

**BOARD MEETING MINUTES**  
**LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF THE RIVERTOWNS**  
**January 13, 2018**  
**HASTINGS COMMUNITY CENTER**

Present: George Calvi, Lisa Cohen, Barbara Dannenbring, Adelaide DiGiorgi, Monica Getz, Jean Howell, Bria Judkins, Ruth Kotecha, Lynn Levine, Emma Lou Louis, Susan Maggiotto, Michele Noe, Jodie Reaver, Karen Schatzel, Christine Verber, Char Weigel

**Call to Order:** 10:10 a.m.

Minutes of December 2017 meeting were approved with amendment to show Christine Verber was also in attendance.

**Announcements:**

- Lynn Levine reviewed a proposed change to the LWVNY's Charter School Position. The change was proposed at the 2017 State Convention as an update to the 2006 Position. The proposed language would delete the following sentence in the Position:

- **In lieu of amendment of the Charter School Act to increase the total number of charters that could be granted, it supports retention of the current total (100) with amendment of the Charter School Act so that a charter could be reissued if a charter school ceased to function for any reason."**

After a brief discussion, the group voted unanimously to accept the proposal to delete the highlighted sentence.

- Lynn announced that the LWV of the City of New York has registered a group of 150 people for the Women's March on Saturday January 20, 2018. Please contact Lynn if you would like to march.
- LWVR has typically sent two students to the Students Inside Albany conference. Bria Judkins announced that students at Hackley School are interested as part of a broader initiative looking at the political process. Char Weigel sent 43 personalized emails to history teachers in public and private high schools in the LWVR area. Croton-Harmon responded with interest so far. The response deadline is February 5. Selected students will be notified February 14. The group discussed the possibility of sending a third student\* if there was strong interest (the Education Fund is used to cover the costs of all students we send), as well as asking the County League if they would like to sponsor a student. Respondents will also be told about the County's Running and Winning program.

\*Need to confirm that it is possible to send more than two students from a given League.

**Treasurer's Report**

Susan Maggiotto reported minimal expenses and considerable assets. The December letter requesting a year-end donation to LWVR and/or the Education Fund resulted

in \$716 in unrestricted donations and \$105 in Education Fund donations. Five members contributed \$410 in membership fees. LWVR donated \$100 to the County League.

### **Work Items**

- Naturalization Court: Monica Getz and Jodi Reaver will attend on Thursday May 3<sup>rd</sup>. The next date for LWVR will be October 18. Jodi will call the Board of Elections to see if they need assistance with voter registration at these monthly events.
- Hot Topics Breakfast: George Calvi commended Vanessa Merton for her presentation on Immigration Reform and her tireless work. The next scheduled event will be Monday, February 12 at 8:30 at Cooper's Mill Restaurant. Deputy Commissioner Jennifer Wacha of the Westchester County Department of Emergency Services will present on "Disaster Management in Westchester." We will add a statement to the posters and postcards to check LWVR website in case of bad weather. Bria has provided a stable URL to include on the communication.
  - Cooper's Mill Restaurant has started charging a \$49 room rental. They are trying to work out a way to charge \$13.95 for the next event, but are now quoting \$15.95. There was discussion about the possibility of using an alternative site to save money, but the group consensus was to continue using Cooper's Mill given the location, parking and general facilities. We will use the Education Fund to cover the increase in costs.
  - Char asked members to please RSVP to be sure we have enough set-ups (but do come even if you can't RSVP in advance!). If someone arrives after the presentation starts, please sit in the back booth to avoid distraction given the room set-up. We will try to have some extra cups and plates in that booth for overflow.
  - Sue Weisfeld approached Nicole Benjamin and Ruth Walter to speak on the experience of running for office in a Hot Topics breakfast this spring. She will also ask David Tubiolo. The group was very enthusiastic about Sue's idea. Given multiple speakers, we will run this session like a Candidates' Forum. Karen volunteered to moderate. Char will work with Sue to schedule a date. We will try to film this session, working with either Mercy College or the Town of Greenburgh Public Access TV (Jodi has provided contacts).
  - We will also have a program on Route 9 Active.  
<http://www.route9active.org/c5/> Daniel Convissor has agreed to speak. We will work on scheduling this session after we get a date for the Benjamin/Walter/Tubiolo session.
- Input for George Latimer: George Latimer wants to make Westchester County a model for managing the opioid crisis. Monica will be attending a daylong County seminar on March 21 at the County Office Building. Please contact Monica if you have ideas to pass on, if you know of an expert who should attend, or if you would like information on alternatives to opioids for pain management.

- Partnering for voter registration while maintaining nonpartisanship: Jodie reported that Indivisible has begun asking us to work with them on coordinating and staffing voter registration. Some well-known Indivisible leaders are also members of LWVR. Their presence at League Voter Registration tables may be perceived as Indivisible being at the table. At times, they have asked for our materials when some table volunteers are not also LWVR members. We can coordinate and work with nonpartisan organizations such as the AAUW, Board of Elections and ACLU. We cannot support, or appear to support, partisan organizations or specific candidates. The recent rise of Indivisible, their support of specific candidates, and the recognizability of their leaders is prompting us to think more deeply about how we can ensure our voter registration activities are perceived as strictly nonpartisan. The group brainstormed a number of options for further discussion:
  - Add a written rule that only League members can be at the table when League materials and branding are in use.
  - Review and potentially update our 2016 Nonpartisan Policy to give clearer guidance on this issue (attached).
  - Jodi will contact State to ask for guidance, including the perception challenge that can arise at Voter Registration tables when well-known Indivisible leaders are also League members.
  - We will discuss this topic at the February meeting, including a decision about how to respond to Indivisible's request to work with us.

### **Committee Reports**

- Outreach: PR/Website/Social Media
  - Lisa Cohen asked that she and Bria be copied via email when The Bulletin goes to the printer.
  - Bria is almost ready to launch the new website after feedback from Lisa and Lynn. She is researching whether we can use our existing URL for the new site. She asked for photos for the site.
  - Sue Weisfeld had sent an email update to all on Social Media activity since she was not able to attend today's meeting.
- Membership
  - Ruth Kotecha reported that we have 100 members of whom 8 are second members of house and 4 are life members. We have five who joined late in the year. We have had more losses than in past, including 14 non-renewals and three deaths. Given the number of new members, though, the net is up by about 12 from a year ago. We should all ask people to join. They can join through the website or Ruth can send a form by email. Ruth has published an Access database and Excel spreadsheet on member details in our LWVR Dropbox (<https://www.dropbox.com/home/LWVR>).
  - Waterfront and Environmental: Emma Lou Louis reported that the plan is to meet at her house on February 5 unless the weather is bad. Emma Lou said that there has been no news on the barges on the Hudson since the last meeting. She has also updated her Committee on the decommissioned fireboat docked in Horan's Landing Park in Sleepy

Hollow. The boat has now been cited for lack of permits and easements by the Army Corp of Engineers and the New York State Office of General Services.

- Health Care: Chris Verber reported that Madeline Zevon is continuing to be very active, working on getting the remaining hold-out senators to vote in favor of Single Payer. Monica commented that the recent news on Senator Jeffrey Klein might change the IDC situation to allow movement on Single Payer (and other issues).

### **Other News**

Two bittersweet announcements:

- Lisa Cohen may be moving to New York City after selling her house in Croton. She may have to step down from our group, but would be excited to get involved in the NYC League. She asked that people start to think about taking on her PR/Communications role if she needs to leave. She said that she has a list of contacts for all media outlets.
- Christine announced that today's meeting would be her last as part of the Rivertowns League. She will be moving to New Jersey next week. She was an original member of the **Dobbs Ferry League** and started the Health Committee along with other League members.

Everyone expressed their best wishes for both Lisa and Christine, and their deep appreciation for what they both have done on behalf of the League and everyone we serve. They both set an amazing example of informed, active participation in our democracy. We hope to have Lisa with us as long as possible. Christine will be deeply, deeply missed, and moves to her new adventure with our gratitude and admiration.

**Meeting Adjourned:** 11:58 a.m.

Submitted by Char Weigel