League of Women Voters of Massachusetts (LWVMA)  

June 13, 2020
Council 2020  
Minutes - Plenary Session

The LWVMA Council 2020 was held Saturday, June 13th, 2020, via Zoom webinar

- Workshops were not offered this year as we follow state health guidelines due to COVID19.
- After the business portion of the meeting Ricardo Ramirez, from the Voting Rights and Election Center of the Brennan Center for Justice, was the keynote speaker on “Voting during a pandemic: What we need to do over the next 5 months and beyond.” (Mr. Ramirez replaced Prof. Charles Stewart, who was scheduled to speak on the same topic but had a medical emergency.)

CALL TO ORDER  
Judy Zaunbrecher, LWVMA Co-President, called to order the LWVMA virtual Council at 10:03 a.m., June 13, 2020, welcomed all, and noted that the meeting is being recorded.

She explained how the virtual meeting would operate:

- Use of the chat box to “hear” any motions and to take questions and feedback at certain points, monitored by Co-President Mary Ann Ashton who will convey messages to Judy.

- To vote on the slate of officers and directors, the “Raise Hand” function under the Participant icon will be used.

- Delegates for Council either checked in early or were instructed to open the Chat Box and click on the link to sign in as a delegate.

- Judy reminded attendees that LWVMA bylaws require a quorum of one-third of local Leagues and Units of LWVMA be represented at Council, so delegates representing 16 local Leagues and units are required to conduct business. To ensure this requirement is satisfied, there will be a Credentials report presented later in the meeting prior to any voting.

INTRODUCTIONS  
Judy introduced the following people:

- Parliamentarian  Lora Goldenberg (LWV Bedford)
- Secretary Pro Tem  Kathy Leonardson (LWV Marblehead and First Vice President of the LWVMA Board)

MINUTES READING COMMITTEE  
The Minutes Reading Committee was appointed to review and approve the minutes shortly after the close of convention, and the committee was approved by unanimous consent:

- Amy Smith  (LWV Topsfield, Boxford, Middleton and LWVMA Board)
- Karlen Reed  (LWV Concord Carlisle)
ELECTION COMMITTEE

Judy introduced the Election Committee:

- Members: Lynn Cohen from the Westford League, Bonnie Glass from the Sudbury League, and Marilyn Peterson from the Acton-Area League
- Election Committee is poised to be activated for the election of Officers and the Board if there are nominations from the floor resulting in contested races; Committee would be in charge of conducting an election by ballot in which case a poll would be sent to all delegates in the Chat Box and delegate emails, with results announced at the end of the virtual meeting.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR’S REMARKS

Pattye Comfort, LWVMA Executive Director, reported on her first 7 months in the ED position.

Thanks

She praised the League for taking swift action writing a statement in support of Black Lives Matter in the wake of the death of George Floyd and by following up with support for legislation for change based on League positions.

She thanked the staff and Board of Directors, and she offered special thanks to outgoing Co-President Mary Ann Ashton and Co-President Judy Zaunbrecher for help in transitioning into the League ED position.

Updates

- Office staff members (Taylor Grenga and Martha Maguire) have been working from home since March 3rd; Brynne Gorman works remotely from San Francisco.
- Summer intern to LWVMA from Harvard College, Lila, will work remotely from her home in Washington State on the Voter Guide and Census efforts.
- Student Video Contest winner will be announced, and Pattye is making arrangements for a virtual announcement and ceremony.
- Pattye said that the much of League advocacy work has been sidelined by the pandemic but it has lifted the veil on inequalities. The League has pivoted to work on emergency election laws for the pandemic. The League already has long-standing suggested reforms: vote by mail, election day registration, etc., and so is well-positioned in these matters.
Pattye Comfort, LWVMA Executive Director, and Andrea Kozinetz, LWVMA Treasurer and member of LWV Newton, were introduced to provide a financial overview for current fiscal year ending June 30.

**Pattye Comfort, Executive Director of LWVMA** presented an overview of the 2019-2020 combined LWVMA and the Lotte E. Scharffman Fund (LESF) audit review.

- The LWVMA/LESF organization is in a strong position for working capital ratios; it has no debt and has more than the benchmark of 2:1 ratio. (Note: meaning the combined organization has enough cash and receivables available to cover liabilities twice.)
- The organization is also in a strong position in cash reserves; it is recommended to have 3-6 months in reserves and the League far exceeds that.
- For FY20 Budget to Actuals chart, the difference in income is because the 100th Anniversary fundraiser was moved until after June 30th (into FY21) due to the pandemic.
- Because the numbers in the chart are only through April, she expects the final numbers to be close to budget for FY20.

**Andrea Kozinetz, LWVMA Treasurer and member of LWV Newton** presented an in-depth financial report.

- The combined LWVMA/LESF organization is in a positive financial position, with a budget of approximately $300,000 per year, and a cash burn rate of about $25,000 per month (salaries, rent, insurance, subscriptions, etc.).
- Income was from Fall Appeal and Phonathon.
- Expenses for programs include a portion of Phonathon receipts to local Leagues plus there will be other expenses in the next two months.
- Andrea projects that we will be on target for FY20 budget.

**CREDENTIALS REPORT**

Brynne Gorman, tracking delegate and non-delegate Council attendees, reported the following:

- 92 local League delegates
- +1 member at large
- + 9 state board delegates
- 102 voting delegates

The credentials report reflects a quorum is in attendance; this report was accepted by unanimous consent.
NOMINATING COMMITTEE REPORT

Lee Bona, Nominating Committee and LWVMA 2nd Vice-President, thanked the members of the Nominating Committee for the slate of candidates.

- Lee is representing the Nominating Committee on behalf of Chair Wendy Manz, who was unable to attend.
- She placed in nomination the slate of new Officers and Board members to take office July 1, 2020, the slate having been distributed to all LWVMA members 6 weeks ago, as required in Bylaws.
- The slate will fill eight of nine Director slots, based on staggered terms which were adopted at LWVMA Convention last year.
- Although LWVMA Bylaws call for two-year terms, Lee noted some on the slate are completing the terms of others who resigned or moved to other positions on the Board, hence their positions are for one year.

The Proposed Slate

The Slate of Nominees brought forward by the Nominating Committee was read by Lee:

**Officers of LWVMA:**
- Elizabeth Foster-Nolan, a Member at Large, for the office of Co-President for a two-year term
- Amy Smith, from LWV of Topsfield-Boxford-Middleton, for the office of 2nd Vice President, for a two-year term
- Tanya Roy, from LWV Wellesley, for the office of Treasurer, for a two-year term
- Courtney Rau Rogers, from LWV Norwood, for the office of Secretary, for a one-year term

**Directors for a Two-Year Term:**
- Marie Gauthier from LWV Franklin County
- Vedna Lacombe-Heywood from LWV Plymouth
- Susan Millinger from LWV Amherst
- Brenda Safford from LWV Worcester Area

**Directors for a One-Year Term:**
- Jo-Ann Berry from LWV Acton-Area
- Karen Callanan, a Member at Large
- Susan Flicop from LWV Wayland

**For the Nominating Committee:**
- Sharon McCarthy, as chair from LWV Harvard
- Sharyn Roberts from LWV Newton

Judy opened the floor for nominations (nominations could be made by typing names in the “Chat” box). There were none. Hartell Johnson moved to close nomination (typed into Chat box) and it was seconded. (The motion to close nominations requires 2/3 majority vote; Judy asked for all opposed to “raise their hands”; and discussion ensued to ensure all were able to do so.) The motion to close nominations passed. (Recorded vote
was 93- yes, 3- no).
Judy asked for a vote (by delegates only) to approve the slate of Officers and Board as proposed. The slate was approved, with one opposed. (Recorded vote was 95 - yes, 1- no).
Judy thanked out-going members of the Board for their service to the LWVMA: Mary Ann Ashton, Lee Bona, Nancy Brumback, Kate Boland, and Andrea Kozinetz.

DIRECTION TO THE BOARD
Co-President Judy Zaunbrecher reminded the delegates that directions may be about a specific program item, project, or about the management and goals of LWVMA.

Co-President Mary Ann Ashton asked delegates to type any Direction to the Board in the “Chat” box or emailing to the League after the meeting. She affirmed they will be conveyed to the new Board as part of the record of the meeting.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name/League</th>
<th>Direction to the Board</th>
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<tr>
<td>Meghan Hanawalt (LWV Falmouth)</td>
<td>Ensure diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) is a component of everything we do.</td>
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<td>Susan Friedman (LWV Newton)</td>
<td>Election reform: support ranked choice voting and related change.</td>
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<td>Julie Rohwein (LWV Concord-Carlisle)</td>
<td>Continue to work on the climate emergency and include social justice as a vital part of that work reform.</td>
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<td>Mary Bradley (LWV Sudbury)</td>
<td>Provide the tools to navigate the waters of racism.</td>
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<td>Launa Zimmaro (LWV Concord-Carlisle)</td>
<td>Please continue your excellent work on the election reform and criminal justice efforts this session. But please do not forget the urgency of climate change – a slower moving crisis but one that will not have a vaccine.</td>
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<td>Florence Seldin (LWV Cape Cod Area)</td>
<td>Need to focus all our efforts on the coming election – make certain vote by mail, once it’s passed, is implemented.</td>
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<td>Suzanne Brock (LWV Cape Cod Area)</td>
<td>Please plan and share action regarding the ongoing political unrest areas including voting suppression and changes in police training.</td>
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<td>Valentina Pasquantonio (LWV Acton-Area)</td>
<td>When talking about needs of individuals in MA, especially black and Hispanic citizens, “HEALTH CARE is a right of every citizen.” We need to understand and state this when we list needs! In light of the Covid-19 statistics and the country’s push to stop systemic racism, we would recommend that when MA League officials say the equality litany be expanded as follows: “.... To provide equal opportunity for education, employment, housing, and HEALTH CARE* for all persons...regardless of their race, color, gender...”</td>
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<td>Jen Lynch (LWV Salem)</td>
<td>The Board may want to reconsider the membership model. The per member payment makes it difficult for local Leagues to expand and diversify because the dues have to be set at a very high rate.</td>
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<td>Joanne Blatte (LWV Sharon Stoughton)</td>
<td>Work on increasing college student voting.</td>
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<td>Judith Reilly (LWV)</td>
<td>Fall election “worst case scenario” planning.</td>
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<td>Salem)</td>
<td>Tom Mikus (LWV Cape Ann)</td>
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<td>June Michaels (LWV Cape Ann)</td>
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<td>Kathy Jacob (LWV Sudbury)</td>
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<td>Patricia Clifford (LWV Acton-Area)</td>
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<td>Katherine Florio (LWV Brookline)</td>
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PRESENTATION OF LOCAL LEAGUE GIFTS

Judy thanked local Leagues who have generously donated to the LWVMA, saying it is not too late to donate. The list was shared on screen.

Local Leagues that have donated: Acton Area, Amherst, Concord/Carlisle, Harvard, Needham, Newton, Northampton, Plymouth Area, Topsfield/Boxford/Middleton, Wayland, Wellesley

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Judy said she has received a request for volunteers to help with questions for candidates to be used in the Vote 411 online voter guide. The time commitment would be a few hours between now and June 30th. If interested, please contact Tanya Roy, troy@lwvma.org.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion to adjourn LWVMA Council 2020 Business Meeting was made by Vedna Heywood, seconded by Andrea Kozinetz, and approved. Business meeting was adjourned at 10:46 a.m. Nancy Brumback introduced the guest speaker, Mr. Ricardo Ramirez, who began his presentation on our election landscape in a COVID-19 world. Following a question-and-answer period, Judy adjourned the meeting at 11:30 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathy Leonardson (First Vice President of the LWVMA Board; LWV Marblehead)
Secretary Pro Tem