

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF WINCHESTER

Steering Committee Meeting
Wednesday, December 14, 2022, 7:30 p.m.

Board members/Attendees:

Elizabeth Brodbine Ghoniem	Caroline Shamu
Trã Evrigenis	Cheryl Shepard
Kim Foley	Robin A. Swan
Marie Lee	Susan Verdicchio
Marilyn Mullane	

AGENDA

HOST: Marilyn Mullane

FACILITATOR: Marie Lee

SECRETARY: Caroline Shamu

Called to order at 7:35 pm

1. **Minutes** from November 16, 2022 were approved.

2. **Treasurer's Report** – provided by Jean Herbert, Treasurer. Approved.

a. Auditor update – Will be provided by Elizabeth at the next meeting.

3. **Membership report** - Kim Foley

New membership drive began Oct 1. All going well. So far, 50% of members have renewed. Kim expect the remaining 50% to renew in January (as usually happens). Kim is sending out targeted email reminders on 12/15 and also early next week to those who have not yet renewed. In early January, Kim will ask SC members to phone/email those who have not yet renewed. One new member has expressed interest in joining the SC. Because we currently have an opening, Kim will reach out to her with an invitation.

4. **Lessons Learned**

Moveable Feast Update – December 8 – Marilyn reported that the event went very well. The team will re-visit the menu and amounts ordered for next year. She and Elizabeth will meet to do a thorough “lessons learned” report. The SC discussed the idea of returning to the original idea of breaking bread together/fellowship. So, perhaps, no to-go containers; the focus should be on a sit down and eat together event.

5. **Upcoming Event**

a. January 11 Open Meeting – Susan provided an update: State Rep. Michelle Ciccolo (15th Middlesex), Town Meeting member Stephanie Zaremba, and Board of Health member Ruth Trimarchi will be on the panel. Susan is still following up with Susan Nardone and Dorothy Simboli. We discussed additional panel member options, if needed, so that we have at least 4 panelists that date. LWVW members will be encouraged to bring friends to the event. Cheryl will put the announcement on the LWVW website. Since the Open Meeting will be hybrid, the Zoom link will only be shared with League members.

6. **2023 Program Planning:** We spent some time discussing plans for upcoming programming:

a. **Program or Events already committed to:**

i. WHS Partnership and Case Study Program - March 15 (Jeanette and Marilyn organizing)

ii. Spring Contested Town Races Debates and Voter Guide: Robin and Marie (leads, debates), Caroline (lead, voter guides). Note that nomination papers are due Jan. 27. The election is on on March 18. Will need a quick turnaround re: planning for the debates and voter guides. Voter services team to meet at the end of January to start to organize. Caroline will work with the team to schedule the meeting after the new year.

iii. Spring Jimmy Tingle Fundraiser—Marilyn will talk with Jenks after the new year. The event will be in person, with cake and champagne. Marilyn will also work with Jimmy T to finalize the date. She is aiming for April at this point.

iv. Continuing role for LWVW with Winchester Housing Coalition: WHC activities are quiet now. They are currently planning educational efforts and awareness raising, and are making changes and improvements to their website. A suggestion was made that the WHC provide FAQs on their website addressing how to apply/access affordable housing in the Winchester Area. Susan will connect with the WHC to suggest this.

v. Civic Leadership Award: We discussed whether we want to hold this as a separate, stand-alone event or combine it with the annual meeting in June. In the past, these were two separate events. The Annual meeting might be held at a restaurant and have a speaker, whereas the Award event, if held separately, would probably still involve light refreshments. The SC agreed that two separate events, held so close together, seems like too much to take on Thus, we will present the Civic Leadership award at the LWVW Annual meeting in 2023. We could hold the event at Sanborn House or Wright Locke Farm. We should set the date and reserve a location this winter.

vi. June 3 Town Day—the logistics of our Town Day booth will be addressed closer to June.

b. For additional events that we might hold in 2023, we looked at the LWVW feedback from the 2022 membership survey results. The number next to each topic indicates the number of members that ranked the topic as a priority area for LWVW:

i. Educate and Advocate for Affordable Housing in Winchester - 10 (1)

ii. Advocate for stricter Gun Safety Laws - 9

iii. Advocate for Reproductive Choice - 8 (1)

iv. Empower Voters and Foster Civic Engagement - 7

v. Address the Climate Emergency - 6

vi. Advocate for Honest Elections and restoring our Democracy - 5

vii. Educate about the separation of Church and State - 3 (1)

viii. Advocate for Racial Justice - 3 (1)

ix. Advocate for same-day voter registration - 2 (2)

- x. Advocate for Criminal Justice - 1 (1)
- xi. Advocate for Immigration Reform - 1
- xii. Advocate for Gender Equity - 1
- xiii. Explore and advocate for expanded safe and reliable Public Transportation - 1
- xiv. Advocate for ERA Ratification pursuant to S2415 - (1)

We discussed what activities/events we might organize related to the top topics. Those present noted the importance of providing information about how to find affordable housing in Winchester. For example, this would help Town employees who don't know how to find affordable housing locally. We will definitely work on this via our partnership with the Winchester Housing Coalition.

A suggestion was made that it would be good to address a topic that we are not yet addressing. We briefly discussed the possibility of focusing on gun safety, but then pivoted to discussing holding an event around the Academy Award-winning short documentary film, "Period. End of Sentence" (26 minutes). The film addresses provision of period products and menstruation taboos in India. Showing the film and organizing a panel discussion afterwards would be a good way to launch a local discussion about access to menstrual products. Tra offered to take the lead to contact local (Newton MA) author Anita Diamant who has written about historical taboos around menstruation and could be a panel member. The panel could also include a member of the Winchester Board of Health, and perhaps Dot Butler from the Winchester Coalition for a Safer Community. Tra and others will work in upcoming weeks to set a tentative date for the event and to contact possible panel members. [Marilyn subsequently found and shared an online educational package that provides information on how to access the film and also a packet of discussion prompts.]

7. We organized facilitators and secretaries for **upcoming meetings**:

Date	Facilitator	Secretary	Host
Wed Jan 11 (Open Meeting)	Susan	Marie	Library (OWL device reserved to run a virtual meeting)
Wed Feb 15	Tra	Robin	
Wed Mar 15 (Open Meeting) - Note that this conflicts with Case Study Event and should be re-scheduled, perhaps.	Robin	Kim	

We adjourned at 9:13p.