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LWVDC Board Minutes
February 8, 2017

PRESENT: Brook Soltvedt, Sue Larson, Diane Liebert, Helen Horn, Mary Anglim, Steve Ploeser, Susan Fulks, Gail Bliss, and Kathy Fullin by phone.

Arrived late: Mike Casey, Ingrid Rothe.

The meeting was called to order at 2:01 pm.

Treasurer's Report: Liebert reported we made \$350 on the Lively Issues Luncheon.

Fullin noted that the budget is in the black, even though our major member fund raising solicitations (Valentine's/League Anniversary, and May Member Challenge) have not yet taken place. Horn noted that increased membership, including \$990 in half year memberships, and a \$500 end of year gift are improving our budget position. Horn noted that investment income reported last month has been added to the Memorial fund. She reminded us we need to start spending our accumulated funds.

Fund Raising Report: Larson reported that in addition to taking in \$1,778 in payments for the Lively Issues Luncheon, respondents sent in about \$1800 in gifts. The Stripe payments for on-line registration were counted as gifts, so the figure is not exact. The Valentines letter has gone out. Sue will convene a fundraising meeting in March with Caryl Terrell and is seeking additional participants. Soltvedt asked to be kept on the list. Ellen Rosborough was suggested as a possible member.

ILO Report: Larson listed a number of articles from the Upper Mississippi ILO news feed. Elaine Sinagra continues as the office contact. Mary Ploeser will be our policy contact. Soltvedt has been tweeting about ILO issues. Several people from the new member tea expressed interest in environmental issues. We need to get them involved. The board discussed two Dane Co water quality stories. (Water quality in the Yahara N of Lake Mendota & opening stretches of the Sugar River for fishing.) The League of Wisconsin Municipalities reported on a grant a SE Wis community used to reduce nitrates in wastewater. [Casey arrives.]

Membership Report: Anglim reports that in 2016 we added 84 members, and lapsed 55. So far in 2017 we have added 19 new members with 5 more signed up electronically, but not yet paid. We need to hold another new member event March 11 or 18, probably at a Westside location. The Arboretum and Sequoia Library were discussed. Space for 50 and the ability to provide coffee & snacks is desired. Olbrich Gardens costs \$130 to rent, which was seen as expensive. Snacks provided by current members keeps costs down. Soltvedt suggested using Action Team organization as a program. Liebert said when she joined the LWVDC officers talked about their roles and projects. Bliss suggested stations around the room for various issues – voting rights, education, environmental issues, etc. as a way to create small groups interest.

There was a suggestion that new members be referred to the appropriate unit leader, but because unit attendance is based on much more than geography there is no way to decide which unit would be the best fit for a new member. Fullin and Anglim (& Liebert?) will continue discussing possibilities. The West Madison Monday evening group is expecting so many new members they have to move to a larger location. They will meet in the party room at Noodles on University Ave, instead of at Panera.

Bulletin Report: Casey said that the March Bulletin has 6 pages of great articles. It will be circulated again prior to printing. Articles for the April Bulletin are due to Mike by March 6. Ploeser and Casey will be meeting to work on the database providing information about donors in a user-friendly form for inclusion in the Bulletin.

Voters Service Report:

Fullin reported that newspapers had not printed the letter she wrote on our behalf about in person absentee voting (IPAV). The clerk tweeted that 493 votes were cast at early voting sites during their 611 hours of operation. Horn reported on the Madison School Board forum sponsored by GRUMPS (GRandparents United for Madison Public Schools.)

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Diane Liebert interviewed all six Madison School Board candidates for the Know Your Candidates programs on City Channel. Soltvedt asked for more members interested in training as forum moderators. Casey volunteered.

Soltvedt reported on Candidates' Answers – The on-line traffic has been above baseline, but disappointing. All the pages are ready to go for the general election. The paper version will be turned in to Isthmus 3/1, proofed 3/10, with publication 3/16.

The location of the downtown Farmers Market voter registration table was again discussed. The preference is to stay where we have been for many years. At State Street the non-profits are up the stairs. The advantages and disadvantages of the North Hamilton corner can be observed this summer for possible changes in 2018. It appears that the earlier the request is in, the better the site assignment at each corner, so file now, and file very early in 2018. We will experiment with computer options and providing envelopes with the address of local clerks for out-of-town registrants. In 2011 LWVDC got an informal legal opinion that providing stamped envelopes addressed to local clerks to allow individuals to mail in their voter registration was not a bribe.

High School Voter Registration: Fulks reports eight volunteers have signed up to work on the project. They will be meeting in early March. She is also meeting with Joe Schmidt of MMSD Social Studies curriculum development 2/16. The LWV-Milwaukee has created a packet that we can adapt. Soltvedt noted that since state statutes now require civics education, this is a good time to get involved. We should look for ways to reach minority youth. Ploeser knows several former teachers who might be interested in getting involved. We may also be able to work with other groups at schools such as debate team. There is one volunteer from Sun Prairie; Larson will connect that person with SPARC, for more volunteers.

Publicity: Fulks sent out a press release for the online Candidates' Answers. The flyer for the Education Forum is developed and the press release will be sent out soon.

Business Systems Report: Ploeser reports the special events section of the database can be cleared out and reused. He is meeting with Casey on donation reports, and meeting with Rothe and Sinagra Feb. 23.

WebMaster Report: Soltvedt has created a LWVDC Twitter account (@LWVDaneCounty). Tweets are also available on the LWVDaneCounty.org website. New member Paige Millburg works at Epic in user interface development. She has volunteered to help with our online presence. Soltvedt discussed the balancing act between full size computer screens and mobile devices. Because the site uses a template, there are limitations to the design changes that can be made. Calendar has been updated with forums and unit meetings. The button for the action team form is coming (following the Bulletin and email announcements of the program).

[Rothe arrives]

Minutes: Rothe moved and Casey seconded approval of the January 2017 minutes as amended. Motion carried unanimously.

Vice President's Report: Rothe reports that Check Out Voting is being discussed for March 18 or 25 in Madison Libraries. Both dates are within the blackout period where we cannot assist people to register online. However, for Madison residents, IPAV will be available. The only way to be an Election Registration Official (ERO) is to be an employee of the Clerk's office. We can still talk about Voter ID and candidate information, since Candidates' Answers will be published March 16.

Based on feedback from the new member coffee, many new members are interested in looking at issues beyond voting. Some are also interested in working on state issues. There was at one time an "Action VP" at LWV-Madison. Eleanor Barshall suggested that if you want to be seen as important and involved on an issue, you need to be seen at committee meetings. Today there are more options for observing meetings via computer, but not being at the meeting limits the impact of observers who aren't physically present. Our new effort with Action Teams is related to the February "attend a government meeting" program. We focused on four subject areas:

- Environment/Natural Resources
- Voting Rights

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Social Policy (Health care/Housing)

Education

Other (if someone was interested in another topic)

There was significant discussion of the use of Google Groups to organize interested volunteers, and other areas where we might also be involved, including whether these action teams might generate programs for 2017-18 and beyond. Topics discussed included:

Following the impact of federal regulations on the city and county (Rothe)

Looking at fee structures in business parks (Larson)

Citizen input on the Budget & Shared Revenue

Government responsibilities and procedures

Criminal Justice/Policing – in conjunction with MOSES/WISDOM (Anglim)

Program Report: Since the board organized the February program encouraging LWVDC members to attend local meetings, we created study questions for use by the Units in reporting their members' actions and impressions.

March – The study materials for the education program needed revision, which has been completed by Soltvedt

April – The program on jailing the mentally ill is on track

May – The entertainment/program for the annual meeting was discussed again, including the movie "Electoral Dysfunction" about the Electoral College (too long) and the Willy St Co-op Sock puppets (rejected as not relevant). Rothe will check with Greg Jones, President of the Dane County NAACP, as a possible speaker for May 17.

Presidents' Report: By March 23, 2017, board members need to file their annual reports. Last year's report (2015-16) is in Google Drive, and available to edit or replace. Do not thank everybody. Items to be voted upon need to be completed by March 30. Horn will provide the budget related materials. The Nominating Committee has announced the following slate

President: returning Brook Soltvedt

Fund Raising: Cathy Berndt

Voter Service: Paul Lindquist

Secretary: Gail Bliss

The Nominating Committee still needs a chair.

Horn moved, Rothe seconded a motion to adjourn. Meeting adjourned about 3:50 pm.

Gail Bliss, acting Secretary