

Minutes of the Meeting of the Board of the League of Women Voters of Dane County

September 12, 2011

The meeting was called to order at 5:59 PM by President Moss.

Present: Gail Bliss, Kathy Johnson, Lois Kiggens, Kathy Kuntz, Earnestine Moss, Donna Norton, Brook Soltvedt, and Deborah Speckmann.

Absent: Lynn Klessig, Barbara Mortensen

A motion to approve the second draft of the August minutes was made by Gail Bliss and seconded by Donna Norton. The minutes were approved.

President's report: Moss reported that the August retreat was very successful, attended by board members, ongoing members, new members, and prospective members. There was general consensus that a retreat should be held annually.

Moss reported that she has contacted the Delta Sigma Delta sorority about partnering with the birth certificate / Voter ID project. She also contacted a fraternity on campus and plans to send an invitation to the Pan-Hellenic council at UW. Gail Bliss noted that it is not necessary to have a complete list of partners for the Evjue grant application.

Treasurer's report: Johnson distributed current financial statements, cautioning that the stock market is very volatile, so the line with the value of our investments is not very reliable. Dues are down because of the number of 50-year members (who do not pay dues), but donations are up. Our national dues are paid in full. Our state dues are paid quarterly, and are one-fourth paid. Moss confirmed that our 501(c)(3) status has been granted. It is not yet clear what will become of the education fund now that all donations will be tax-deductible.

Web/Bulletin: As an outcome of the August retreat, Soltvedt brought five items for Board consideration. To ensure that the *Bulletin* and study materials can be distributed to members on a timely basis and that there is adequate time to publicize our events, Soltvedt moved that the Board adopt the following schedule for the rest of the calendar year. After this trial period, the Board will re-evaluate the schedule for 2012.

5th of the month, items for next *Bulletin* due to *Bulletin* editor. Program announcement and study materials for the next issues forum due to Sara and Publicity Director (Lois)

By the following Saturday, *Bulletin* editor will circulate a draft of the *Bulletin* and will post the program info, study materials, and publicity flyer on the website. (1 to 7 days)

By noon the following Monday, all corrections should have been sent to the editor. Large additions (as opposed to minor tweaks) may not be accommodated. (1.5 to 2 days)

By Tuesday morning, Sara will have the final *Bulletin* for copying and distribution and it will be posted on the website. (0.5 days)

That Friday the *Bulletin* and program information will be mailed. (3 to 4 days)

Gail Bliss seconded the motion. Moss expressed concern that the new deadline would be before the board meeting. The motion passed unanimously.

Soltvedt also moved that the board adopt a general schedule for meeting preparation for the rest of the calendar year. After this trial period, the board will re-evaluate the schedule for 2012.

Two weeks before the board meeting, Sara will call for agenda items.

One week before the board meeting, Sara will distribute the agenda, which Soltvedt will post on the website.

No later than the weekend before the board meeting, board members will circulate reports or information about their agenda items; preview subjects for discussion; circulate motions.

Before the board meeting, members will read such reports and information.

Deborah Speckmann seconded the motion. Discussion included the request that materials be sent in both PDF and .doc format whenever possible. The motion carried unanimously.

Soltvedt next proposed the formation of a committee to **review the Policies and Procedures** document, which was last revised 20 years ago. Moss, Johnson, and Soltvedt would like to serve on this committee. Bliss will share notes she made on an earlier review of the Policies and Procedures. Soltvedt will seek a long-term member to participate.

Soltvedt raised the issue that our Bylaws call for certain standing committees, and that the composition and activities of committees should be documented and published on the website. She requested that such information be shared with her.

Finally, Soltvedt requested a discussion of the best way to solicit reports from Unit leaders on a timely basis and in a format that can be used to provide feedback to the membership through the *Bulletin*. Ideas included providing an electronic version of the current hard-copy forms and asking Unit leaders to send a brief summary to the *Bulletin* editor.

Fundraising: Bliss reported that contributions included \$2660 to the General Fund, \$285 to the Education Fund, including one contribution from a non-member.

Regarding the Voter ID project, Bliss spoke with an Evjue Foundation liaison to get more information about what constitutes a successful proposal. The Foundation is

less likely to fund projects for which they are the sole support; few projects receive the maximum \$10,000 amount. The grant proposal is due before the next Board meeting. Bliss is still negotiating for cab companies to provide subsidized rides to the City Clerk's office. If this funding is not assured, can it be included in the proposal? Bliss moved that the board approve the concept of an Evjue grant request for \$10,000 that includes our commitment to raise \$2000 in additional funding, backstopped by funds from the League (that is, if we do not raise the money from outside sources, the League will contribute the difference). The motion was seconded by Deborah Speckmann. In discussion, Kathy Kuntz suggested that we request matching funds from Evjue, but it is not clear that the Foundation considers such requests. Earnestine Moss suggested we ask a local radio station to host an on-line fundraiser for the project. The motion carried unanimously. It was noted that the Executive Committee will approve the final grant application before submission.

Membership: Speckmann will revise the membership renewal letter and have Sara send it out. Because our recent events have drawn non-members and new members, we should send guests a personal note inviting them to join. Although most people sign in, they usually do not complete the contact information area, which makes it difficult to follow up.

Community Outreach: Moss regularly calls in to radio station 1670 to publicize the activities of LWVDC. Darlene Hancock is interested in working on the 18-year old voter project. She may work with Lynn Klessig on an application for funds from the national League passed through the state League in support of the project.

Program: Kuntz reported that the Joyce Foundation funds we received to promote and provide refreshments for the September program with Justice Roggensack were used to purchase food, water, and publicity (as reported by Kiggins). Using blue name tags for guests helped members target them for a welcome and invitation to get involved. Several took membership applications. Kuntz has all the information about the next two programs.

Because the October meeting is on a national League issue, we need to have our consensus ready to send to LWVUS in early November. Kuntz is trying to arrange to have an Education committee member at each October unit meeting to ensure the consensus is completed. She also proposed sending out an electronic survey (using Survey Monkey) to allow members to respond to the consensus questions if they are not going to a unit meeting.

Kuntz is also working with Sara to rewrite the confirmation letter for speakers to explicitly state that the materials speakers provide can be distributed online without violating copyright.

Since Voter ID is a lively issue, some suggestions for speakers for the January luncheon included Robin Vos, who wrote the legislation, or someone from the GAB to represent the current administration position.

Voter Service: Lynn Klessig was ill and did not attend. Gail Bliss reported progress on the Voter ID birth certificate pilot. The project has been broken down into five major areas: **Publicity** about the project, to garner volunteers, clients, and contributions. **Application assistance:** Helping people complete the forms necessary to obtain a copy of their birth certificate. **Problem solving:** Problem solvers will help clients work through knotty problems such as how to get a birth certificate from a state that requires a photo id to get it. **Transportation:** Getting clients to the DMV (by bus, subsidized taxi, or rides organized by church or other civic groups). **Voter Registration**—getting the individuals registered to vote with their new ID.

Six potential “clients” have contacted the office. By partnering with the City Clerk’s office, churches, and community groups such as Middleton Action Team, and a group at Allied Drive, Bliss believes they will have a significant number of volunteers and clients. Kathy Stella is working with UW-Madison, Edgewood College, and MATC/Madison College to help them with awareness of the new requirements for student ids if they are to be valid as voter IDs. Bliss used a 2005 UW-Milwaukee study of the demographics of WI drivers license holders and applied those percentages to 2010 census data to estimate that about 50,000 otherwise-eligible voters in Dane County may not have valid voter ID.

Bliss assisted a homeless person get a new id. The process took about 30 minutes at the DMV.

The 18-year old registration project group will meet on September 14, 4-6 pm, at the League office. Tom Van der Vest, a former principal at Middleton High School, is interested in this project.

President-Elect: Norton pointed out that all nonprofit groups should have an attorney. Edith Sullivan has volunteered to read anything for us and offer an opinion. Other members noted that Melanie Ramey, state League president, likely would, too.

Publicity: Kiggins reported that she had 100 flyers printed for the September meeting. Thirty were distributed to libraries. The other seventy were distributed by members. The paid ads were time-consuming to research and place. Without data about how people learned about the forum, it’s impossible to assess the effectiveness of the advertising. Most of the non-members who attended had been personally recruited.

Kiggins will distribute information about the October program to school administrators, departments in the School of Education, and she’ll have members distribute them on campus.

Old business: The Urban League is going forward with planning for their charter school with same-gender classes. Moss would like to see the LWVDC take a position in support of the school.

Bliss moved to adjourn and Norton seconded. Moss adjourned the meeting at 8:08 pm.

Respectfully submitted by Brook Soltvedt