

THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF CONCORD-CARLISLE

BULLETIN

LWVCC Website: www.lwvcc.org

January 2014

P.O. Box 34 Concord, Massachusetts 01742-0034

Volume 18 2013-14 #2

CALENDAR

JANUARY

- 25 Sat LWVCC Membership Winter Brunch, Colonial Inn 9:00-11:00 AM
Speaker: Professor Alexander Keyssar speaking on Voters Rights
- 27 Mon Concord Town Caucus, Concord Town House 7:30 PM
- 28 Tues Carlisle Warrant Articles Submission Deadline, Carlisle Town Hall 5:00 PM

FEBRUARY

- 5 Wed LWVCC Board Meeting, 282 East Riding Dr. Carlisle (Barbara Lewis) 9 coffee, 9:15 mtg
National Program Planning, Brown bag lunch, after Board Meeting 12:00-2:00 PM
- 19 Wed LWVCC ESC Meeting, Newbury Court (Anita Barker) 8:00-10:00 AM
- 26 Wed LWVCC Book Group, Trustees Room, Concord Library 10:00-11:30 AM

MARCH

- 2 Sun LWVCC Concord Candidates' Forum, location TBA 1:00-3:00 PM
- 2 Sun Family Homelessness Forum, Tri-Con Church 3:00-5:00 PM
- 5 Wed LWVCC Board Meeting, 342 Sudbury Rd. (Anne Hayden) 9 coffee, 9:15 mtg
- 5 Wed Voter Registration Deadline for Concord Town Election
- 10 Mon Carlisle Town Caucus, Clark Room, Town Hall 7:00 PM
- 12 Wed LWVCC Local Program Planning, location TBA
- 19 Wed LWVCC Agriculture Study Consensus Meetings, times & locations TBA
- 25 Tues Concord Town Election Polls open 7:00 am-8:00 PM
- 26 Wed LWVMA Day on the Hill, State House 10:00 AM

APRIL

- 2 Wed LWVCC Board Meeting, 898 Crescent Rd. (Erin Pastuszewski) 9 coffee, 9:15 mtg
- 28 Mon Carlisle Town Meeting, Cory Auditorium, Carlisle School 7:00 PM

MAY

- 4 Sun Concord Town Meeting begins, CCHS Auditorium 2:00 PM
- 5-8 M-TH Concord Town Meeting, CCHS Auditorium 7:00 PM
- 6 Tues Carlisle Town Election Polling open 7:00 am-8:00 PM

Members are invited to attend monthly Board meetings.

Please contact Cindy or Dee if you would like to attend any of them.

The League of Women Voters is a non-partisan political organization of men and women formed in 1920 and dedicated to the principles of self-government established by the Constitution of the United States. The League works to promote political responsibility through informed and active participation of citizens in government.

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CO-PRESIDENTS' LETTER

Cindy Nock and Dee Ortner, Co-Presidents

January 2014

Dear League Members,

We wish everyone a happy and healthy new year! As busy as many of us are with the League it is about to get much busier. Thank you to all who participated in Concord's Special Town Meeting in December. The League took positions on each warrant article and the Town Meeting voted along the same lines as our positions. As an organization it is satisfying to know that we are in tune with the community in either an influential way or a representative way.

Now as we approach Annual Town Meeting in Concord and Carlisle we ask everyone who is able to attend a Town Hearing to do so and participate in the League's warrant review and local Candidate Forums. If you wish to be a more active participant and report to the League on a Hearing, please contact the Town Government Initiative group at observercorps@lhwcc.org. If you wish to help with the Candidate Forum, contact Voter Service at voterservice@lhwcc.org.

We hope that all League members have sent in their membership renewals. Numbers are due to National LWVUS at the end of January. The membership directory will be published shortly thereafter. If you have questions about membership or need to update your information please contact Membership at membership@lhwcc.org.

Read about the LWVUS Agriculture Study, LWVMA initiatives and calls to action in this bulletin and on our website and mark your calendars with the following dates for more opportunities to engage with the League at the local and national levels.

- Saturday, January 25 – LWVCC Member Brunch with speaker Alexander Keyssar
- Wednesday, February 5 – National Program Planning, Noon-2:00PM
- Wednesday, March 12 – Local Program Planning, 9:00-11:30AM
- Wednesday, March 26 – LWV Day on the Hill at the State House

The Nominating Committee is beginning its task of recruiting League members to serve on the board for the League year of 2014-2015, which begins July 1st. Please consider how you might help the League fulfill its mission. Your active involvement working with a committee or serving on the board would be most welcome and greatly appreciated! If you'd like to know what issues we are focusing on, please head to our website, www.lhwcc.org. If you think we should be working on an issue not listed or would like additional information, contact us at <http://www.lhwcc.org/contact.html>. We are here because of you and for you. We look forward to seeing you at our events, encouraging civic involvement and *making democracy work*.

Yours in League,
Cindy Nock and Dee Ortner, Co-Presidents

PS. As you know, sustainability of our membership and of our dedicated volunteers is paramount. Please make it your special mission this year to bring a new member to the League and guests to our meetings!

MEMBER NEWS

MEMBER UPDATE

Welcome to our new calendar year and the second half of the League year! We urge you to renew your membership by the end of the month if you have not yet done so. We have achieved a nearly 90% renewal rate and attracted eighteen new members since our 2013 Directory was printed. Those who have not yet renewed have been contacted and still have time to meet our January 31st deadline through online renewal on our LWVCC website through Paypal. Your response is important for both needed financial support and for maintaining significant membership numbers.

Our 2014 Membership Directory will be distributed in February. If you have questions, comments or suggestions, please contact me by email at either: membership@lwwcc.org or vandeverP@aol.com or call 978-369-9268.

Our annual Winter Breakfast meeting was held on January 25th and featured Professor Alexander Keyssar of the Kennedy School of Government and Public Policy. His presentation regarding “the current crisis of American Democracy” will be featured in our March LWVCC Bulletin.

We thank you for your continued support as members, donors of time, money, enthusiasm and commitment to the Concord-Carlisle League. What a special group of intelligent, professional and interesting people who are making efforts to ensure the best outcomes for our democracy.

*Paula Vandever, Membership Chair
Committee members: Lauren Bakewell,
Nancy Beeuwkes, Mary Chapman, Irmi
Doane, Barbara Lewis and Paula Vandever*

LWVCC NOMINATING COMMITTEE

Would you like to join a group full of
Interesting and interested people who are
Working towards important goals while
Participating in stimulating dialog?

Are you looking for an experience to remember: demanding, rewarding, challenging, satisfying? Consider joining the LWVCC Board of Directors to be part of a dynamic, lively group of people.

You will be able to:

- develop your leadership skills,
- learn to use your skills to make things happen for the League and for your community,
- share your League successes with other Leagues,
- help to set the direction for the LWVCC,
- expand your commitment to the League,
- raise your visibility.

The LWVCC Nominating Committee is looking for members to serve on the 2014-2015 LWVCC Board who have varied experience with the LWV, from retired longtime members to those who have recently joined. We are considering creating several “At-Large Positions” so new members could join the board and be mentored by an experienced board member.

If any part of this sounds like an opportunity you or someone you know might want to pursue, please contact Deena Whitfield, chair of the LWVCC Nominating Committee at deenawhitfield@comcast.net.

*LWVCC Nominating Committee
Deena Whitfield, chair, Lauren Bakewell,
Janet Beyer, Mary Chapman, Cynthia
Rainey, Paula Vandever*

VOTER SERVICE

Barbara Lewis (Carlisle) and Erin Pastuszenski (Concord)

Contact Erin or Barbara anytime, by phone or at VoterService@lwvcc.org if you would like to get involved with the League's work on voting and elections.

Local Election Dates and Deadlines

Concord:

Town Caucus – Monday, January 27, 7:30pm, Town House

Nomination Papers Deadline – Tuesday, February 4

Concord Candidates' Forum – Sunday, March 2, 1:00-3:00pm, location TBA

Voter Registration Deadline – Wednesday, March 5

Town Election – Tuesday, March 25, 7am-8pm

Town Meeting – Sunday, May 4, 2:00pm, continuing Mon/Tue/Wed, 7:00pm, CCHS

Carlisle:

Town Caucus – Monday, March 10, 7:00pm, Carlisle Town Hall

Voter Registration Deadline – 20 days before election

Carlisle Candidates' Forum – Sunday, April 27 (tentative date)

Town Meeting – Monday, April 28, 7:00pm, Cory Aud., Carlisle School

Town Election – Tuesday, May 6, 7am-8pm

Running for Office

LWVCC encourages people to consider serving the community in elected offices or appointed positions in town government. To provide prospective candidates with information and inspiration, we sponsored two panels (one for Concord in November 2012 and one for Carlisle in January 2013) before last year's town elections and recorded the programs. You can view "Running for Office in Concord" and "Getting Elected in Carlisle" on demand at <http://concordtv.org> or <http://carlisletv.org> or catch them on local cable Channel 8 (check schedule for times).

The League is looking forward to seeing how many candidates run in this spring's local elections. We think that contested races help make our local government stronger and more responsive to the voters. Our website always has information on elections and voting and a page about running for local office (<http://lwvcc.org/runningforoffice.html>),

where you can download a copy of LWVCC's "Getting Elected in Concord" booklet there. (The booklet is also available at the Concord Town Clerk's office.) In addition, watch for Carlisle's own "How to Run for Office" booklet, which is in the works.

A Note on Town Caucuses

Concord's Town Caucus will be held on Monday, January 27, at 7:30pm, at the Town House, 22 Monument Square, Concord (snow date: Jan. 28). Voters attending the Caucus may nominate two candidates for each office on the Town Election ballot. The meeting is nonpartisan, and candidates do not run with party affiliations.

Candidates who are not nominated at the Caucus may have their names placed on the ballot by collecting at least 50 valid signatures of Concord voters on nomination papers available at the Town Clerk's office and by filing those papers with the Town Clerk by Tuesday, February 4, 4:30pm.

Carlisle will hold its Town Caucus on Monday, March 10, at 7 pm in the Clark Room in Carlisle Town Hall. The process is similar to that described above. All registered Carlisle voters may attend and participate.

**Concord Candidates' Forum
Sunday, March 2, 1:00-3:00pm**

Please join us for the LWVCC's Concord Candidates' Forum on Sunday, March 2, 2014, 1:00-3:00pm, location to be announced. (Snow date is March 9.) Our forum will be moderated by a LWV moderator who lives outside Concord. The candidates will answer questions from the League of Women Voters and audience members.

Attend the forum to learn more about the candidates running for Town Moderator, Board of Selectmen, School Committee and Housing Authority (one seat for each office), so you can cast an informed vote at the Concord Town Election on Tuesday, March 25.

The League plans to record the March 2 forum for rebroadcast on our local public-access cable TV station (CCTV Channel 8) and for online viewing on demand at <http://concordtv.org>. We also plan to collaborate with the *Concord Journal* on a voter guide to be published before Election Day.

For more information or to volunteer to contact Erin at VoterService@lwvcc.org or call LWVCC at 978-254-1598. LWVCC also plans a Carlisle Candidates' Forum, which is tentatively scheduled for Sunday, April 27.

Carlisle "Know Your Town" Resource

A new LWVCC booklet for Carlisle, "Know Your Town," is in the works, and volunteers are needed to help with gathering information, writing and editing. If you are interested in joining this effort, please contact Barbara at VoterService@lwvcc.org or Cindy at Co-Presidents@lwvcc.org.

**Carlisle Public Forum:
Issues Facing the Town**

Citizens in Carlisle will have several important issues to decide at Town Meeting this year, including education, land use, town budget, and possibly the use of the historic Highland Building. The League has been asked by a member of the Carlisle Board of Selectmen to hold a public forum in late March that will offer important information to all who are interested, and allow differing views to be shared and aired. If you would like to help plan this event, please contact Barbara Lewis at VoterService@lwvcc.org.

Get Out the Vote with LWV VOTE Signs

If you'd like to be part of the group of LWVCC volunteers who post "VOTE Tuesday" signs before all elections, please email VoterService@lwvcc.org. We also post reminder signs for Town Meetings.

Spring Voter Registration

For the last two years, we held successful new voter registration events for graduating CCHS seniors at the Senior BBQ in early June. If you would like to work on student voter registration, either following the roadmap from last year or forging your own new approach, please get in touch with Erin or Barbara soon. We may also have opportunities to register students at Minuteman High School or other schools. Call us directly, leave a message at 978-254-1598, or email VoterService@lwvcc.org. Thanks!

LWVMA DAY ON THE HILL

Wednesday March 26

Gardner Auditorium, State House

The LWVMA's annual lobbying and advocacy day will be held on March 26th. While plans are still being finalized, the theme this year will be **"Advocating beyond Beacon Hill: How local Leagues can be effective in bringing action on League issues to their own communities."**

State Auditor Suzanne Bump will speak on this subject and a state Senator (not yet confirmed) will address the ways in which the League can be effective even in areas which have no Leagues. As always, LWVMA Program and Action specialists will address the bills which are being followed. In the interest of time, the specialists will try to focus on one bill each, but will present written information on others. The League's legislative priorities for the coming year will also be addressed.

At the conclusion of the sessions, Leagues are encouraged to meet with their Representatives and Senators. The LWVCC has usually invited ours to join us for lunch at a nearby restaurant. As we get closer to the date, carpools will be arranged. Watch the League Leaders update and our Monday Member News for further information.

The LWVMA website lists the legislative action undertaken by League specialists as well as copies of the testimony given at hearings. More specialists are needed as there are some longstanding League areas of interest that do not have a specialist at the moment.

*Louise Haldeman, member
LWVMA Program & Action Committee*

NATIONAL PROGRAM PLANNING

Every other year, local League members have an opportunity to make recommendations to the LWVUS for issues to be studied during the upcoming two-year term. Recommendations will be collected from Leagues nationwide, and those with strong support will be presented at the LWVUS convention in Dallas in June.

To participate, bring a brown bag lunch on **Wednesday, February 5th** at noon to Barbara Lewis's home at 282 East Riding Drive in Carlisle* along with your suggestions for new studies or updates of current positions.

The National League has current positions in the following areas: Representative Government, International Relations, Natural Resources, and Social Policy. To view the detailed positions under these headings go to www.lwv.org and search for "Impact on Issues."

Ideas currently being discussed include

- updating our national campaign finance position to respond to the *Citizens United* Supreme Court decision,
- continuation of the agricultural update/study
- studying alternatives to state and local partisan primaries.

Nancy Cronin, National Action

*Directions to 282 East Riding Drive in Carlisle: At the Carlisle rotary turn onto the road toward Billerica. Follow it for about 1-1/2 miles, and turn right on East Riding Drive.

**LWVCC BOOK GROUP
FEBRUARY 26, 2014 MEETING**

On Wednesday, February 26, 2014 the LWVCC Book Group will hold our next meeting of the year in the Trustees Room of the Concord Free Public Library from 10:00-11:30 AM.

We will be discussing *The Right To Vote: The Contested History of Democracy in the United States* by Alexander Keyssar. Professor Keyssar was the speaker at our January Membership Brunch and this will be a wonderful opportunity to further discuss the voters rights issues that he addressed in addition to the issues that he has raised in this book.

The Right to Vote was originally published in 2000 and was revised and expanded in 2009. It was widely hailed as “a magisterial account of the evolution of suffrage from the American Revolution to the end of the twentieth century. In this revised edition, Keyssar carries the story forward, from the disputed presidential contest of 2000 through the 2008 campaign and the election of Barack Obama. *The Right to Vote* is a sweeping reinterpretation of American political history as well as a meditation on the meaning of democracy in contemporary American life.” Quoted from Amazon.com website.

All members of the Concord and Carlisle communities are invited to come and participate in our book discussions.
Anne Hayden, LWVCC Book Group Chair

**ANNUAL HOMELESSNESS FORUM
Sunday, March 2, 2014, 3:00-5:00pm,
Trinitarian Congregational Church,
54 Walden St., Concord, MA**

With a Record Number of Homeless Families in Motels and a housing shortage What Can We Do?

Come to the Tenth Annual Homelessness Forum and learn about our state’s homelessness prevention programs – especially state plans for significant increases in low income housing. The challenges to and improvements in the state homelessness program will be presented and discussed. Find out how you can focus your advocacy efforts to have the greatest impact.

Keynote speaker: Aaron Gornstein, Undersecretary, Department of Housing and Community Development. Additional speakers: Kelly Turley, Mass. Coalition on the Homeless; Sen. Jamie Eldridge; and Rep. Ken Gordon. The forum, organized by *The Advocacy Network to End Family Homelessness*, is free and open to all. Details: www.endfamilyhomelessness.net.

**LWVCC LOCAL PROGRAM
PLANNING**

**Wednesday, March 12, 2014
Place and time TBA**

Our annual Local Program Planning Meeting will be on Wednesday, March 12th. At this meeting we review our current programs, determine if there are any that need to be changed or amended and if there are any new areas that should be added. We also discuss potential areas for action for the following year.

The results of this meeting are voted on and then presented at Annual Meeting in late May and then are carried out by the Board and membership next year.

CONCORD TOWN GOVERNMENT INITIATIVE COMMITTEE

This fall, we focused on the financial process and how the budgets for Town and Schools are developed. Tony Logalbo, Concord Finance Director, met with us in October to provide a brief history of the charter, especially regarding financial organization and the budget process. More League members have been involved in attending more meetings of Town boards and committees, especially those related to the budget process during the fall and the special town meeting on December 4. The Committee and the Board met prior to that Town Meeting and the Board voted to support the three articles on that warrant. The Coordination Meeting for the 2014 Annual Town Meeting was held on December 7th where some of the known articles were reviewed.

In November, we went to the Minuteman Tech High School. Committee member Marge Daggett arranged for a presentation by the administration and some students, followed by tours of the different programs. We chose among Clusters in Bio-Science/Engineering, Human, Business & Commercial Services, and Trades and Transportation.

Minuteman has a number of issues pending, such as whether to repair or rebuild the high school and if so to what extent and for what programs. There are also issues around administration such as assessments and membership.

The Concord Town Warrant will be available shortly, and we will look at the proposed budgets and other articles. None of us can attend

all the board and committee meetings, but we *can* keep abreast of what is being discussed and the issues that will need an informed vote by going to the Town website and reading the minutes, especially if you have a particular interest or curiosity about what is happening. For example, there are several warrant articles related to Millbrook Tarry (Lowell Road and Keyes Road intersection). Background development material is available in minutes of the Planning Board, Natural Resources Commission, and the Mill Brook Tarry Task Force.

Warrant hearing dates are listed elsewhere in this issue. Hearings are televised and can be viewed “on demand” at <http://concordtv.org>. Mark your calendars and/or set aside some reading time now. This is also the time to address questions to pertinent boards and committees regarding both the language and intent of their warrant articles (email addresses are on website).

Concord is changing and growing, schools have increasing enrollments, there are growing demands on Concord water and treatment plant, and increased use of our roads necessitates more upkeep to name a few. How will we make wise long-range planning decisions? Ask questions, be informed, and then attend town meeting and vote! Finally, you may or may not be happy to know that the article amending the dog bylaw is scheduled to be the last article on the last day of Town Meeting!

*Ardis Bordman, Chair
Concord Town Government Initiative*

TOWN GOVERNANCE STUDY COMMITTEE (CONCORD)

The Concord Town Governance Study Committee (TGSC) was appointed by the Board of Selectmen in March 2012. The mission of the committee is to review the Town Charter and its form of government and evaluate whether any changes would be beneficial to the town. The Committee will make a report on its progress to the 2014 Town Meeting and will submit its findings and final recommendations to the Board of Selectmen by August 31, 2014.

The TGSC has been meeting every two weeks with subgroups studying and reporting on Town Meeting, Comparable Town Charters, the Library, Enterprise Funds, Technology and Town/School Planning and Coordination. The Committee has reviewed letters and comments from interested citizens, some of which have been included in a list of likely new proposals. Among the LWVCC members attending the TGSC meeting as observers are Nancy Cronin, Ardis Bordman, Anita Barker and Janet Rothrock.

So far the TGSC has made preliminary recommendations not to make any changes in the basic structure of Concord town government. After careful consideration they voted against recommending a recall provision as well as raising the number of signatures to place a petition article on the warrant. Among their likely recommendations are the following:

- finding new ways to engage citizens in the Town Meeting process and to make debate and deliberation more possible at pre-Town Meeting hearings,
- soliciting opinions from citizens on town and school governance,
- establishing a town technology committee,
- modernizing the Town's website,

- developing a handbook on town committees,
- consider hosting regular public forums on town government, and
- recommending that Selectmen appoint an audit committee.

Many of these ideas are ones which the LWVCC Town Government Initiative Committee has also considered important.

To test their preliminary recommendations and help with developing their final ones, the TGSC is planning to hold two public forums in the spring with dates to be announced. You can send your comments to the committee at tgsc@concordma.gov at any time.

Nancy Cronin, LWVCC Observer to TGSC

CONCORD RECREATION DEPT FACILITIES STRATEGIC PLAN

The Concord Recreation Department hosted a public meeting to discuss the recreational needs of the Town on January 16, 2014 at the Hunt Recreation Center. Barbara Heller of Heller and Heller Consulting, Inc. facilitated the meeting. This is the beginning of a review of existing Town recreational facilities and programs and the development of planning for the next 5-7 years. Heller opened the meeting by stating that the community is changing and the Recreation Department wants to determine what our future needs will be. The meeting was well attended by a wide range of age groups.

Heller and Heller Consulting will conduct an on-line survey to gather more information and enable Concord citizens to have a voice in planning future recreation facilities and activities in the town. There will be a draft report followed by a final plan in June.

Ardis Bordman

Concord Government Initiative Committee

**CONCORD SPECIAL TOWN
MEETING**

**ARTICLE 1. Land Acquisition
55 & 55R Knox Trail (Acton)**

This Article **PASSED** by over two-thirds majority, including an amendment that the land may not be used by a contractor in support of outsourced transportation.

**ARTICLE 2. Land Acquisition
State Land on Commonwealth Avenue**

This Article **PASSED** by over two-thirds majority.

**ARTICLE 3. Repeal of Water Bottle
Bylaw**

This Article **FAILED TO PASS**. The bylaw that prohibits the sale of drinking water in single-serve PET bottles in Concord is still in effect.

The above description of the three Warrant Articles is taken directly from the Town Clerk's minutes.

For a text of the votes, see the web site – www.concordma.gov, click Town Meeting Info, then 2013 Dec 4 Special Town Meeting.

The intent of Article one was to purchase land that could be used for parking and possibly maintenance of only Concord in-house buses financed with Concord Public School funds. At this time, the purchase has not been finalized due to the bankruptcy of one of the sellers and permitting questions. The School Committee has voted that if the purchase is not final by April 1, 2014, they will begin the process for outsourcing bus transportation. Should that move forward, it is not known where outsourced buses will be parked. The current contracts for parking buses in Acton and doing maintenance in Billerica can be extended for one more year.

Article two provided for acquisition of this State land to be used for parking for users of the future rail trail. Article three upheld the ban on single-serve drinking PET bottles—again.

The LWVCC Board approved speaking in support of all three Articles.

Ardis Bordman, Chair

Concord Town Government Initiative

OBSERVERS NEEDED

Are you interested in or concerned about how the business of our local government is actually accomplished? All Town Boards and Committees must conduct their business in open meetings, and all documents used must be made available to all citizens.

The Concord Town Government Initiative Committee is actively working on increasing the number of Town committees and Boards which are observed by League members. This is beneficial for all as the public becomes more knowledgeable about what is happening and officials realize that the community is interested in what they are doing.

Currently, League members observe the Finance Committee, Town Government Study Committee, and Planning Board. However, there are many more committees for which observers are needed including the Board of Selectmen and School Committee. One or two meetings a month is all it takes. And if you are only available on an irregular basis, providing back-up for some of our regular observers would also be very helpful.

For more information contact Ardis Bordman at (978) 369-7914.

CONCORD PUBLIC HEARINGS: All Hearings start at 7:00 PM

Finance Committee – Town Budget & Articles Including Capital *****	Monday, February 24, 2014 <i>Snow date: Tuesday, Feb 25</i> *****	Town House *****
Finance Committee – School Budget & Articles Community Preservation Fund *****	Wednesday, February 26, 2014 <i>Snow date: Thursday, Feb 27</i> *****	Town House *****
Board of Selectmen *****	Monday, March 3, 2014 <i>Snow date: Thursday, March 6</i> *****	Town House *****
Planning Board *****	Tuesday, March 4, 2014 <i>Snow date: Thursday, March 6</i> *****	Town House *****
Finance Committee – Enterprise Fund Budgets & Articles	Monday, March 17, 2014 <i>Snow date: Tuesday, March 18</i>	Town House

CARLISLE ANNUAL TOWN MEETING TIMELINE

All Boards/Depts/Citizens	Deadline for warrant articles submission	Jan 28, 2014
BOS/FinCom/etc. **	Coordination Meeting #3	Feb 11, 2014
FinCom/BOS	Budget Meetings with Depts, Bds, Comm	Jan 6 - Feb 14
Bos/FinCom/etc. **	Coordination Meeting #4 Finalize warrant	Feb 25, 2014
Town Clerk	Town Caucus	Mar 10, 2014
BOS/FinCom/etc. **	Coordination Meeting #5 Final Review	Mar 11, 2014
	Order Articles, Close Warrant	
Finance Committee	Finance Committee Hearing	April 21, 2014
Town Moderator	Annual Town Meeting	April 28, 2014
Town Clerk	Town Election	May 6, 2014

** BOS/FinCom/LTRC/CPC/Moderator

LWVUS AGRICULTURE STUDY

Introduction

Since the dawn of human history, agriculture and trade have been part of the lives of people and nations. While it is true that ancient communities were largely self-sustaining, as humans changed from hunter-gatherers toward being farmers, the need to trade for both foods and goods became important to their survival. By the time of the Greeks and Romans, they along with their neighbors in Asia, managed to bring goods and grains from far-off lands. Today it is possible to bring fresh fruits and vegetables from their growing areas to all parts of the world within a few days of their harvesting.

We have grown used to variety and abundance but cannot be sure that it will always be so. We are in a period of rapid climate change, which in many parts of the world has brought about widespread crop failure. When food shortages are coupled with political unrest, death and disaster follows. In our own country, we are somewhat better protected by our size and geographical variety.

Climate change is affecting all parts of the country but in different ways. Some crops no longer grow where they once did but may be able to thrive further north. California is in a serious drought but many parts of the Midwest had a good growing year.

As we consider the update of League agricultural policy, it is important to be aware that when we discuss it we mean policy for the entire United States, not just New England. Coping with the changing climate and the increasing population of the earth is a responsibility for all of us.

Changes in food production are certainly needed. What these changes will be and how successful they are, we do not know but we need to be open to learning about them. There is nothing new about altering and cross breeding of plants. This has gone on since the beginning of agriculture itself; what is newer is the possibility of genetic modification which can take many forms for many different purposes.

The League Study

The 2012 LWVUS Convention voted to update the League's position on agriculture which was adopted back in 1988. The League's current position encompasses support for federal policies that encourage sustainable agriculture, federal funding for research, information and technical assistance, and federal loans to farm operations that need it.

A League study is the first step toward taking action on any given issue. At the National level, once issues are voted, study materials focused on consensus questions are made available to all local Leagues who decide how to present the relevant material to their members. Their answers to the consensus questions are submitted to National where consensus is developed from the views of the membership. That result becomes the basis for the positions on which all levels of the League then can take action.

The Agriculture Update voted by Convention includes new technology issues, including genetically modified seeds and other organisms; accurate food labeling; and federal financing and regulation of farm-related issues. Since the scope of this study is so broad, the National League's volunteer committee took longer than usual to research

and publish resource papers that local Leagues need to develop presentations to their members.

Since the resource papers and the consensus questions accompanying them have only recently become available, and our local response to them is due by mid-April, the LWVCC study committee has limited the scope of what we will study and discuss to the role of government in protecting food safety, the use of new technologies affecting the food supply, setting standards for food labeling and government funding for research on new crops, products, and processes.

In addition we will consider the impact of the Farm Bill, a piece of major legislation, on our food supply. We will not address the details of various federal financing programs currently in use.

Updates from LWVCC committee, links to these reports, and links to the materials from the national committee can be found at: <http://www.lwvcc.org/lwvus-agstudy-2014.html>

LWVCC Consensus Meetings

The LWVCC will hold two consensus meetings on March 19th, 41 Canterbury Court, Carlisle for the morning and the evening TBD. At these meetings our study committee will present information on the topics above as the basis for discussion leading to our response to the LWVUS.

This is fascinating topic. For a short useful introduction to current agricultural issues the LWVUS recommends that interested members review the following resources listed in the box below. For more information, contact Nancy Cronin at 978-369-5399 or nrcronin@verizon.net.

LWVCC Agriculture Study Committee:

Nancy Cronin, chair

Barbara Anthony, Debbie Barr, Louise Haldeman, Julie Rohwein, Vivian Walworth

Suggested Resources for LWVUS Agriculture Study

- Union of Concerned Scientists policy brief entitled *The Healthy Farm: A Vision for U.S. Agriculture*, a Union of Concerned Scientists policy brief;
- A Scientific American article entitled *Will Organic Food Fail to Feed the World?; and*
- The administration's perspective on the key agricultural policy issues that need to be addressed in 2013 as reported in *Challenges and Opportunities in U.S. Agriculture* (Chapter 8 of the *Economic Report of the President- 2013*).

Links to these reports can be found at www.lwvcc.org.

Additional background articles for the study:

<http://www.technologyreview.com/featuredstory/522596/why-we-will-need-genetically-modified-foods/>
http://unctad.org/en/PublicationsLibrary/ditcted2012d3_en.pdf

The second article is the Trade and Environment Review 2013 report on agriculture from the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development.

For direct access to the reports:

<http://tinyurl.com/ucs-healthyfarm>

<http://tinyurl.com/SA-FeedingTheWorld>

<http://tinyurl.com/PresidentEcReport-Chapter8>

UPDATED BOTTLE BILL ON ITS WAY TO THE BALLOT!

Background

In September 2013, LWVMA was just gearing up for a petition signature drive to get the update to the Bottle Bill on the November 2014 ballot.

Going to the ballot is neither simple nor easy. Based on current census data, 68,911 certified signatures were required for November 2014 ballot initiatives. Given the 20-30% rate of ineligible signatures documented in prior ballot campaigns, the UBB Coalition set a target of 100,000 signatures to ensure the requisite number of certified signatures would be collected.

As one of the three lead organizations¹ in the Coalition, LWVMA committed to gathering 10,000-20,000 signatures. As one of the largest local Leagues in the state, LWVCC committed to gathering 1,000-2,000 signatures. The due date for this assignment was November 3, 2013.

In anticipation of the decision to go to the ballot, the LWVMA UBB Steering Committee started building the infrastructure of the campaign in August. And ready we were, with 36 local Leagues signing up to collect signatures!

Signature Collection Surpasses Target

Both LWVMA and LWVCC exceeded their high-end projected estimates with the LWVMA tally at 20,145 signatures and 2,246 for LWVCC. The overall campaign signature total topped 130,000, well above the required 68,911. LWVMA also received high praise from the UBB Coalition leadership for its high rate of certified signatures, a reflection of members' diligence in getting the job done right!

Thank you to the many LWVCC members who helped us not only meet but exceed our goals: Anita Barker, Debbie Barr, Ardis Bordman, Nancy Cronin, Clare Gordon, Judy LaRocca, Barbara Lewis, Marge Daggett, Cindy Nock, Dee Ortner, Cath Parmelee, Erin Pastuszewski, Evin Phillips, Janet Rothrock and Vivian Walworth. A special thank you also to new LWVCC member and former Sudbury LWV President Marion Stoddart for the 900 signatures gathered by her Groton team!

What's Next for UBB

Phase 2 of this campaign—ensuring that the bill passes. Having crossed the hurdle of certified signatures and eligibility for the ballot, the issue returned to the Legislature for one more chance to act on the bill before the November 2014 election. The Legislature has until May 4, 2014 to act.

If the bill fails to pass legislatively, proponents are required to gather an additional 11,485 certified signatures by early July so voters can decide via the ballot. The 11,485 certified signatures must be 'new.' A different signature sheet will be used for the new signatures.

An LWVMA team is working with the UBB coalition on strategy for Legislative passage of the bill as well as its path to the ballot. The LWVMA will be ready when needed to carry this campaign forward one way or another! An outline of the [petition process](http://www.mass.gov/ago/government-resources/initiatives-and-other-ballot-questions/initiative-petition-process) from the Attorney General's office is available online @ <http://www.mass.gov/ago/government-resources/initiatives-and-other-ballot-questions/initiative-petition-process>. For more background information and news about UBB, go to: <http://lwvma.org/the-environment/>.

¹ LWVMA, MassPirg, Sierra Club MA

PRICING CARBON: REDUCING EMISSIONS THROUGH THE MARKET PLACE

As concern about human induced climate change mounts with each new storm, flood and drought, there is growing interest in available solutions that can work on a large scale to reduce emissions. Pricing carbon to reflect its social cost (i.e., health and environmental impacts throughout the full life cycle of a product – costs typically borne by taxpayers, not industry) is a form of *environmental tax reform* and is considered one of the most efficient and cost-effective means of reducing emissions.

Revenues raised from environmental taxes can be ‘revenue neutral’ to offset the financial impact on businesses and individuals. Funds can also be reinvested in the economy to promote industry and job growth in the renewable energy sector. This topic is relevant in Massachusetts because of a new bill introduced by Representative Thomas Conroy (Wayland) and Senator Michael Barrett (Lexington) in January 2013: H.2532: An Act relative to shifting from carbon emissions to transportation investment. LWVMA submitted testimony in support of H.2532 in April 2013.

H.2532 is based on the highly successful carbon pricing system in place in British Columbia for the past five years. The Massachusetts bill is essentially revenue neutral; revenue raised through the carbon fee would be used to offset the economic impact on businesses and citizens through tax relief and dividends. Under the Governor’s directive, the Massachusetts Department of Energy Resources (DOER) is studying and will issue recommendations on how best to implement carbon pricing in Massachusetts.

While pricing carbon to reflect its true cost to society would have the greatest and fastest impact if enacted at a national and global level, action at the state level has often paved the way for action on a broader scale by providing working models and experience, as well as leadership.

Recently, California, Oregon, Washington and British Columbia signed an accord to coordinate their carbon emissions pricing systems where possible, opening the door to regional agreements. More information about pricing carbon as an effective environmental and economic tool can be found on www.LWVMA.org. For an opportunity to hear directly from Legislators and the DOER Commissioner about the state’s energy policy, including the potential of pricing carbon, attend the February 8th forum in Lexington described below:

Public Forum on Environmental Tax Reform

Sponsored by Sustainable Middlesex

What: A chance to learn about energy policy in MA and how using a market-based approach to pricing carbon based fuels can work in MA.

Speakers: [Mark Sylvia, Commissioner Massachusetts Department of Energy Resources](#)
[Senator Mike Barrett and Representative Tom Conroy](#)

When: Saturday February 8th
9:30 am – 11:30

Where: Cary Library, large downstairs meeting room
1874 Massachusetts Avenue
Lexington, MA
For carpooling details, contact
launa@zimmario.com.

WHAT'S NEXT FOR CASINOS?

The Massachusetts Gaming Commission is nearing its deadline for accepting proposals for three casinos and one slot parlor. The law allows for up to three casinos in differing parts of the state as well as one slot parlor which could be located almost anywhere as long as there is no casino in the same district.

A very important part of the Massachusetts law is that no casino can be located in a given community unless the community in question has voted to receive it. This provision, which is different from the laws in many other states, has been an important protection for the voters and the gambling company but it is also a cause of some of the interesting negotiations now going on.

A town or city which has voted to accept a proposal for a casino, assuming that such proposal is ultimately given the green light by the commission, becomes a "host community" and is then in a position to negotiate about terms and revenue. Nearby communities may argue that they are affected by the proposed casino and *may* be able to argue for some mitigation from the company but the Commission would have to agree. A close-to-home example: the citizens of Bolton are prepared to argue that the proposal for a slot parlor in Leominster has not taken into account the increased traffic on Route 117.

The situation which gets the most attention of course is the contest between the proposal in Revere, which was endorsed by the Revere voters, and Suffolk Downs which was rejected. One of the first tasks for Boston's new mayor has been to try to get some agreement on this issue. Mayor Walsh may ask for Boston to be considered a host

community anyway and if that does not work to seek some mitigation. The two sites are separated only by a strip of water and the surveyor's map. The effects of construction at either site will be felt in both the communities of East Boston and Revere.

The Massachusetts law is very tightly constructed and the Gaming Commission has done an exemplary job. Nevertheless, many of the problems which concerned those who opposed allowing casinos initially can be seen on the horizon. *Repeal the Casino*, the principal anti-casino organization, was able to mount a successful campaign to get enough signatures to place the question on the ballot.

The Attorney General has disqualified this as being an "uncompensated land taking" and therefore unconstitutional. Given that no community in Massachusetts has been forced to accept a casino that they didn't vote for, this statement raises some very reasonable questions. Is it constitutional to pass an action which would deprive people of property for which they have paid or promised to pay in good faith? *Repeal the Casino* is preparing to take it to the Supreme Judicial Court but it is not yet on the docket. It should be an interesting discussion to follow

Although many League members were involved in signature gathering, the LWVMA itself did not join as it was concentrating on gathering signatures for the expanded bottle bill. The League will wait for a ruling from the SJC before proceeding further.

*Louise Haldeman
LWVMA Casino Specialist*

January 2014 Domestic Violence Prevention Information

Introduction: national and state League of Women Voters chapters have made a significant commitment to domestic violence prevention with reports in every Concord-Carlisle League newsletter. Included:

- Rachel's' Box Project
- Domestic Violence Services Network [DVSN]
(including DVVAP & Network for Women's Lives [NWL])

This month's information is taken directly from our Concord, MA web site www.concordma.gov under the Police Department's Programs section. These are some interesting community programs that we should know about. Nancy James, January, 2014

Elder Affairs Officer

A partnership between the Concord Police Department, Concord Council on Aging, and Concord's senior population. The Elder Affairs Officer assists in coordination with resources, community support, and protective services, as well as of fulfill the needs of Concord's seniors.

The Rape Aggression Defense (R.A.D.) System – Women's Basic Self Defense Course

The Rape Aggression Defense System (R.A.D.) is a program of realistic self-defense, from risk reduction and avoidance strategies, to hands-on defense training. R.A.D. is not a martial arts program. It is a 5 week course utilizing techniques designed for simplicity and ease in learning, providing a system of effective and proven self defense tactics for women. Participants take an active role in their own self-defense and well being in this course. R.A.D. Objective: "To develop and enhance the options of self defense so they may become viable considerations to the woman who is attacked." - Lawrence Nadeau, Founder of R.A.D. Systems. Contact [Officer Keith Harrington](#)

Domestic Violence Victims Assistance Program (D.V.V.A.P.)

D.V.V.A.P. is a community collaboration that works to end the cycle of domestic violence by training volunteers to provide support, advocacy, and options to victims. Co-founded in October, 1998 by the Concord Police Department and The Network for Women's Lives, DVVAP's current collaborators include the Acton, Concord and Maynard Police Departments and Domestic Violence Services of Central Middlesex, Inc., an inter-community umbrella organization dedicated to the creation, support of and collaboration with domestic violence programs to serve the unique needs of the central Middlesex area. Reach DVAAP at P.O. Box 1556, Concord, MA 01742, (978) 318-3421, DVVAP@Concordma.gov or visit the [DVVAP](#) web site.

*by: Nancy James
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