the IDC members re-elected
  - It's all a show
  - Asking for Rise and Resist endorsement for this action
  - Meeting at 5:30 pm - take the A train - New Leaf Restaurant at Fort Tryon Park - get out at 190th Street - get out on the hill
  - Q: What are you going to do at the action? What's the plan?
  - A: Signs - REDACTED. Fundraiser will be in a tent on the patio so main event will be outside. Still figuring things out.
  - Q: Has there been any discussion about going to the NYS Democrats and asking them why they're allowing this.
  - A: Cuomo, Stewart-Cousins and Shelly Meyer were all supposed to be there but they've canceled.
  - Q: Cuomo has been using this
  - A: Cynthia Nixon has been talking about how Cuomo has been complicit in this. The deal happened because of this and they want all of the challengers to go away.
  - Q: This doesn’t seem to be on social media - has it been on the Rise and Resist page?
  - A: there are local papers covering it and it is on the Rise and Resist page. The coalition that RAR is part of has been covering it - it is on Twitter. This was only announced yesterday - this is new information.
  - Comment: There are so many other Democrats who have spoken out against the IDC - now they're all being quiet and following Cuomo. We need to appeal to them to help.
  - VOTE - proposal: Rise and Resist to sponsoring action on Thursday, April 12th - 5:30 pm meeting time; meeting place in Fort Tryon Park. Expose this fundraiser.
    - People should support this because it will be hard to get people there on such short notice.
    - Motion passed overwhelmingly

- New Actions
  - Hang Up Your Badge, Officer, On This Weeping Cherry Tree (Elka) - fight against police brutality
    - Angie Kearse whose husband died in police custody in Schenectady - no response
- Call to action and vigil on May 11th at sunset (7-8 pm) at Melrose Houses in Bronx
- Public call for Schenectady PO to hang up his badge to atone for the death of Andrew Kearse
- Will plant a cherry tree and hang a symbolic police badge and belt
- Making space for officer to come forward and express his remorse
- Budget for tree - $200 plus money for signs, etc - $200 - $400 TOTAL
- If cannot plant tree, will pick a tree that’s already growing and dedicate in memory of Andrew Kearse
- Contact Elka if you want to help - elka@elka.net
- Comment: We need to think about keeping our costs down on actions. We have about half the money we had 5 weeks ago.
- A: Will try to keep costs down - asking for $400 just in case. Looking into seeing if tree can be donated.
- Q: Any provisions made for caring for treet?
- A: Since it will be near Angie’s home, it will be easy for her and her kids to care for it.
- Comment: could we create a tree, not a real tree
- A: We want it to be there as a memorial and creating a space as a reminder. It’s more than a prop. We can also have a fundraiser for the tree
- Comment: It might be better to just use a tree that’s already there. Don’t understand the logistics of the tree planting - will sidewalk need to be destroyed? Is this in a park?
- A: There’s a lot of green areas around her house so it would be in a grass area.
- Comment: We’re under attack on all sides. We’re going to need money. We’re going to need to raise more money. We all need to ask everyone we know to raise money.
- Q: NYC plants free trees in front of people’s houses
- A: Elka is looking into this
- Comment: Just because there’s a green space, doesn’t mean the City will allow it to be planted there.
- A: Elka is speaking to the housing department about this. We have a month to produce this action and get through all of the logistics
- Q: Why are people picking this action right now to raise financial issues? This is about police brutality.
- VOTE - proposal: RAR to sponsor this event with a $200 budget. Elka to come back in a couple of weeks once the finances are clearer.
- Motion passes overwhelmingly.

- Anti-War Demo (Donna)
  - End US Wars at Home and Abroad
- Sunday, April 15th - gathering at Herald Square at 2 pm - rally followed by march to Trump Tower
- Organized by UN Anti-war Coalition - endorsed by a bunch of organizations including traditional anti-war groups, community orgs, all on flyer that is being passed out
- Express solidarity with oppressed people under attack
- Consequences of militarism abroad
- War-monger Bolton increases danger and need
- Propose that we endorse demo and go together with RAR signs as a contingent
- VOTE to endorse action
- Motion passes overwhelmingly
- Will meet at SE corner of 35th Street and 6th Ave - bring signs
  - Ideas from last meeting about actions went to actions committee (Jamie)
    - Thinking and working on them
    - Schumer’s apartment building in Brooklyn
    - Follow the Money (Mercers)
    - Other things being thought about
    - Now we’re on the verge of bombing Syria
    - Join the Action Committee - meeting this Wednesday at the United Auto Workers space at 256 West 38th Street between 7th / 8th Aves at 6 pm

- Finance (Robert)
  - Cash on hand $7100
  - Accounts payable $3500
  - Net $3600 (minus $200 from last week)
  - $339 collected
  - Selling t-shirts in the back

- NRA Fundraiser (Wrolf)
  - Location will be updated on facebook tomorrow
  - Thursday, April 12th -

- Book Club (Andy)
  - How Democracies Die - this Saturday 3-5 pm
  - Next month:

- Pride (Jake)
  - Had a meeting on Saturday
  - DSA, ACT UP, GAG, Jewish Voices for Peace
  - Another meeting this Saturday LGBT Center, Room 310, 1-2:30 pm; hosted by the DSA Queer Caucus.
Next HOP meeting next Tuesday during our meeting at the LGBT Center
Two sets of issues with NYPD - that they march and their actions in policing the parade
Meeting on April 30th at 8 pm with NYPD. Not an open meeting - round table with reps from different groups. Not more than 20 people. There will be reporters there.
No matter what happens with HOP, we need to start telling our story. This meeting should be an opportunity.
Wristbands - limiting corps to 200 marching members is a good move. Limiting community groups to 200 people is not good. Maybe the limit should only be for corporations.
As the resistance community, we still want to march together. Discussing with HOP how that can happen. Brainstorming various acts of CD or disruption.
Let Jake know if you have comments for the NYPD meeting
Q: Is issue of NYPD marching that they're marching or that they're marching in uniform.
A: Difference of opinion on this. Temperature is likely marching out of uniform might be okay.
Comment: Policing should not include riot gear and weapons, etc.
A: ACT UP has done a lot of visioning on this. People closest to parade would be least armed. If you're interested in police issue, go to ACT UP meetings, Mondays at 7 pm at the LGBT Center.

Non RAR Actions (Jeremiah)
Endorsement asked for birddog training for single payer activists, co-sponsored by Housing Works: Sunday, April 29 noon to 3 pm - location TBD
Vote - overwhelmingly passed.

Reminder that tomorrow night is the Eric Schneiderman event that we endorsed at Friend’s meeting house at 6 pm