

Board Meeting: Thursday, May 19, 2022, 7:00 pm

via Zoom

MINUTES

Attending: Board members (5-not a quorum)—Peggy Dellinger, Evelyn Murphy, Marie Curtis, Lois Kiely, Nancy Sabino. Nom Com Chair – Jayne Mackta. Member guests—Harriet Bernstein, Eileen MacHaffie, Luisa Paster.

Opening – Welcome, Introductions, and DEI Policy Pledge *(Read by Nancy Sabino)*

Announcements—

- Ted Dellinger (webmaster) has put a glossary of terms used in a DEI context under the DEI Tab on lwvsmc.org.

Standing business *(Distributed in Advance)*

- **Minutes** of April Meeting—Marie offered one correction (to the list of those participating in an LD11 legislative interview) which will be made and the revised document will be file as “unapproved minutes” on the “Members Only” page of lwvsmc.org.
- **Treasurer’s Report**—posted on “Members Only” page of lwv.org
 - Evelyn pointed out that the income included an “in-kind” contribution (for postage) and encouraged the Board to follow this practice of reporting un-reimbursed expenses to allow us to know what our operations actually cost.
 - Expenses totaled \$607.39, including cost of LWVNJ Gala journal ad (honoring Sol Hara) and a portion of the LWVUS convention registration fee (\$300 of the \$450) for Pat Supplee who will be an in-person delegate.
 - An outstanding 2021 Forum fee balance of \$25 from Ocean Grove Homeowners was received after treasurer’s report window closed—thanks to the follow-up by Harriet Bernstein.
 - Evelyn explained that an unexpected expense came in the form of a fee paid to Associate Press (AP) for unauthorized use of a photograph in our EYV material. Evelyn spoke to agency representing AP and the fee was reduced to \$150. Lois emphasized the need to be alert going forward to use only public domain material. We have since scrubbed EYV of all propriety material. LWVUS has a trove of public domain or LWV-owned images on its Flickr account.
- **Team Activity Reports** – Board commented on how impressive the work of EYV and Reenter-Register-Vote continues to be.

LWVUS Convention 2022 – June 23 – 26 *(Reported by Evelyn)*

- LWVSMC is allotted three delegates.
- Evelyn is attending, but not serving as a delegate (to avoid potential conflict of interest with her role on the national team that is proposing changes to League structure that will be considered at the convention). Sharon Miggins and Pat Supplee are going as in-person delegates. One slot remains.
- Evelyn confirmed that no one else on the Board is able to attend virtually or in person. The Board agreed to designate a member of another League to serve as our third delegate. Evelyn suggested offering our unfilled slot to LWVGRBA student member Lillian Hardwick, who took our Moderator Training last year, is a member of Youth Advisory Board of EYV, and has expressed interest in attending virtually.
- Delegates go “informed, but not instructed.”

Merger Update *(Reported by Peggy and Evelyn)*

- **Process:** Steering Team (Anne Torre, LWVGRBA; Evelyn Murphy; Sharon Steinhorn; Barbara Chaudhery; Janis Iwanyk; Susan Sferas; Peggy Dellinger) held meeting of members of three Monmouth County Leagues on 2/10 via Zoom. Merger idea was endorsed and work proceeded. Kickoff meeting was held for four Design Teams (listed in the next bullet) on 5/10. Their work will be fed to the Steering Team which is putting together a slate, bylaws, budget, and organizational structure/strategy for the new League that meets the goals of the merger and the embodies our Guiding Principles. The three presidents spoke to every member of their boards to ask if they want to serve on the board of the new League.
- **Teams:** Four design teams are meeting regularly: **Communications** under the leadership of Janis Iwanyk of LWVWM; **Social**, Susan Sferas and Barbara Chaudhery; **Local/County Presence**, Peggy Dellinger; and **Governance**, Steering Team Chair Anne Torre.
- **Dues structure:** Evelyn explained that currently each of the three Monmouth County Leagues has a different dues structure. The Steering Team is proposing a dues structure that offers recommended amount as well as options to pay more or less (down to nothing). This approach is consistent with the direction being suggested by LWVUS. The current thinking is that the recommended amount would be \$55. The experience of other nonprofits using this flexible model is positive; they reporting actually increasing their membership income. On the question of students: Current state and national charge nothing for students. LWVSMC charges \$10; LWVGRBA and LWVWM charge nothing. Student dues are still under consideration; any decision would always include the option to pay nothing.
- **Approvals:** The LWVNJ has approved the merger and it is on the agenda of the LWVUS for its June Board meeting.
- **Strategy:** The Design Teams are creating a vision and structure for the new League that will be fleshed out, implemented, and refined by the new Board. For the first year, the Board of the new League will be led by three co-presidents (the three presidents of the current local Leagues). Our goals and guiding principles will direct us and adjustments to the founding documents (bylaws, nonpartisan policy etc.) and organizational structure will be made as needed.
- **Official launch:** A Zoom meeting is scheduled for July 26 where the members of all three Leagues will officially vote on the merger. Press releases will await this final approval.

Candidate Forums *(Reported by Evelyn)*

- **When a party/candidate refuses to participate or withdraws at the last minute**
 - National Republican Party has announced its candidates will not take part in national-level forums. But we have not so far found either party refusing to take part in forums within our footprint. There are only a few competitive races for the June Primary and we have forums in the works for both parties. To date, we do not seem to be affected by the national Republican position.
 - Traditionally the LWV does not allow “empty seat” forums; we will hold forum that is missing a major party candidate if at least two candidates representing different parties are participating. We can have a one-candidate “Meet-and-Greet” if we have a co-sponsor.
 - When candidates have agreed and at the last minute do not show or pull out—we can go ahead only if we have a co-sponsor who can take over and we are not visibly part of the event. We cannot moderate.
 - Some members of the Board felt that this bowing-out allows us to be manipulated by a party or candidate. Situations differ and we might want to distinguish cases where a candidate/party pulls out at the last minute (within 24-hours of the event, for example). We also may want to adopt an aggressive approach to publicizing the behavior of candidate who refuses to debate or pulls out without legitimate cause. We have to protect our reputation for non-partisanship and fairness—but, in the end, we can't prevent party from accusing us of partisanship. The issue doesn't affect our Primary Forums. We have to set policy by the fall.

- **Red Bank mayoral Democratic race:** We have been involved in a very visible back-and-forth in the mayoral forum for the Democrat candidates in Red Bank. Paragraphs of our email correspondence with the candidates inviting their participation have been reported on their Facebook pages. This experience highlights the need to be very cautious about what we say and how we say it in our correspondence on forums.

NJ Elections Legislation

- Same Day Registration Lobby Day in Trenton – Thursday, May 26. It is focused on election legislation, particularly same-day registration. Starts at 10 at Historic Masonic Temple on Barracks St. with a breakfast and some training/background. At 11, walking to the front steps of Annex for a rally and press conference. Those who want to talk with legislators go inside. Members have received notice both in LWVSMC “May Calendar” and LWVNJ “Action Needed.” Our members have received multiple invitations and Evelyn will send another.

Close 8:22

– Next Board Meeting: *Thursday, June 16, 7:00 – 8:15*