League of Women Voters of Winchester

APPROVED -MINUTES of Steering Committee meeting -Tuesday, October 6, 2015

Winchester Savings Bank (open meeting)

Facilitator and Host, Susan Woodword; Secretary, Vicky Coccoluto. Attending: Jan Dolan, Judie Muggia, Marilyn Mullane, Nancy Schrock, Patty Shepard; guest LWV member, Gordon Simons

1. Check-in presented an opportunity for introductions of the Steering Committee, and guest Gordon Simons, our newest LWVW member.
2. The minutes of the September 1, 2015 meeting **were approved as amended** to “QuickBooks” from “Quicken” for the accounting system used for the Treasurer’s report.
3. Farmers’ Market, September 26—Susan reported the booth attracted many visitors; there were 7 contact sign-ins and numerous good conversations. A volunteer, Anna La Violetta, new to Winchester from Long Island, with many years of experience working on political campaigns, was especially energetic and friendly with passers-by.
4. Membership—Vicky reviewed recent membership history, which included a timeline for the process of membership renewal, which begins with October renewal letters, followed by reminders before yearend, and the final “official” membership list due January 31st of the next year. Since our last LWVUS list of 61 members, we added 6 new members from program activities last spring, and another 6 since the June 20th Annual Meeting until now, for a total of 73 currently.

Drafts of the member renewal letters were presented, with slight variations for four recipient groups--renewing members, paid-up (new) members, former members and prospects, using suggestions from the Committee for different emphasis in each. The Committee agreed to the basic letter format, and the recommendation to include a pre-addressed envelope for the mailing, which will begin within the next week. **Jan** agreed to assist Vicky in identifying possible new member prospects from lists of former members, and Town Meeting Members.

1. Treasurer’s report—Nancy announced that she is now a co-signer on the LWVW CD (approximately $7,000+) and that the balance in the checking account is $3,661.41 after paying the bill for dues to the LWVUS. Going forward, Nancy suggested that she would email the three financial reports to the Committee prior to the monthly meeting, but focus on one of them, the summary, for the meeting handout.
2. Grants follow-up—Nancy reported submitting two grant applications before the end of September: (a) a $250 request to the LWVMA Scharfman Citizen Education Grant program for the speaker fee for our planned March “Women’s History” program on prison reform. The total cost of that program is estimated at $389 to cover room rent, posters, and the speaker’s fee. (b) A second request is to EnKA for $435 for a portable public address system to use in our programs. EnKA meets within a month, and she expects a vote on this grant to be made then.

Nancy mentioned that she will be sidelined for about two months from November 11 following knee surgery, but will be able to work from home during that time.

1. Communications report—Susan asked for feedback on the LWVW Facebook page. She has put numerous photos on it, including as recently as Farmers’ Market, and has posted other LWV meetings from Needham and Sudbury as well. She noted the websites and Facebook pages for those two chapters are similar to each other, evidently using a common LWV template, while ours is a custom design by Mary Ann Haraldsen.

There followed a discussion of protocol in posting other LWV programs and other organizations’ events. It **was VOTED**: that we would restrict our own website to LWV-specific events, and post the events of other organizations, whose goals are consistent with our League values, on our Facebook page. In some cases, if the League has a position on the topic to be covered by another organization, we will use our e-mail list and send a blast to our members. Accordingly, as the Multicultural Network has requested our publicity for an upcoming Winchester Reads program on a book by Cuban expatriate Carlos Eire, **Nancy** will forward their request and **Marilyn** will compose an e-mail blast capturing the League’s position and the organization’s event that Susan will send to our members.

Nancy suggested a “how to” consultation with Mary Ann Haraldsen on website issues, such as putting new files and more photos on it; Vicky suggested we compensate Mary Ann for her services from this point. This received a favorable **VOTE** from the Committee, and **Nancy** agreed to follow up with Mary Ann on terms and a possible future consult.

1. Next Door Theater—Marilyn confirmed that the November 14 planned social/mini-fundraiser event around the play “Spitfire” is suspended due to the show’s cancellation. **Judie** mentioned that the Stoneham Theater also does group sales, and she **agreed to look into their schedule and ticket revenue-sharing arrangements**. It was **VOTED**: to wait one more week to assess options to replace this event and then issue a notice to members about the cancellation of the previously-announced event—and mention a possible re-scheduling, if feasible.
2. Constitutional Amendment Study and Consensus meeting-November 7th—Marilyn mentioned the Power Point slides for this discussion have been emailed to the SC, and that the Arlington League will join us for the study and has agreed to split the $250 room rental. Separate meetings will be required for the consensus exercise itself, and the Sanborn space will facilitate this. Nancy mentioned the Sanborn has a screen, but no projector, so **Nancy** will look into borrowing one from MIT, and **Marilyn** will provide the laptop. Marilyn will open the study and generally discuss the notion of consensus and the nature of the study. Patty will facilitate discussion on each question while Marilyn scribes. Jean, our recorder and timekeeper, will provide a recap (agree, Question 1; no consensus, Question 2; etc.) at the conclusion of our meeting.

Follow-up publicity for the consensus study will be generated by **Patty**, who will send a draft announcement to Nancy and Susan next week; then it will go out to members, and it will ask for RSVP’s so that refreshments, seating, etc. can be planned. Arlington has agreed to bring fruit, juice, cold cups, napkins and a tablecloth and Carolyn Parson agreed to arrive at 8:30 to set up. **Marilyn** has offered to make a coffee cake and **Jan** offered to pick up bagels and coffee for the event.

1. League Leader Roundtable, October 3rd—Judie contributed a number of very positive comments from this field service meeting in Sudbury. First, that the Mass League has good leadership and is enthusiastically offering a number of state resources for voter service in the wake of three major changes in MA election laws. These include pre-registration of 16-17 year olds, online voter registration, and early voting by next November**. We should put the link for online voter registration on our own website.** Also, the VOTE411.org link is up and running and in January the Online Voters Guide from LWVUS should be available--with the Presidential candidates on it. The LWVMA.org is the best resource for study guides for the two upcoming consensus studies, and the questions for Money in Politics were posted just last week. The MA League will be looking for volunteers for its Charter School Study, and putting additional efforts into a development program, as membership dues do not cover all their expenses. The MA League also announced an early Day on the Hill this year to be held in February, possibly the week before school vacation. Both Judie and Vicky felt the Roundtable was well worth attending.
2. Women’s History Month—Patty reported that Andrea James has agreed to a March 8th date to speak at our first Hot Topic on “Building up People, not Prisons” and will contact the Winchester Library for room availability on that date. Marilyn suggested we consider WinCAM taping, and that Jenks would be more suitable—if available**. Nancy** agreed to check with the Jenks, and with the Griffin Museum, where last year’s “Violence against Women” program was held. Patty added that there are many interest groups working on prison issues, and that many bills are currently under debate in the State Legislature to deal with some of them. It was suggested that our publicity efforts reach out to connect with these interest groups, though probably not to co-sponsor, as we did before with Winchester Multi-Cultural Network.
3. WHS Civic Engagement Senior Focus panel—Marilyn announced that “Connect and Commit,” a WHS student organization, is sponsoring this panel on October 15\* at 8 a.m. at the high school. Michael Day, State Rep, is on the panel, as is someone from MCN; could we send a League member to join them on the panel? **Judie** volunteered to do this—thank you, Judie!
4. LWVMA Fall Fund-raiser and Phonathon—Marilyn drew our attention to an email from LWVMA which pitches a new appeal: donations of $100 or more to LWVMA will garner a 15% contribution to your home League; lesser amounts produce a 10% cut to the local League. However, these must be received by October 30th to qualify. Marilyn and Jean Herbert plan to work on the Phonathon again this year; in the past they have been joined by Gloria Legvold.
5. Other Business--Marilyn reported that Richard Leaf provided 13 sources for renovated kitchens for our spring fundraiser. She agreed to be part of a subgroup that works on our biennial fundraiser and suggested we start after the holidays. In the meantime, SC members should be on the lookout for spectacular kitchens in Winchester and check their connections for kitchens for famous people, i.e., local chefs, etc.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 p.m. The next regular meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, November 3, at the home of Judie Muggia, with Jan as co-host; Vicky, Facilitator; and Jean Herbert, Secretary.

Respectfully submitted,

Vicky Coccoluto, Secretary

\*subsequent date change to October 23