

Minutes of Annual Meeting on Saturday, June 9, 2018

League of Women Voters Winchester

Sanborn House, 15 High Street, Winchester, MA 01890

Moderator: Vicky Coccoluto

First Reader: Patty Shepard

Recorder: Susan Woodward

Second Reader: Jan Dolan

The Annual Meeting began with a gathering for conversation and a delicious brunch. At 11:30 a.m. our moderator, Vicky Coccoluto, on behalf of the Steering Committee, welcomed those present to the Annual Meeting and the presentation of our Civic Leadership Award. She spoke about the League's main mission; that being the education of our citizens so they may be well informed before voting. Vicky also spoke about our wide variety of activities from our voter registration drives to our popular program, "A Day at the Races" which we will be planning before this fall's state elections.

Vicky then introduced Nancy Schrock, former League Steering Committee member and past Treasurer. Nancy introduced Dr. Ellen Knight, this year's recipient of the League's Civic Leadership Award. Nancy spoke of the work Dr. Knight does with the Arts Forum, the books and many pamphlets she has written, and the historical tours she has given. Ellen graciously accepted the award and went on to regale us with some of the stories she has researched and written over the years about the history of the town of Winchester.

At 12:30 Vicky opened the annual meeting by welcoming approximately 30 attendees. Vicky began with a little information about the National League of Women Voters. It has recently developed a "Transformation Roadmap" that includes specific action steps, yet to be implemented, including how to attract more supporters and volunteers, and how membership can embrace the qualities of diversity, equity, and inclusion in order to have a meaningful impact for the next century and beyond. As a part of the process, the National Board adopted the following: "**Clear Strategic Focus – Our Vision** – We envision a democracy where every person has the desire, the right, the knowledge, and the confidence to participate. **Our Mission** – Empowering voters. Defending Democracy. – **Our Value Statement** – The League believes in the power of women to create a more perfect democracy."

Vicky proceeded with the Business Meeting. She announced Susan Woodward as Recorder, and Patty Shepard as First Reader. Jan Dolan volunteered to be Second Reader. Next, the members took time to review and complete our form for suggestions for programs for the coming year. We ranked our top three choices and indicated how we might become more involved in the League's work in the coming year. Vicky made a special plea for membership outreach and more photographers.

We had a special guest from the State League attending our meeting. Judy Zaunbrecher, a Board Member and Voter Services Co-Chair, brought greetings from the League of Women Voters of Massachusetts. She stated that the State League is there to help all the local leagues and we should not

hesitate to call to ask questions or get help. They want us to use the online site as a reference and already have online a “Voter Service Toolkit”. A new voter guide, “Move 2018” will be available on July 20th. There are also state groups working on moderator training, setting up candidate forums, and voter registration. They recently gave out awards at the State House in Boston to the winners of the student video contest. The videos are online for all to see.

Steering Committee Report

Susan Woodward highlighted the events of the past year.

- Farmer’s Market – Volunteers distributed educational and membership materials. They also signed up anyone interested in joining our email notification list.
- Two hot topics: “How to Speak to Your Legislators” was presented by Nancy Brumback, who is the chair of the State League’s Legislative Action Committee. The second program was “How to Run for Office” during which citizens in town who had run for office, their campaign volunteers, and the Town Clerk led a discussion, which included how to get on the ballot, fundraising, and campaign strategies.
- Steering Committee members attended two Metro West meetings. These meetings offer an opportunity to learn about the activities of Leagues in surrounding areas and to share what we have done with members of other local leagues.
- Voter Registration drive at WHS. In addition to registering the 18 year olds who were eligible to vote in the March town election, we preregistered 16 and 17 year olds with the help of our Town Clerk, Mary Ellen Lannon.
- We presented our 2017 Civic Leadership Award to Judy Manzo at the Annual Meeting.
- One of our Steering Committee members attended The State League Convention in April at Clark University in Worcester. The theme was “Beyond the March: Women Leading the Way in Massachusetts”.
- A new program - “The Health Benefits of Renewable Energy Choices: A Role for Carbon Pricing” featured Dr. Jon Buonocore. He offered new research showing the benefits realized from present carbon policies. This event was co-sponsored by Wright-Locke Farm, Winchester’s Farmer’s Market, and the State League.
- Moveable Feast in December is the annual luncheon for town employees to express our thanks for all they do for the town.
- We co-sponsored a panel discussion on “Gender in Civic Engagement” presented by the Winchester Multicultural Network and Winchester Inclusive. Five women who have served in local government shared their perspectives on the unique challenges that women face in public service.
- “Day at the Races” for the Spring Town Election brought us 2 contested races; that of the Planning Board and the School Committee. Before the forum there was a 30 minute “Meet and Greet” for Town Meeting Member Candidates in the vestibule of the McCall School auditorium.

- We set up a booth at Town Day in June, another opportunity to connect with potential voters and promote civic involvement.
- Discussion of the book, Just Mercy written by Bryan Stevenson. The group was made up of high school students, a few teachers, and 7 League members.
- “What’s Cooking? A Tour of Kitchens in Winchester was our biennial fundraiser. Sub-Committee members were Marilyn Mullane, Nancy Schrock, Vicky Coccoluto, Jan Dolan, Judy Blaine, and Susan Woodward.

There are several activities already in the planning stages for the near future:

- Summer Steering Committee meeting on Sunday, June 24, from 2 – 5 p.m. at Lynne Brodsky’s house.
- July 24th at 7 p.m. – Candidate Night in Arlington: Debate between the 2 candidates for Middlesex County DA, Marian Ryan, and Donna Patalano.
- Saturday, September 1, 9:30 – 1:30 LWV Winchester will be at the Winchester Farmer’s Market.
- Possible Candidate Forums: (1) State Senator Jason Lewis (D) and Sam Hammar (D) **before** the primaries. (2) U. S. Congresswoman, Katherine Clark (D) and John Hugo (R) **after** the primaries. (3) State Rep, Michael S. Day (D), Kateen R. Kumar (I) and Caroline Colorusso (R) **after** the primaries. (4) Governor’s Council for District 6 (Winchester) are Terry Kennedy (D) and Vincent L. Dixon (R) **after** the primaries.

Major Fundraiser Report

Marilyn Mullane, who co-chaired the 2018 Kitchen Tour fundraiser with Nancy Schrock, reported that we sold 150 tickets and made \$1250 in ad revenues. She thanked Judy Blaine who opened her home for the event and joined the committee. She also recognized Judy Manzo for not only selling tickets at her store, “Book Ends” but she also opened her kitchen for the Tour. Nancy Schrock produced a beautiful booklet/ticket. She thanked local business owners for buying ads and donating flowers and food. Marilyn asked that we support them during the year. Our town newspaper, The Star, ran a feature article and put a reminder in the section, “Things to do in Winchester.” The League made in total a little over \$6,000 which will be used to support both our programs and attendance at state and national League Conferences.

Membership Report

Vicky Coccoluto, Membership Chair, confirmed that we are 76 members strong as of today, 4 more than we had on January 31, 2018 when she sent in our annual report to the National League. She noted that our total membership has been highly stable, even though it’s not the same people every year. But achieving net growth has been challenging. Vicky said that each year we have loyal members who send in their dues right away and there are always some who do not renew on time despite numerous

reminders. Some years we lose members to death as we did this past year when Evelyn Trageser passed away in February. What to do we do to expand our membership? We reach out to those who attend our events, sign up at Town Day or at the Farmers Market in the summer, and those who are active in Town government. Vicky keeps refreshing the list, adding new names each year, and doesn't give up on prior members who sometimes respond unexpectedly, as if they just forgot. Vicky stated that we must keep in mind that there is a lot of competition in the fall solicitation of membership and contributions; we must be aware of our need to make our case frequently for relevance and visibility. Our group is open for any new ideas in how we go about identifying and retaining new members. Our 76 members include 40 that are Sustaining members, meaning they renew at the \$100 level, and of these, 4 contributed above the Sustaining member level. We received 5 non-member contributions in support of our budget for local activities. These extra gifts really help out. Vicky pointed out she had some copies of the membership roster and encouraged people to pick up one and get better acquainted with other members.

Vicky announced that we had a quorum and asked that we refer to the Minutes of last year's Annual Meeting held on June 10, 2017. There was a motion to approve the minutes and it was seconded. The motion passed and the minutes were approved.

Treasurer's Report

This Treasurer's Report is normally for the current year ending June 30, 2018; and the proposed Budget for next year, ending June 30, 2019. Our Treasurer, Robin Wolf, was not at the meeting. She submitted a written report in mid-May on the financials presented in our booklet, which Vicky read, beginning with the Treasurer's report on the current year.

"As of this writing in mid-May our large fundraiser, the "What's Cooking? A Tour of Kitchens in Winchester", has raised approximately \$6,000 for our League. We were also very pleased and grateful to receive a grant from the Daniel Scharfman Citizen Education Fund to pay a large portion of the costs associated with hanging and maintaining our VOTE banner at the rotary during elections. It is important to have these sources of supplemental funds, since over 60% of our membership revenue goes to the National and State Leagues as a "per-member payment" to support their important work.

As in previous years, we made the most of our limited budget. Total income as of May 22 was \$14,019.68, which also included \$690 in gifts, while expenses to date total almost \$7,686.53. Income is higher than projected and expenses are projected to be very slightly under what we budgeted. Details are provided in your booklet."

Next Vicky read the Proposed Budget for the coming year which required a vote. Again, Robin submitted a written report that Vicky read to the group.

"As you look at the proposed 2018-2019 budget, the first thing you might note is that we are intending on running at a deficit since we will have earned quite a bit from the Kitchen Tour. Traditionally, we have a major fundraiser every two years with a goal of raising \$2,000-\$4,000. This means that we have a surplus in one year to fund operations for the following year. At this point we are not contemplating an Appeal since we do not want to conflict with fundraising efforts by the National or State leagues which do so much good work. We anticipate another Consensus study in January on the Massachusetts ballot question process, at least one educational event on a topic of local interest, in addition to our annual

candidate forum, voter registration efforts, and outreach at events such as Town Day and the Farmers Market. Details are provided in your booklet.”

Vicky opened the floor for discussion of the fiscal 2019 budget. Marilyn Mullane and Nancy Schrock had the same question about revenue from the annual meeting being listed together with the kitchen tour fundraiser under program income on the second line. It was agreed that the amounts on line 2 should be listed separately under program income and fundraising event, respectively. After this was resolved, Patty moved to accept the budget as amplified. Marilyn seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously.

The last vote was the nomination and election of a slate of Steering Committee members for 2018/19. Five candidates have agreed to be nominated for their first two-year term on the Steering Committee. They were Lynne Brodsky, Meredith Crowley, Denise Goluboff, Jeanette Kolodziej, and Gail O'Reilly. Vicky asked if there were any nominations from the floor. There were none. There were also four returning members: Robin Wolf and Judy Blaine to start a second two-year term; and Jan Dolan and Patty Shepard for completion of their second term. We said good-bye and thanked those who were stepping down: Michele Bartalini, Vicky Coccoluto, Lauren Costello, Mary McKenna, Elinor Quill, and Susan Woodward. Maggie Russell moved to elect the slate of the candidates nominated to the Steering Committee for the 2018-19 year. Jan seconded and it was unanimously approved.

Finally, Nancy Schrock asked to make a special announcement. On October 20, 2018 the town of Winchester will be sponsoring “Mass Memories Roadshow.” Winchester has been selected as one of the four sites to collect videos and photos to present a snapshot of our town. Nancy suggested that we also try to capture photos of our town showing what Winchester was like in 2018. The Multicultural Network, the Council on Aging, Town Schools, the Historical Society, and the Public Library are also working on this project. The Jenks Center has generously donated a work space.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Woodward