

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF DANE COUNTY

2020-21 BOARD MINUTES

August 12, 2020

Meeting conducted remotely using Google Meet

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

Absent: Bonnie Chang

Meeting called to order at 5:33 pm by Christine Clements

2. Approval of Board Minutes--Joan Provencher

Minutes for the Special Board Meeting on July 1st--**motion** to approve Stephen, 2nd Matthews, approved

Minutes for Board Member Orientation on July 14th--**motion** to approve Hernandez, 2nd Schmit, approved

3. Treasurer's Report - Jean Jacobson

Jean reported that most of the activity in July was an influx of revenue related to dues. For fiscal year-to-date we are at 25% of budgeted revenue and 5% of budgeted expenses.

3. Consent Agenda--The following items were approved by consent agenda. Board members reviewed the reports ahead of the meeting. Board members were given the opportunity to take items off the Consent Agenda. One communications item was moved to the discussion agenda. No other requests were made. The text of each of these items is included in an Appendix at the end of these minutes.

- Financial Report
- Governance
- Fund Development
- Communications
- Program/Advocacy
- Membership
- Voter Service
- DEI
- Bulletin
- President's Report

4. Discussion Agenda

- Discussion items

- **Approval of Finance Committee**--Jean Jacobson

Proposed members of the Finance Committee for 2020-2021 are Jean Jacobson, Linda Dietrich, Helen Horn and Susan D

Motion to approve: Stephen, 2nd Lindquist, approved

- **Fund Development**--Linda Dietrich:

An anonymous donor has made an offer for matching funds for a Fall appeal challenge. The amount is expected to be at least \$8,000. The donor prefers the funds to be used for Voter Service related activities, but at this point expenses related to the Making Democracy Work programs is likely to be acceptable.

- **Communication**--Laura Gruenberg

Laura raised a question regarding press releases. As the new co-director she is unsure about the process for editing and approving them. The President has final approval and board members gave suggestions of members who could be copy editors.

- **Programs**--Georgiana Hernandez

: Approval of September, October, November programs

SEPTEMBER How Can We Ensure a Safe, Fair and Inclusive Election? (working title)

Focus: Speakers will address issues of election security, safety and inclusion and will take questions from community representatives.

Date: Tuesday, September 22nd, 7:00-8:30 pm (National Voter Registration Day)

Speakers: Eileen Newcomer, Voter Education Coordinator, LWVWI; Barry Burden, Professor of Political Science, Director of the Elections Research Center, and the Lyons Family Chair in Electoral Politics at the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

Community guests: Earnestine Mosse, NAACP Dane County; Siti Hydera, UW Madison, WISPIRG Students-involved in voter mobilization/registration efforts; Barbara Becketer, Disability Rights Wisconsin and the Disability Vote Coalition; Bianca Tomasini, Madison Chapter of Voces de la Frontera

Moderator: Joy Cardin

OCTOBER

Climate Voters, Better Jobs, Brighter Future (working title)

Focus: Young climate activists weigh in on local, state and national climate-related voting issues

Date: Week of October 5th

Possible speakers: Max Prestigiacomo, Alder for District 8; Stephanie Salgado, Member of the Governor's Task Force on Climate Change; Vic Barrett, one of 21 plaintiffs in Juliana vs. U.S.

Moderator: Carol Barford

NOVEMBER

Wisconsin's Path Forward: Election and Redistricting (working title)

Focus: Summary of state election results and implications for redistricting in Wisconsin

Date: Thursday, November 12th, 7:00-8:30 pm

Speakers: Dr. Charles Franklin, Director of the Marquette Poll, Marquette University Law School; Debra Cronmiller, Executive Director, LWVWI

Moderator(s): Susan Curran will introduce speakers; Joy Cardin will moderate the forum discussion and Q&A

Motion by Dietrich to approve all 3 program concepts with the understanding that if any of the speakers change, further board approval will be needed, 2nd Schmidt, approved

VS videos--Georgiana Hernandez

Georgiana proposed that LWVDC put together a series of voter access videos targeting specific communities. The videos would seek to draw out the specific barriers to voting experienced by each targeted community and provide solutions and resources (one being the League's new Dane County Voter Project Helpline).

Three possible videos were suggested:

Target community: Formerly Incarcerated and Jailed Citizens

Possible partnering organizations: EXPO; Nehemiah, MOSES

Possible guests: Anthony Cooper, Sr. from Nehemiah; formerly incarcerated individuals

Possible moderator: Jerome Dillard, Statewide Director for EXPO; Frank Davis, EXPO

Audiences: Organizations serving formerly incarcerated, criminal justice support organizations; faith communities

Target community: Voting for limited English speakers

Possible partnering organizations: Voces de la Frontera; Literacy Network

Possible guests: Graduates of the Literacy Network's Citizenship Program

Possible moderator: Bianca Tomasini, Voces de la Frontera

Audiences: new citizens; limited English speakers

Target community: Nursing home and care facility residents

Partnering organizations: Wisconsin Faith Voices for Justice,

Possible guests: Millie Moffitt, resident, Capitol Lakes; other nursing home residents

Possible moderator: Rabbi Bonnie Margulis, Wisconsin Faith Voices for Justice or Denise Jess, Wisconsin Council of the Blind & Visually Impaired

Audiences: Nursing home and care facility residents and service providers

Motion to approve the concept of these videos with the understanding that if any of the people interviewed for the videos change, further board approval will be needed,:

Stephens, Lindquist 2nd, approved

○ **Voter Services--Marian Matthews and Paul Lindquist**--Marian and Paul reported that some of the voter services volunteers think that LWVDC should approve in person voter outreach activity. After discussion, the board agreed that in person activity should remain suspended.

● **Video Conferencing**-- Georgiana Hernandez

Georgiana presented a proposal that LWVDC purchase Zoom licenses and gave details about the pricing of Zoom Pro versus Zoom Small and Medium Business.

Motion by Matthews that LWVDC purchase 10 licenses and ensure that support will be provided by Zoom. It is further moved that a scheduling protocol must be developed by each functional area for the use of their assigned licenses. 2nd Lindquist, approved.

● **Budget**--Jean Jacobson

Jean presented a budget update. We have a very aggressive fundraising goal this fiscal year and we are currently showing a loss of \$89,000, although it is still very early in the year. The conversation then shifted to the next topic--staffing.

● **Staffing**--Chris Clements

The board discussed the possibility of hiring a full time Executive Director. Chris feels we have a reserve that can support the first year's salary and that we should use it, with the expectation that the position will be self-supporting in future years due to an increase in fundraising. Discussion then moved to forming a committee to put together a draft job description. Joan Provencher has already volunteered for the committee and Chris asked others who are interested to please contact her asap.

Motion by Stephen to approve moving ahead with this discussion and draft job description. 2nd Dietrich. approved

● **Web redesign steering committee--discussion tabled to future meeting(s)**

Meeting adjourned at 7:44pm

Respectfully submitted,

Joan Provencher

LWVDC Secretary

APPENDIX--REPORTS UNDER CONSENT AGENDA

• Financial Report

Financial activity for the month was primarily centered around Membership renewals and Donations. Contributions in particular far outpaced the prior year, \$12k vs \$5k. Contributions did include a \$5k restricted gift from a nonmember donor which is to be directed towards Voter Services activity. In addition a \$5k grant was received from the Evjue Foundation, also directed to Voter Services activity. Expenses were fairly typical for the month. The largest expenditure was the quarterly dues payment (\$3k) to LWV Wisconsin.

There is a new statement which is now included with the financials - Profit and Loss YTD by Class which will outline expenses incurred by each of the Board Domain areas. I will be working to develop reports which provide greater detail by Domain area as well as comparisons to Budget. These reports will take the place of the previous Committee spreadsheets.

On the Balance Sheet, our largest assets are Cash and the Memorial Fund. Within the Memorial Fund category, we have \$463k invested in stocks and bonds and \$100k sitting in a cash account. In total between the bank cash accounts and the Memorial Fund, we currently have \$200k in cash. This cash will help to fund the recently signed \$100k Dane County Contract which will be reimbursed to us later in the year.

• Governance

The executive committee is continuing the work previously done by the ad hoc planning oversight committee which is responsible for the new organizational chart, draft revised bylaws and draft revised policies. I anticipate that the draft bylaws will be submitted to the members for approval later in the fall. After the executive committee finishes their review, the draft policies and procedures will be submitted to the board for their review and approval. As you prepare your domain descriptions, please consider whether there are policies and procedures that it would be appropriate to include in the formal document. The alternative is creating a guide to zoom your program's processes that give detailed instructions about how the work is actually carried out.

• Fund Development

The League's fundraising goal for FY20-21 is \$90,000. It is an ambitious goal, requiring a thoughtful and creative approach to planning. So far in FT20-21 we have received 95 donations, totalling \$12,505.

To help the League better track and meet its fundraising, membership and financial goals, as well as manage other key data, the Fund Development team, in conjunction with Voter Services and Finance, researched new software, finally selecting a versatile and powerful tracking tool provided by a highly-recommended software firm, Little Green Light.

This will enable the Fund Development Committee focus its activities on multiple areas:

- increasing the number of member donors;
- increasing the amount members donate;

- increasing the number of non-member donors;
- aligning fundraising goals with League priorities.

We have set quarterly financial targets and are developing a calendar of fundraising campaigns and other initiatives with tasks and deadlines. Among these initiatives are:

- Continuing the “Why I Give” donor profile series with a focus on young donors, donor couples, men who have given and non-members who have given. We hope to see these profiles in the Bulletin, through social media and possibly forwarded to external media outlets.
- Expand interactions with member donors and non-donors, listening to their suggestions about expanding support for the League, increase awareness and support of the League among non-members
- Produce a four-page “annual report” highlighting the work of the past year for distribution at key events
- Produce a more in-depth case statement to include in grant requests
- Continue traditional League fundraising activities, including the general membership, Valentine’s Day, year-end and Candidates Answers appeals, as well as the May Challenge and the 50-year member campaign

● **Communications**

A press release was sent for the candidates answers for the election on Tuesday. The PR was sent out to the established LWVDC media list and was seen published in a few articles. In addition, Facebook/Twitter/Instagram posts carried this information. New press release being worked on for ERA forums.

LWV Dane County is participating online in #CivicHealthMonth on Instagram and Twitter. Had a twitter blast for #VRAA and #VRA55 in conjunction with the state league and the US league. Currently working on plans for web redesign and curated media to make sure people know of the November election and safe at home voting.

● **Program/Advocacy**

Program

The climate crisis subcommittee produced two virtual forums in late June and early July on the importance of the wetlands as a climate crisis mitigation strategy.

- 15 members are serving on the Program Committee and/or subcommittees: Mary Anglim, Carol Barford, Joy Cardin, Janine Edwards, Meg Gordon, Georgiana Hernandez, Sue Larson, Aileen Nettleton, Pat Patterson, Ralph Petersen, Mary Ploeser, Steve Ploeser, Joan Schwarz, Consuelo Lopez Springfield, and Caryl Terrell.
- The Book Group (which is part of Program) had a fantastic turnout for How to be an Anti-Racist, with 25 League members attending the discussion sessions.
- Through Caryl Terrell’s leadership, research and writing, LWVDC and LWVWI submitted a comprehensive statement (grounded in the League’s positions) to

the Governor's Task Force on Climate Change with recommendations for addressing the climate crisis.

- We held two virtual meetings with Discussion Unit leaders to get their input about activities for 2020-21 and ways to convene this year (virtually and in-person).
- Since 7/1, we've published 4 Swinging for the Fences blogs re: the Governor's Task Force on Climate Change; reflections on "How to be an Anti-Racist;" Redistricting; and "A Brewing Controversy between Climate and Weather."

Action Committee

Marilyn Stephen will chair a new Action Committee with the goals of influencing public policy through education

and advocacy and engaging members in learning how government works and how citizens can have a voice beyond the ballot box. The subcommittees of the Action Committee are the Observer Corps (Chair Laurie Egge), the Advocacy Corps who will respond to action alerts from the national, state and local leagues, a Quick Response Team who will research and prepare responses from the league on issues that arise unexpectedly in Dane County, and a Speakers Bureau (Chair Joan Schwarz). If you know of new or old members who might be interested in any of these activities, please let me know!

A small task force of members Janice Greening, Louise Robbins and Sherie Sondel was created within the last two weeks to research and determine if a response from the league would be appropriate on a resolution proposed by Supervisor Elizabeth Doyle to stop all work on the new jail and make other changes. While the league has pointed out the dismal conditions in the City/County building jail in three different communications in recent years, we have not taken a formal position on the plan to build a new jail.

● Membership

As of 8/6/2020

627 Total Members

- 61 Student
- 28 Life
- 45 Additional Joint
- 493 Primary

20 new members in July

15 past lapsed members from the prior 3 years have renewed

394 have renewed or are life members

233 not renewed

Membership Projects:

Volunteers are being recruited for making calls to members who have not renewed their LWV membership. An email will be sent to all members who have not renewed at the end of August, and then volunteers will make calls to members who have not yet renewed at the end of September.

Development is underway of Zoom format and slides for New Member Opportunities

(and orientation) that is planned to be offered to new members at regular intervals. Amber Rottier is working on both slide and zoom development with Mary Ellen Schmit. New member zoom meetings are scheduled for Aug. 31 and Sept. 15. Joan Schwarz has created an email template to more efficiently welcome new members. Amber Rottier is also working on creation of a new Brochure with Joan Schwarz.

With much help from Maria Spinozzi, Mary Ellen and Joan are signed on with UW Madison Handshake app in order to meet with Students virtually during the September 16 Public Service Fair. A short presentation will be developed for this format of meeting virtually with students.

● **Voter Service**

Dane County Project:

The Dane County Board approved \$99,000 for a voter assistance project to develop social media and other publicity materials to inform voters at high risk of being disenfranchised in November. The money will also be used to hire a manager for the Voter Helpline which we anticipate will receive a higher number of calls due to increased publicity. We received over 50 applications for the position by the deadline of August 5. Interviews will be held later this month, with a start date at the beginning of September. The project will be coordinated by the LWVDC and the Voter ID Coalition.

Helpline Volunteer Training:

Marian and Paul conducted an online training for approximately 20 volunteers who will answer calls to the Helpline. These new “agents” learned to use the Freshdesk software program that Paul recently installed. We will have 2 levels of agents – Level 1 for general questions and Level 2 for more complicated issues.

Statewide network:

Residents from throughout Wisconsin can call the Voter Helpline for assistance. While our volunteers in Dane County can answer many of their questions, there are times when help from local experts is needed. We are building a network of statewide “experts” and now have partners in 12 communities in Wisconsin. With the help of the LWVWI, we hope to expand our network to include partners in all regions of the state.

Apartment project orientation

JoAnn Boushon, the Apartment Project Coordinator, conducted a second project orientation for prospective apartment adopters on July 25. Approximately 20 people attended. The project currently has 41 apartment adopters who have adopted approximately 78 apartment complexes.

UW Interns

For the 20-21 school year, our UW interns will be moving from the Social Justice Hub at Union South to the Morgridge Center. As a result they will join a larger team of student interns focused on voter outreach and engagement. They will be supervised by the person hired for the newly created Morgridge Center position – Voter Engagement and Civic Learning Coordinator. The position will be filled this fall. In the interim Marian and Paul are serving as the interns’ supervisors.

High School Team

Volunteers on the High School team, led by Sue Fulks, will be offering to conduct Zoom the Vote events at high schools in Dane County. Currently Sue is sharing her Zoom license with the group.

Candidate's Answers

We are exploring alternative print options to Isthmus including the Capitol Times.

• **DEI**

Lisa Janairo has agreed to be the new chair of the DEI Committee. She was introduced to the committee as the new chair on July 31st. Mary Ellen Schmit and Lisa Janairo will meet August 13 for DEI goal and leadership development. The next DEI meeting will be held on Friday, Sept. 4 at noon.

• **Bulletin**

The Summer Bulletin was published on June 19th.

Articles/Information/Data for the September Bulletin are due on Monday August 17th.

The expected publication date for the September Bulletin is September 1st.

• **President's Report**

Executive Committee/ Communications

Communications approved by the Executive Committee and sent in support of LWVDC positions since July 1:

Government Responsibilities and Procedures

- Email to Dane County Clerk requesting that all municipalities be provided with masks to offer voters who come to a polling place without a mask. August 5, 2020
- Email to Dane County Personnel and Finance Committee urging support of resolution to fund voter outreach to address Covid-19 voting barriers July 6, 2020 (Also sent to full County Board on July 7, 2020)
- Email to Dane County Board Chair and Executive requesting video access to virtual meetings for members of the public June 29, 2020
- Email to Madison Mayor requesting video access to virtual meetings for members of the public June 23, 2020

Administration of Justice

- Email to all City of Madison alders (August 4, 2020) supporting referral of Police Oversight ordinances to appropriate city committees.
- Email to Common Council Executive Committee (August 4, 2020) We urge the CCEC to place on file some outdated ordinance drafts that would delay consideration of police reform.
- Email to City of Madison alders (July 29, 2020). We urge the Alder Workgroup for MPD Civilian Oversight to follow the recommendations of the Ad Hoc Committee in establishing the membership of the Civilian Oversight Board, instead of constructing a complex process which we believe will add confusion and delay in establishing the Board.

Natural Resources

- Recommendations to Governor's task force on climate change, 7/31/20

Centennial mailing - Centennial materials that were unable to be distributed at the cancelled spring event will be mailed out in the next several weeks. The packets also include materials that were unable to be shared at the annual meeting. Included are historical highlights, a commissioned poem by Madison Poet Laureate Fabu, past and new 50-year members, the 2020 Carrie Chapman Catt Award winner, and the 2020 Voter Service Award winner.

Ring the Bells - At noon on August 26 (CST), citizens, churches, businesses and organizations across the state are encouraged to ring bells, blow whistles or otherwise make celebratory noise in recognition of the 100th anniversary of the 19th Amendment.