**League of Women Voters of Wilmette**

**Board Meeting Minutes - Tuesday, December 12, 2017**

**Valley Lodge, Wilmette**

Call to order 11:54 AM.

*Present*: Allyson Haut (co-president), Kate Gjaja (co-president), Rebecca Boyd, Lisa Braganca, Katherine Byrnes, Susan Gallagher, Trudy Gibbs, Nancy Hoying, Eleanor Lipinski, Meg McDonnell, Trish Nealon, Leslie Parsons, Stefanie Rupp, Anne Sullivan, Gail Thomason, Michele Thorne, Anne Treadway, Lali Watt

*Absent:* Julie Arment, Peg Cartier, Rhona DiCamillo, Susan Fortier, Susan Morrison, Tracy Peacock

**I. Administrative**

The November 14, 2017 Board meeting minutes were approved. There will not be a January issue of the Voter, There will be weekly updates sent on January 9 and 16. Send info for these to Ann Dronen. The Student and Government Leaders program kickoff date is January 18.

**II. Student and Government Leaders**

On behalf of the co-chairs, Katherine Byrnes reported that 60 students have already signed up. Gail Thomason added that this has been a League program for over 40 years. Eighth graders in the community learn what it is like to be a government official or administrator. Currently, students from St. Joe’s, Avoca and Wilmette Junior High participate. St. Francis students have not participated for a while.

This program provides positive interface with government leaders. We do need League member volunteer time. Volunteers are there to be another adult in the room, no experience or expertise necessary

Nancy Hoying asked whether the League coordinates with the PTAs to get volunteers and perhaps to interest new members in the League. Lali Watt echoed that this program provides a good opportunity to get the League’s name out. Kate Gjaja stated that Tracy and Rhona are both rolling off the Board this year, we will need a new leader to shadow them this year to learn the program.

**III. Affordable Housing**

Nancy Hoying reported that League work on affordable housing is going well. A focus is on providing educational tools on the website as well as a Q&A. The League’s intent is to provide information that is neutral and as factual as possible. Allyson Haut reported that the League is also meeting with Village staff to discuss ways to facilitate citizen civility at these and other public meetings of government bodies. Plan Commission hearing is January 16.

Lali mentioned that a new League member, Carolyn Goldstein, who has a strong background in affordable housing and an understanding of the planning commission is hosting a meeting discussing facts regarding affordable housing. That meeting is Friday, Dec. 15th, at her house. Richard Koenig of HODC will be in attendance to answer questions. All LWV members and members of the community are invited. League member Jeff Axelrod has also reached out to discuss the LWV’s role of affordable housing with Nancy.

**IV. Citizen Civility**

Allyson Haut reported that Gail and she met with the Village Manager regarding citizen civility. The ideas were well received. Immediately prior to Village Board meetings, a summary of the rules and expectations will scroll on screens in the meeting room to educate people on the citizen participation processes. Other efforts to promote civility and to educate commission members on how to set expectations for meeting behavior were discussed.

**V. Sick Leave and Minimum Wage**

Anne Sullivan reported that the Village has organized a working group. LWV member Therese Steinken will be on the committee. The League will provide a list of points for the committee to consider.

**VI. Equal Rights Amendment**

Allyson mentioned the “Equal Means Equal” event at the library on November 30. She said she spoke with the library’s building engineer after the event and he said that the turn-out and enthusiasm were unprecedented for an evening meeting there. Allyson and Michele Thorne commented on how it was a successful team effort by the League. Future ERA program plans include participation in the ERA phone bank, compiling educational information and resources, outreach to younger adults, a survey of Illinois State legislators, and a specific bipartisan outreach to both major parties in the state.

Allyson said that there is support in the Illinois Senate but so far not in the House. No one wants to vote on the ratification until after the March 20 primary. We might be able to pair up with the Glenview-Glencoe league on our efforts and also associations of university women.

Anne Sullivan suggested reaching out to local leagues where state representatives are not yet on board. Lali added that the movie “Equal Means Equal” is most compelling and is available on Netflix and could easily be shown to groups in people’s homes. Allyson noted that the movie does have a lot of tough material about situations women face and would recommend it for young adults and up. Susan Gallagher mentioned that both Virginia and Florida are making good progress on ratification in their respective states.

**VII. UN Climate Change Meeting**

Rebecca Boyd attended the UN climate change meeting in Bonn, Germany on behalf of the US League of Women Voters. This was the 23rd year that the UN has met to discuss climate change. There has been discussion of the US pulling out of the Paris Agreement, while almost all other countries, including latecomers Syria and Nicaragua, are still in.

Rebecca mentioned some of her takeaways from this important meeting. She said responsibility to manage climate change issues extends from heads of state down to state and local governments and nonprofits. She said that a gender action plan was approved, based on the understanding that gender issues are key to addressing climate change, since the impact and opportunities to effect change are sometimes more significant as they relate to women in many parts of the world. Women are thought to be more likely to vote in favor of environmental issues.

Rebecca added that although people in the US are not really focused on climate change, around the world there is an understanding that this is happening. The League of Women Voters had not sent anyone for 9 years, although it does have positions on climate change. The US League of Women Voters was involved with the UN in its initial stages and has a significant role to play in the future.

Rebecca also attended the Chicago Climate Summit, a climate change conference involving representatives from small towns and cities all over the country. At her urging, two Village trustees, Senta Plunkett and Julie Wolf, made time in their schedules to attend. Rebecca asked League members to express their appreciation for the commitment of these local trustees to climate change issues.

Allyson added that once a quarter, Go Green Wilmette and the League of Women Voters of Wilmette leaders are hoping to start meeting to discuss common ground on environmental issues.

Rebecca said she has some specific ideas on what we can do here in Wilmette, based on the climate change conferences. The plan is to have Rebecca be the key speaker at a member meeting in January and to reach out to new members to find those particularly interested in this topic. We can include new members in an action focus for next year.

**VIII. Nominating Committee**

Allyson reported that the Nominating Committee will soon meet to prepare a slate of people for next year. We will continue to have people paired with alternating start/end dates so that work can be better accomplished and there can be continuity.

**IX. Program Planning**

Allyson said that the US League comes up with program that then is sent to the local leagues. Our planning begins in January. We have lots of new people in our League and we should get them excited about and involved in our plans for this next year.

**X. National Meeting**

The National Meeting of the League of Women Voters will take place in Chicago this summer.

Ann Yoshida of Glencoe-Glenview served on the state league and is in charge of volunteers. We plan to add to the meeting the electoral college video prepared by our League member Karen Glennemeier. Allyson said that we could also share our work on citizen civility and best practices for good relationships in the community.

**XI. Membership**

Meg McDonnell said that our League now has 150 members. Gail mentioned that with our level of membership, we will have three delegates at the National Convention. Meg also noted the highly successful new member event at Susan Fortier’s house. Allyson said it is a good time to start contacting members who have joined in the last 12 months and invite them to coffees. Anne Sullivan and Stefanie Raupp will take lead on setting up new member coffees.

**XII. Illinois State League**

Lali reported that the Executive Director of the Illinois league has been ill and the League is doing what it can for this situation.

**XIII. Treasurer’s Report**

Allyson said that the Treasurer’s Report will be deferred until January, along with the Audit Committee report.

**XIV. Voter Services**

Trish Nealon said that Voter Services is working on a three part program aimed at voter empowerment, running from January through April. Voter Services is also working with the Glenview-Glencoe League on activities for the primaries in the Fall. In addition, more information will be provided on the effective date of the automatic voter registration.

Trish mentioned a few more activities. The Wilmette League generally has a presence at the Going Green Matters event in Wilmette in March. On January 20, the Illinois league is sponsoring a group for the “March to Vote” in downtown Chicago. Allyson mentioned that we could bring ERA signs and should organize a group from Wilmette.

Finally the Illinois League has been working with BallotReady on a voter’s guide app. This is different from Vote411 which is what most Leagues use.

**XV. Events**

Nancy said that the League really accomplished a lot during the first semester. The State of the Village event was so successful that a several hundred dollar surplus was added to the League’s general budget. The League’s holiday gathering was also well attended and generated a little money to donate to the Education Fund. We will be working with Glenview-Glencoe on the women’s history event. Nancy said she will be working on compiling an event calendar.

**XVI. Other**

Lali suggested that folks provide book recommendations relating to some of our program areas, to make the website more interesting and dynamic. Members can give ideas to Susan Morrison for the website. Lisa mentioned that we might also want to post the League’s Twitter on the site. Gail suggested the LWV provide information on how taxes are calculated in Wilmette because it can be confusing and there are questions in the community right now about tax levies being increased by the schools. Lali suggested considering a study of the Village’s storm water plan, perhaps as early as the new year.

**XVII. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 1:41 PM.

**Next Board Meeting: January 16, 2018, 12:30-2:30 PM, Wilmette Public Library**

*Meeting minutes respectfully submitted by Michele Thorne.*