

**League of Women Voters of Winchester
Steering Committee Public Meeting
December 10, 2019
Winchester Town Hall, Winchester Room**

In attendance:

Steering Committee Members: Jeanette Kolodziej, Lynne Brodsky, Robin Wolf, Meredith Crowley, Erica Lane, Jean Herbert, Kim Foley

Members: Patty Shepard, Vicky Coccoluto, Jan Dolan, Judy Blaine, Gloria Legvold, Amanda Littell-Clark

Guests: Liora Norwich from the Network for Social Change

Minutes from November were accepted as read.

Treasurer's report was submitted. It was noted that this is Robin's fourth year on the Steering Committee and it is time to start recruiting for a Treasurer for next year. Interested members are asked to contact Robin or any other member of the Steering Committee.

Membership: Update was given by Vicky. The membership campaign is going very well. Letters were sent out with personal notes. 235 letters were sent out. Of 89 members, 55 renewed, 8 individuals joined; end of January is close out for membership drive. At the time of the meeting, reminders went to only members who have not submitted their dues yet.

Postage and supplies related to membership came to \$239.

Website: No update on the status of the revamping of the website. Robin noted that the PayPal account has to be changed from an "individual" to a "business" account and she will look into how to do this.

Voter Registration: Update was given by Judy and Jeanette.

Judy confirmed that the Vote Banner is reserved at the town center rotary from Tuesday, March 17, in time to publicize the Town Election on March 31. (Banner is hung two weeks prior to the election.) Jeanette will retrieve the banner from Lynne to get the date patch put on at Fast Signs.

Jeanette has reserved February 5 from 9-10:45 a.m. (WIN block) for Voter Registration at WHS. Laptops, tables, and chairs will be provided. She will need 5-8 volunteers to help students register. The deadline for registering to vote in the presidential primary is February 12 and March 11 in the town election.

To expand the League's student voter registration efforts to high schools in adjacent towns with no LWV chapters, Erica is looking into Stoneham and Kim is looking into Woburn. Vicki noted

that in the past, LWVW coordinated with Medford's City Clerk to register voters at Medford High School.

Moveable Feast: Merry reported that 56 signed and there were more walk-ins. Due to the storm, the location was changed from the DPW to Town Hall. Sue and Kim were extremely helpful dealing with the last-minute changes. See addendum.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI): The National League statement was read aloud and discussed. The Massachusetts League created its own DEI committee and decided to adopt the National League's position. Those present felt that the statement was very inclusive of many characteristics (Patty,) that it was stronger than the previous statements (Robin,) and that there was history of the LWVW's efforts on inclusion (Gloria.) It was felt that the MA DEI could be ratified with a statement that included recognizing all immigrants regardless of status. The Steering Committee felt that this should put to vote by the full membership at the annual meeting in June.

Patty summarized the LWVW and MAWOCC (Massachusetts Women of Color Coalition) dialogues, referring to the printed summary handout. The importance of acknowledging past hurt, listening, and awareness of privilege were all key components in the process of learning how to move toward collaboration.

She summarized the work by the subcommittee (herself, Lynne, and Jeanette.) After three Facebook Live events with MAWOCC and LWVW in dialogue: 6/30 "Overcoming Betrayal & Exclusion: Building an Inclusive and Respectful Partnership", 8/11 "Ain't I a Woman? – themes from the book by bell hooks", 10/27 "Facing and Overcoming Challenges", the next session "And Now What?/Until Freedom Truly Rings" is scheduled for Sunday, January 19, 4-5pm in Randolph. It is hoped that more LWVW members will attend.

The three Facebook Live events can be found here: <https://www.facebook.com/mawocc>. Click on videos to watch.

Lynn Brodsky referred to bell hooks' book "Ain't I a Woman" which was the topic of one of the Facebook Live events. This book might be an option. Lynne mentioned that Jeanne Morrison from MAWOCC identified three important areas to focus on: experience, research, and action. She talked about the importance of trust.

Erica recommended "So You Want to Talk About Race?" by Ijeoma Oluo as a book that, among other things, shows how to be o.k. with being uncomfortable.

Someone asked whether MAWOCC was involved in other leagues. Patty pointed out that some members are working with the Worcester league.

Liora stated that the Facebook Lives were "process on display"- valuable and very enlightening. She felt that both groups were very brave to go through this process.

Vicky wanted to know how broad the participation was on our end. It's difficult to tell given that these events are hosted on MAWOCC's Facebook page. We can see who is watching in real time. It seemed as though participation by LWVW was much sparser than MAWOCC. There was discussion on how to increase participation. Some ideas: more proactive advertising and hosting a "Watch Party."

Patty reviewed the agreements on the handout for the dialogue about brainstorming. Members and guests shared why they were here and why this issue is important to them personally.

Liora Norwich from Network for Social Change volunteered to record our brainstorming ideas.

Questions:

What legislative agenda is MAWOCC working on?

The State League determines what LWVW works on. One of the problems MAWOCC encounters is that by the time legislation is passed, what is important to MAWOCC has been cut. It would be good to have input from MAWOCC on what the League can push for.

Brainstormed Ideas:

1. Voter registration event in POC neighborhoods (It was pointed out that this could be perceived as "white savior" mentality and that it is important to assess whether we are wanted in these neighborhoods before proceeding.)
2. Supporting each other's legislative agendas (See above question.)
3. Pick movie or documentary to have a watch party together
4. Joint Book Reads, possibly "The Untold Story of Women of Color in the League of Women Voters" (book comes out in February), a bell hooks book with moderated discussion along with WHS, the Network, etc.
5. Black History and League History of the Suffrage movement from the point of view of WOC
6. Explore differences in white/WOC feminism
7. Edit the Facebook Live videos to create an event focused on "Process on Display" which could include discussions with a trained facilitator on core themes

In closing, those in attendance shared one word or phrase about how they were thinking/feeling. Here are a few examples: warm, hopeful, proud, impressed, productive, overwhelmed, and curious.

Addendum:

More details from Meredith regarding the Moveable Feast, paraphrased:

Employees came from Highway, DPW, Water Dept, Comptroller, Town Clerk's Office, Town Manager's Office, IT Dept, Fire and Police Departments, and Transfer Station. This was the first year we were able to get food over to some town employees who could not leave their posts. Photos were taken by Felicity Tuttle and sent to Lauren Costello to be published in the

newspaper. Servers were Marilyn Mullane, Sue Carney, Judy Blaine, Vicky Coccoluto, Kim Foley, and Gloria Legvold. Set up was overseen by Michelle Bergstrom, Sue Carney, Kim Foley, Jan Dolan, and Meredith Crowley. We heard many thank you's ...a good time was had by all. Expense receipts will be submitted to Robin.

Next Steering Committee Meeting: January 14th at Meredith's house.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeanette Kolodziej