

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF DANE COUNTY

2020-21 BOARD MINUTES November 11, 2020

Meeting conducted remotely with Zoom

Present: Chris Clements, Joan Schwarz, Paul Lindquist, Marian Matthews, Mary Ellen Schmit, Joan Provencher, Maria Spinozzi, Marilyn Stephen, Linda Dietrich, Laura Grueneberg, Jean Jacobson, Georgiana Hernandez, Bonnie Chang

Absent: none

Meeting called to order by President Chris Clements at 5:35pm

Minutes--Joan Provencher

Motion by Stephen to approve the October 2020 minutes, Seconded Hernandez, Approved

Treasurer's report--Jean Jacobson

Revenue for the month was \$33,120. This amount includes \$4,600 in Making Democracy Work donations as well as the receipt of the original donor's match gift of \$10,000. The campaign was so successful that a second donor stepped forward and issued a \$4,000 match challenge (reference comments in Fund Development). Membership dues contributed \$4,300 to revenue. In addition, the Dane County Clerk was billed \$13,764 for expenses related to the Voter Outreach Campaign. The billing includes an administrative fee of \$655.

Expenses for the month were \$25,235, of which \$18,020 was related to Voter Service. Of this amount, \$13,109 was billed back to Dane County. Board expenses included \$2,600 for the printing of the Centennial packet mailed to all members. Remaining expenses were for office rent and payroll.

Excluding the impact of the Dane County Contract from both actual and budget figures, revenue stands at 62% of the total year budget. Year to date expenses are running at 40% of the total year budget. The Covid pandemic has certainly had an impact on expenses as virtual activities have taken the place of in person gatherings with their related costs.

To date, our net operating income(pre investment income) is \$23,854 versus a projected net loss of \$20,682 for the year.

Discussion Agenda

Programs--Georgiana Hernandez

- **Motion by Hernandez**, Seconded by Jacobson to approve three additional speakers for our December forum, *Reimagining Public Safety*. Speakers include

Colleen Clark-Bernhardt, Coordinator, Criminal Justice Council of Dane County; Anthony Cooper, Sr., Executive Director of Focused Intervention Coalition in Madison, affiliated with Nehemiah; Heidi Wegleitner, Supervisor for District 2. Serves on Health and Human Needs Committee, Human Services Board, Equal Opportunities Commission, Long Term Support Committee (Co-Chair), Homeless Issues Committee (Vice-Chair), Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee, and Poverty Commission. Attorney, Legal Action of Wisconsin, Inc.

Motion approved

- A motion to approve our League's affiliation as an allied member of Climate Table, a bipartisan statewide networking organization. Goals of the Climate Table are as follows: - "This effort is supported by RE-AMP, a Midwest network with the shared goal to equitably eliminate greenhouse gas emissions in the Midwest by 2050." Members agree to support this goal.

Motion Hernandez, Second Stephen, approved

Fund Development--Linda Dietrich

Linda presented some options for a year-end fundraising campaign. Given that the Making Democracy Work campaign just ended, the board agreed that a "soft ask" statement should go into the December bulletin for those members who plan their giving to coincide with the end of the calendar year.

Grant Proposal--Linda Dietrich

The Dane County Office of Energy and Climate Change has established the Clean Energy Economic Development Grant Fund and will be awarding \$135,000 in grants December 21, 2020. Grants will range from \$10,000 - \$15,000. The Program Committee, working with the Fund Development Committee, would like to submit a grant to advance several of the Funds initiatives: 1) Promoting advancements in energy use and generation in the most just and equitable ways and 2) Advancing cutting-edge energy technologies and programs that can be replicated in other counties in Wisconsin. The Climate Crisis Subcommittee's upcoming forums for February and April 2021 focus on clean energy, energy infrastructure, and energy and access issues (such as broadband) for marginalized communities, particularly in rural areas. In addition to producing our forums and marketing them to other Wisconsin Leagues, we would use our blog and other communication vehicles to promote cutting-edge energy technologies. The deadline for applications is December 8, 2020. Georgiana Hernandez and Caryl Terrell have offered to prepare the application.

Membership Survey (moved from Consent Agenda)

Mary Ellen Schmit and Paul Lindquist reviewed the CAC demographic survey which collects demographics about members across the whole State of Wisconsin. A discussion was held about questions on this survey that are not currently asked on the member survey our local League conducts and how the two surveys would overlap. The board feels both surveys should be conducted at this time.

DEI REMINDER OF ACTION NEEDED: By December 1, domain chairs/co-chairs are requested to share their DEI-related activities with Lisa Janairo for incorporating into the vision plan for the DEI Committee. (Note: the deadline was extended from October 1 to accommodate busy schedules stemming from election-related work.)
(Submitted by Lisa Janairo)

Old Business

Employee Handbook - Benefits - Marilyn Stephen

A. Health Expenses Reimbursement: Motion by Hernandez that LWVDC establish an IRS Section 105, Health Reimbursement Arrangement for full time employees beginning on their date of hire. The benefit is capped at \$5000 and can be used to reimburse the employee for health insurance premiums or qualified health related out-of-pocket expenses. The specific terms and conditions of the plan are described in the Summary Plan Description. The motion was seconded by Matthews and passed with 2 no votes. Members who voted no supported a lower dollar amount for the cap.

F. Retirement Plan: Motion by Hernandez that LWVDC establish a 401(k) retirement plan which provides employee eligibility to enroll upon completion of one year of employment. The LWVDC will match 100% of the employee's contributions up to 3% of the employee's salary. An employee may choose not to participate. Both the employee's contribution and the LWVDC contribution are immediately vested. The motion was seconded by Provencher and approved unanimously.

Recording Meetings - Marilyn Stephen

Marilyn gave the board some background information and presented the following suggested policy:

At the beginning of any meeting being conducted virtually or in person, all attendees are to be informed if the meeting is being recorded and that any attendee has the right to object. If one person objects, the meeting should not be recorded. The recording should be stopped if any attendee requests that it be stopped at any time during the meeting. Any member of LWVDC has the right to see or listen to the recording as long as it exists. Recordings should be destroyed or deleted as soon as the usefulness of the recording has passed, or 90 days after the recording was created, whichever comes first.

Motion to approve the suggested policy by Hernandez, seconded by Dietrich, approved

Executive Director--Joan Provencher and Chris Clements

Joan shared with the board that the search committee is as follows: Joan Provencher (Chair), Chris Clements, Marian Matthews, and Maria Spinozzi. The committee will hold its first meeting on Nov 19th. A change was made in the position description to enhance

the inclusion of DEI as a KSA (Required Knowledge, Skills and Abilities). A new KSA was added to read, "Proven ability to be a role model for LWVDC's DEI policy and to integrate key DEI concepts into LWVDC activities and decisions." This request was made by Lisa Janairo after review.

The first of two member Zoom Information Sessions on the hiring of an executive director was held on Monday, November 9th, with the next scheduled for Tuesday, Nov. 17th at 6 p.m. Twenty people signed up for the first session, 15 attended and 12 stayed on for the entire session. A request was made to make the position description available to members. The PD was posted on the Board web page today and a link will be included in the e-News for the next few weeks.

Meeting adjourned at 7:32pm

Respectfully submitted
Joan Provencher
Secretary

APPENDIX CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS

Finance

The October Finance committee meeting was focused on reviewing finance policies and procedures, both at the organizational level and at the operational level. These policies and procedures are particularly important due to the size of the organization's staff and the difficulty in separating duties among several people. An in depth review of the financial transactions by the Finance Committee is a critical component of the policies and procedures. We briefly discussed activities the Finance Committee could undertake to support DEI and will submit our ideas to the DEI chair.

Governance

Board Planning Retreat: The executive committee decided that the proposal from re:power to work with us on a board retreat was too costly at this time so it will not be submitted to the full board for approval. The retreat planning committee will meet to discuss alternate approaches.

Program

1. Summary of Recent Activities and Accomplishments

- We produced our fourth virtual forum for the year: *Check Your Ballot for Climate* on October 13, 2020, (with 37 participants).
- Since our last board meeting, we've published three *Swinging for the Fences* blogs: [*Wisconsin is a Gerrymandered State: How Can We Change It?*](#) by Joan Schwarz; [*Gotta Communicate—Fair Maps This Time*](#) by Janine Edwards; and [*Concerns Related to the Electoral College*](#) by Joan Schwarz.
- In late October/early November, to accompany forum resource materials, we published on our website two analytical/legal papers written by Joan Schwarz: [*Wisconsin is a Gerrymandered State: A History and Legal Analysis*](#), and [*Electors and the Electoral College in the Presidential Election of 2020*](#).

2. Important Discussions and Decisions

- This month our committee initiated a small planning team whose charge is to try to increase member input into the Program plan for 2021-22. Last year we sent out an online survey to members asking them to assess 2019-20 activities and to give us input on possible program themes/topics for 2020-21. Only 10% of members responded. For the coming year, we hope to increase member input by conducting Zoom “focus groups” and by administering an online survey that asks members to select from a menu of Making Democracy Work (MDW) *topics*, e.g. Ranked Choice Voting, Voter Rights, etc. rather than just choosing the overall theme of MDW.
- Several Program Committee members who have been working on the issue of redistricting are forming a League-wide working group, under the auspices of the Program Committee, to work on educational activities related to redistricting. We will begin recruiting for this working group this month.
- For the past year, our Climate Crisis subcommittee has informally been attending meetings of the Climate Table, a diverse network of groups in Wisconsin working together for equitable climate solutions. We are now seeking permission from the board to join as an allied member.
- We have finalized our 2020-21 line-up of forums. The final forum/seminar for the year will be a virtual event led by a team of League members working on development of a possible League position on Ranked Choice Voting under the leadership of Maria Spinozzi.

3. Activities in Progress and Upcoming Events

- The Book Group has announced its two book selections for the next few months: On Dec. 5 and Dec. 7, 10-11:30 a.m., the discussion will focus on *The Politics Industry* by Katherine Gehl. In January, the Book Group will discuss Isabel Wilkerson's book, *Caste: The Origins of Our Discontent*.
- Planning is underway for upcoming virtual forums, already approved by the Board:
 - o [*Wisconsin's Path Forward: Election and Redistricting*](#) (11/12/20), with Dr. Charles Franklin, Director of the Marquette Poll; Debra Cronmiller, Executive Director of LWVWI; and Joan I. Schwarz, member of the Dane County Redistricting Commission and LWVDC Board Member.

- o *Reimagining Public Safety*, (Dec. 7, 8 or 10), with Keith Findley, member of the newly established Madison Police Civilian Oversight Board and two additional speakers to highlight new county initiatives as well as community-based responses.
- o *Lively Issues* event – a Centennial Celebration (1/16/2021) with Dr. Carolyn Jefferson-Jenkins, author of *The Untold Story of Women of Color in the League of Women Voters* and the poet Fabu, who had been slated to read a poem she wrote for the Centennial event we had to cancel in March due to the pandemic.

Fund Development

Making Democracy Work Update

The Making Democracy Work Campaign began with an initial gift of \$8,000, which the donor generously increased to \$10,000. A second donor expanded the challenge to \$14,000.

As the campaign was ending on 11/5/20 we had received \$13,567.78 from 113 donors, leaving us with an outstanding balance of \$432.22. However, a third donor pledged \$5,000 to cover the remaining dollars, resulting in an aggregate total of \$32,567.78.

Any gifts that come in after the 11/5 deadline, but which are designated for the MDW campaign, will be added to the total.

This campaign was successful beyond expectations and we thank the challenge donors and everyone--members and non-members--who helped us match and surpass our goal. We deeply appreciate your support.

Fund Development Report

(As of 11/8/20)

Year-to-Date fundraising	
General donations	\$17,135.71
Grants	7,109.09
Memorial gifts	200.00
Other	25.00
Making Democracy Work	<u>32,568.00</u>
Year-to-Date Total	\$57,112.80
FY 2020/21 Goal	\$90,000.00
Difference	\$32,887.20

Communications

[Vote Wisconsin](#) has sold **42 products** and received \$10 in donations! Which means we made/raised \$130.21 (total) by letting a t-shirt design sell on the internet. The money is

currently still in/tied with Bonfire, we would like to work with the Treasurer to get it out of bonfire. All shirts should have been delivered.

Worked with Rippe Keane to post 'influencer' videos across social media platforms on the importance of voting and why we would want to do it. The influencers included notable folks around Madison like Shiva.

The Girl Scouts continue to be a great help in wanting folks to vote and encouraging others since they are not old enough to - we cross posted their videos and received a shout-out from them.

In general as a reminder - Events posted online FB page for all major league events. Instagram stories (24 hours) are also posted day of to remind folks. Press releases go out for candidates answers and all major league forums.

Membership

Total membership prior to lapsing 11/10/2020 - 705

Total membership after lapsing 11/10/2020 - 582

(lapsed 75 regular members, 3 additional members & 44 student members)

New Member Volunteer Opportunities Zoom sessions are scheduled for Tuesday November 10 at 5:30PM and Thursday November 12 at 12:00PM.

Membership Committee meeting was held on October 19 attended by Joy Cardin, Margaret Fuguitt, Sally Gleason, Mahr Malik, Mary Ellen Schmit, Joan Schwarz, Brook Soltvedt, Amber Rottier. Initial discussions were of possible projects related to volunteer recognition and engagement, social events, recruitment and outreach. The next meeting will be scheduled for November 23.

Special thanks to Margaret Fuguitt, Jan Anderson and Susan Sweet for volunteering to make reminder calls to those members who have not yet renewed their membership. An additional 23 members renewed after these calls were made in the past month.

CAC Demographic Survey is being finalized by LWVWI and will be sent to LWVDC leadership next week. The survey will be in Google format that allows responses to be entered into a spreadsheet and allows anonymous responses. The goal is to have responses back by the end of January when membership data is due to LWVUS.

Voter Service

1. The **Apartment Project** has had a successful first year:
 - a. 89 apartment complexes adopted
 - b. 56 adopters

- c. Distribution of 5 time-sensitive informational items (via email/poster)
- d. 9 management companies/owners cooperated to varying degrees
- e. Limited number of in-person registration events (due to COVID)
- f. Special projects – coordination with the girl scout troop project

JoAnn Boushon, project coordinator, is planning google meet sessions with adopters to solicit input for planning next steps of the project.

2. The **UW-Madison**, under the leadership of BadgersVote Coalition, improved student access to voter-compliant IDs by enabling students to obtain IDs electronically at a dedicated website and by placing machines that can issue IDs at all campus polling locations.
3. The **Voter ID Coalition** and **Dane County Project** reminded the community to ready to vote and how to get help through the Voter Helpline:
 - a. 6000 pieces of literature were distributed through neighborhood canvassing, with a particular focus on low voter turnout neighborhoods
 - b. 250 yard signs were distributed and displayed throughout Dane County
 - c. Large signs were displayed in low voter turnout neighborhoods and banners were hung on city of Madison pedestrian overpasses.
4. The **Voter Helpline** is a statewide service that will continue after the election. Most questions to the Helpline can be answered by volunteers in Dane County but when callers need direct assistance or local knowledge/expertise, volunteers from around the state are needed. A statewide network of volunteers (many but not all from local LWV chapters) in 44 communities/counties was reestablished this fall. We plan to support the continuation of this network going forward.

DEI Committee

Because of the election, the committee has not met since October 2. The next meeting will take place at 12 pm on Tuesday, November 17. It is expected that, with election behind us, the subgroups will begin their work in earnest starting in late November.

One goal of the DEI Committee is to advise LWVDC domains on their activities. Although the committee has not discussed the matter yet, it is likely the committee will recommend that core competencies for LWVDC staff (e.g., the new executive director position) specifically include equity and inclusion. The committee will discuss this matter during the November 17 meeting. If the committee's input is desired before that date, please contact Lisa Janairo at 920.889.2600.

Action

Observer Corps: Laurie Egge is providing the observer corps training online instead of scheduling meetings. She discusses the project with potential observers and is available to answer questions, but there is no set Zoom meeting. Observers report back to the league on each meeting that they observe so that we can measure our success.

Because more meetings are available virtually now, Laurie is working to engage more members.

Advocacy Corps: Six members have indicated an interest in responding to action alerts on an ongoing basis. Training materials will be provided to them and they will report back to us after responding to alerts from the national, state or local league. All contacts made by these members will be to their own representatives and not in the name of the league. The more constituents an elected official hears from, the more likely she or he will respond favorably when they vote. Volunteers choose which action alerts they wish to pursue depending on their personal views.

Quick Response Team: We have not been asked to respond quickly to any issues that are under consideration by local governments because of the focus on the election.

Speakers Bureau: Joan Schwarz has been very busy in numerous other areas of service. Hopefully this project will start later in the year.

RCV Study Committee

The committee has written up a plan and timeline for our study. We are also reaching out to other local WI Leagues to inquire if they'd like to follow-along, participate or run a similar study in parallel to ours.

Research: We are currently in the research phase of the study, and have begun documenting some of our findings for the study report.

Consensus: We intend to have written consensus questions by February. These consensus questions will be used in discussions with members. Responses to the consensus questions will inform updates to the proposed position statement.

Education and Member Feedback: The book group has agreed to read a relevant book for December, "The Politics Industry" by Katherine Gehl and Michael Porter.

We are working with program to plan a forum for June. The forum will involve education as well as presenting the consensus questions and collecting feedback.

We are continuing to write relevant articles for the Bulletin, and are also planning to hold mock elections in March/April online which will provide some data to present at the forum.

Board: The current timeline has us reporting back to the board in June/July with recommendations based on member feedback.

Bulletin

December Bulletin will be published Sunday Dec 6th. This was pushed back later than most months due to Thanksgiving being the last week of November.

Articles and Data Due November 24th

There will likely not be a January issue.

President

Executive Committee Actions/Communications

The Executive Committee made the decision to offer two Information Sessions for the general membership about the board decision to hire an executive director and the search process. The first session was held on Monday, Nov. 9th and the second will be held on Tuesday, Nov. 17th.

The Executive Committee approved the addition of a working group focused on Redistricting. The request came from the Program Committee as their work on Redistricting has expanded beyond the normal program domain.

The Executive Committee discussed/approved the RCV committee request to engage other local WI Leagues to follow-along, participate or run a similar study in parallel to ours.

No public statements or position updates were approved/released by the Executive Committee since the October Board Meeting.

Other

Two press requests were received since the last board meeting. The first was from A.J. Bayatpour at WKOW Channel 27 Television, which we were unable to respond to in time, in regard to the vote turnout in Dane County and its increasing impact on state elections. The request came into the League office at 4 p.m. for a 10 p.m. news show.

The second was from Up North News WI asking to speak to the President about the record turnout in Dane County and seeking someone involved in the action of getting voters to the polls. Gail Bliss from Voter Service was in contact with the editor to talk more about assisting homeless populations in getting registered and to the polls. In the future, it is hoped that the executive director will be able to handle these last minute press requests as part of their League ambassador role.

Thank you's

- To the many members of the League and, in particular, Voter Service and the Voter ID Coalition members who have worked tirelessly and diligently to get voters registered and to the polls, assisted the Madison City Clerk's office in early voting and acting as couriers for absentee ballots, worked at the polls on election day and continued working in its aftermath on provisional ballots and

canvassing. You are all an inspiration and the heart and soul of the League's work. We are grateful to Paul Lindquist and Marian Matthews for their leadership in this work.

- To Cindy, who went above and beyond normal duties in support of Voter Service and the Voter ID Coalition and fielded an enormous number of calls requesting election-related information.
- Brook Soltvedt and Gail Bliss for coming forward at the last minute to take press calls on the League's behalf. Brook has filled this role a number of times.
- The many donors and, in particular the anonymous challenge grant donors and the Fund Development Committee, who contributed to the highly successful Making Democracy Work appeal.
- Marilyn Stephen for her continued efforts to develop and benchmark the benefits aspect of the employee handbook and executive director position, and for developing a policy regarding the recording of board meetings .
- Joan Provencher for continued leadership of the Executive Director Search Committee and Marian Matthews and Maria Spinozzi for agreeing to serve as members of the search committee.
- Margaret Fuguitt, Jan Anderson and Susan Sweet for calling lapsed members and asking them to renew

Calendar

November

Final Planning for January Lively Issues Luncheon (date, time, location, speaker)
Deadline for early December mailing: Lively Issues Reservation Form
Schedule Spring CA with Isthmus
Formulate CA for candidates
Executive Director Search Process

December

Formulate CA questions for candidates
Mail Lively Issues reservation form
Nominating and Budget Committees begin deliberations
Spring CA preparations
Planning for Board planning retreat
(Planning for February General Meeting, if any)
Executive Director Search and Hiring

January

Lively Issues Luncheon
Deadline for February *Bulletin*
Mail letters for Spring CA; process responses
Primary website proofreading and publication
KYC interviews for primary candidates
Nominating and Budget Committees begin deliberations

Planning for General Meeting
Valentine fundraising letter draft begins
Member count due for LWV member roster