

League of Women Voters - Wilmette - 2023 Annual Meeting

May 24, 2023

In Person at Mallinckrodt Center

Members attending in person: Anne Sullivan, Cindy Levine, Kirsten Stadheim, Anne Treadway, Karen Glennemeier, Carol Shukur, Lisa Hoffman, Jennifer Manning, Mary Lawlor, Joan Oh, Gail Eisenberg, Cindy Blikre, Wendy Zun, Laurie Leibowitz, Cecilia Clarke, Micaela Daly, Cindy Fey, Susan Jones-Landwer, Susan Morrison, Trish Nealon, Mary Smoley, Anne Stevens, Lisa Keipert, Julie Wolf, Michele Thorne, Liz Seager, Sabine Scholz, Kim Ratkin, Chris Norrick, Lisa McDonald, Judy Mandel, Marcia Leadholm, Suzie LaBelle, Kate Gjaja, Trudy Gibbs, Joan Fishman, Joann Dineen, Mary Condon, Katherine Byrnes, Sarah Kurensky, Nancy Hoying (40)

Anne Sullivan called the meeting to order at 7:15 PM.

Anne Sullivan: Introduction

Anne Sullivan Reviewed the meeting agenda and welcomed all attendees.

Laurie Leibowitz: New Trier Scholarship Recipients

We've presented this award for the past 10 years. Winners receive a \$500 check. This year we have two student winners as it was too hard to select just one. selected two outstanding recipients. Katherine Byrnes who is the Scholarship Chair introduced the winners: Becca Arneson + Maya Ramaswamy

Maya was the Chief Editor of the New Trier News, she tutors many science and math, involved in Robotics Club, was voted most likely to win a Nobel Prize, spends Summer in India helping grandparents, and is also an accomplished pianist and artist. She's going to attend Northwestern University with a major in Biomedical Engineering with a Minor in Business. Her grandmother has osteoarthritis and she's hoping that her work in stem cells can help to create regenerative limbs for those who can't afford prosthetics.

Becca is involved in Social justice issues including Students Demand Action. She's President of the Mental Health Advisory Board, has worked at Evanston Hospital in the Cancer unit, spent summers working with children in Nogales, Mexico and is Co-Captain of the New Trier Basketball Team. She's going to major in Nursing at the University of Minnesota. She'd like to work with cancer patients.

Updates from Jennifer Gong-Gershowitz' Office Provided by Anne Sullivan

Representative Gong-Gershowitz was hoping to attend tonight's meeting, but the Illinois legislature is still in session in Springfield. She is participating in a Town Hall with Senator Laura Fine and Representative Robyn Gabel on June 14 at 6:30 PM. Here are some highlights of bills passed and pending this session:

- On Women's Issues: amended consumer fraud and protective services act – passed.
- One that is pending – automated license plate readers bill.
- Also there is a digital forgeries bill – creates a civil course of action for victims of deep fakes, oftentimes faces are superimposed on pornographic videos.
- Ride Share Carriers – to be liable for civil liabilities when there's a sexual assault on their platform.
- Civil liability for doxing
- Affirmation of the Equal Rights Amendment – calls on the Biden Administration to recognize it.
- Gun safety legislation – bring civil suits against gun manufacturers.
- Environment – passed bill to reduce single use plastics.
- Finally – Education: HB2396 – in 2027-2028, Illinois school districts would be required to provide full-day kindergarten.
- Right to Read Bill – would make libraries ineligible for state grants if they ban books.

Update from Georgia Gebhardt, LWV- Cook County

Georgia provided an overview of the Cook County League:

- It is an intra-league organization whose Board of Directors coordinates the electoral activities between and among leagues throughout the county.
- They liaise with the Cook County Clerk and the Chicago Board of Elections.
- In addition, they communicate with 13 local Cook County leagues.
- A partnership was formed to produce a video voter guide and it is thought to have reached a lot of the voters.
- There are observers that watch 4 entities: 1.) the Cook County Board 2.) Cook County Health Board 3.) Cook County Forest Preserve 4.) Water Reclamation District (\$1 billion dollar budget to treat waste water and manage stormwater). We observe board meetings and committee meetings and get to know commissioners, and when they are newly elected we meet with them and question them on their plans. Cook County has a budget of \$8.8 million dollars and it is important to follow the money.
- There are also interest groups that delve into the issues at the county level.
- Georgia said that the learning that took place since she's been on the Board has been incredible. "I felt like I was taking a political science course and I saw it all in action. It is really fascinating." Cook County would welcome any of you to join the group.
- Per Anne Sullivan, LWVW is looking for a liaison to the Cook County League.

Anne Sullivan and Laurie Leibowitz provided an overview of Wilmette League accomplishments during the 2022-2023 year.

a.) Inclusive Community (Cindy Levine)

- Narrative of Wilmette's community – placement of a plaque reflecting this history.
- Cindy helped to coordinate several educational events, facilitating the sponsorship of Todd Maxman speaking on the history of racism in NT Township.
- The League monitors the Village of Wilmette's efforts to form an inclusive community and communicates with commissioners about educating the community.

b.) Fair Elections (Joan Oh)

- This committee did a great job recruiting election judges
- They also organized door hangers in portions of Wilmette with historically low voter turnout.
- Fair Elections tracked issues, lawsuits and legislation related to redistricting, Electoral College reform, and voter rights and suppression at the state and federal level.

c.) Environment (Karen Glenemeier)

- Beginning work with the Park District in creating healthy habitat at Elmwood Dunes.
- Gathered at local forest preserves to rally support for the referendum which ended up passing. The referendum raised millions of dollars to support the health of our woods, prairies, and wetlands
- Also focus on areas like stronger tree protections.
- If you'd like to join this committee next year, let Karen know.

d.) Good Governance (Mary Lawlor)

- Sponsored 3 Living Room conversations during the past year with the District 39 Board President and Superintendent, Library Board President and Director, and the New Trier Township Supervisor and Administrator.

e.) Reproductive Rights (Nancy Eisenberg and Diane Baker)

- Spurred by May 2022 Supreme Court Dobbs decision.
- Formed a committee and provided action updates
- Presented a status update on reproductive rights featuring speakers from the ACLU and Men4Choice.
- Organized phone banking to Kansas voters to inform them of a ballot measure that would restrict access to women's healthcare.
- Organized postcarding to Lake County voters to inform them of the Supreme Court election that could have shifted the balance of reproductive rights support.

f.) Voter Services (Jennifer Manning + Carol Shakur)

- Focused work around National Voter Registration Day on registering new voters at area high schools.
- Organized tables at Wilmette Public Library, CRC and Mallinckrodt.
- Did get out the vote work at train station and French market.
- Partnered with neighboring leagues to organize candidate forums for the US Congressional 9th District and Illinois House Districts 17 and 18.
- Hosted forums for the 3 contested local elections and all candidates participated in these forums.

g.) Student and Government Leaders (Kirsten Stadheim)

- In partnership with Wilmette Jr. High School, 33 8th graders participated. Students were assigned positions as either elected trustees or appointed officials in one of two mock village board meetings.
- Program consisted of 7 sessions culminating in Mock Board Meetings where students used Robert's Rules of Order to decide on which of the 10 capital improvement projects to approve.

h.) Observer Corps (Mary Smoley and Anne Treadway)

- Observed an average of 12 meetings a month with seven Observers for 8 Boards and Commissions.
- Always looking for new observers

i.) Communications (Susan Morrison, Trish Nealon and Anne Stevens)

- Kept our social media account up to date with timely posts.
- Maintained and updated website visited by 10K unique users.
- Voter guide page alone had over 4,000 page views.
- Social media posts reached 5,000 Facebook users and 300 Instagram accounts.
- Published a weekly email newsletter that averaged a 70% open rate compared to a non-profit industry average of 21%.

j.) Membership (Lisa Hoffman + Leslie Weyrich)

- Helped to increase membership by 10%.
- 3rd largest League in state behind Glen Ellyn and Chicago.
- Close to 200 members.
- There has been an increase in Benefactor Memberships.
- When people give at a higher level, it helps us accomplish more.
- Hosted a fun in-person event at The Bottle Shop.
- Would love to get younger members involved and are open to ideas people who have kids in elementary, junior high, high school.
- Renew your membership by scanning the QR code. Survey to indicate if you'd like to be on a mailing list or get more involved in an interest area.

This marked the end of the public meeting. Non-League members were asked to leave so the League could conduct a business meeting.

The business meeting was called to order at 8:05 AM by Anne Sullivan.

- We have a quorum for this meeting (40 members present, 18 needed for a quorum).
- Gail Schnitzer-Eisenberg is going to serve as our parliamentarian.
- Laurie thanked all who participated in planning this meeting.
- There was a motion to approve the minutes from last year's Annual Meeting. The minutes have been reviewed. Karen Glennemeier moved to approve. Cindy Levine seconded. The motion passed.

a.) 2023-24 Budget:

Prepared by Tracy Sommer and available on the website. Motion to approve: Cecilia moved to approve and Susan Landwer seconded. The budget passed.

b.) Program Plan:

Local program Action Foci – issues for concerted study – received 35 responses, conducted a planning meeting to determine program plan. The following were recommended for this year's program:

- Environment- Karen Glennemeier
- Inclusive Community – Cindy Fey
- Fair Elections – Anne Sullivan will lead this area in 2023-24.
- Reproductive Rights – Wendy Zun will work to educate members on reproductive choice

- Gun Violence Prevention – Return to local program for this year. Cindy Levine will lead this effort in an off-board role.
- Good Governance to continue under the oversight of the Critical Action Team

Nancy Hoying moved to approve. Katherine Byrnes seconded. Program plan passed unanimously.

c.) Bylaws Amendment

Proposed changes include:

- Removing language that was in the wrong section.
- Ensuring the treasurer had the ability to sign and endorse checks.
- Removing a Board member section was changed to reference the Illinois statute
- Number of policies. We have additional policies as well and made sure that we referenced all of them, the same as the state board.
- Changing the requirement for three membership meetings to one since others tend to be more social.

Trish Nealon moved and Marcia Leadholm seconded. The Bylaws passed.

d.) 2023-2024 Board Slate

Executive Committee	Name
Co-President	Laurie Leibowitz
Co-President	Kirsten Stadheim
Treasurer	Cecilia Clarke
Secretary	Susan Jones-Landwer
Board of Directors	Name
Communications	Anne Stevens
Communications	Trish Nealon
SG Leaders	Ellen Sternweiler
Membership	Leslie Weyhrich
Membership	Lisa Hoffman
Observer Corps	Anne Treadway
Observer Corps	Mary Smoley
Past President	Anne Sullivan
Program/Events	Gail Eisenberg
Voter Services	Carol Shukur
Voter Services	Margo Chambers
Webmaster	Susan Morrison
Director - Environmental Chair	Karen Glennemeier

Director - Anti Racism/ Inclusive Community	Cindy Fey
Director - Fair Elections	Anne Sullivan
Director - Reproductive Rights	Wendy Zun
Director-At-Large	Rachel Arend
Director-At-Large	Micaela Daly

There were no nominations from the floor. Sarah Kurensky moved to approve. Karen Glennemeier seconded. The Board slate was approved.

e.) Meeting Conclusion

Anne Sullivan turned meeting management over to Laurie to conclude the meeting.

- Laurie noted a few “thank yous” including Marcia Leadholm, Chris Norrick, and Gail Eisenberg for their work to organize tonight’s meeting
- There are still volunteer roles open, such as Nominating Committee Chair. This is an off- board role starting in Feb/March. Two additional members are needed for that committee.
- We have three open spots for LWV Convention delegates. See Laurie or Anne if you’re interested. Weekend of June 10-11.
- Thanks were expressed to long time Board members rolling off of the board this year – Cindy Levine, Jennifer Manning, Tracy Sommer, Joan Oh, and Mary Lawlor. Cindy Blikre, Marcia Leadholm, Chris Norrick, Lisa Keipert, Nancy Eisenberg and Diane Baker, thank you for your participation this year.
- Anne Sullivan has been a wonderful partner.
- New board members Cecilia Clarke, Susan Landwer, Ellen Sternweiler, Margo Chambers, Cindy Fey, Rachel Arend and Micaela Daly were welcomed.
- League of Women Voters Wilmette will celebrate its 100th Anniversary in 2024. Hope to create meaningful opportunities for all to connect and reflect on where we’ve been and where we’re going in the next 100 years. If interested in helping to plan, please reach out to Anne Sullivan.

There was no old business. There was a move to adjourn from Karen Glennemeier and Cindy Levine seconded. With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:23 PM.