



League of Women Voters® of Falmouth Bulletin

March 2021

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lwvf.org

Visit our Facebook page

**[https://www.facebook.com/
LWVofFalmouthMA/](https://www.facebook.com/LWVofFalmouthMA/)**

[instagram.com/lwvfalmouth](https://www.instagram.com/lwvfalmouth)

Member Event Calendar

March	18	7:00 pm	Looking Under the Hood: Our Covid-19 Election and Lessons Learned FCTV Channel 13
	23	7:00 pm	Board Meeting Zoom
April	12	7:00 pm	Annual Town Meeting
	21	7:00 pm	Candidates Night FCTV
	27	7:00 pm	Board Meeting Zoom

LWVF Board of Directors 2020-2021

Steering Committee

First Vice-President		Joan Boyer , Steering Committee Chair	
Second Vice-President		Maggie Sweasy	
Local Study		Kathy Mortenson	
At Large		Joanne Treistman	
At Large		Misty Niemeyer	
Secretary	Marcia Easterling	Membership	Jackie Webster
Treasurer	Meghan Hanawalt	Voter Service	Jenny Putnam
Observer Corps	Denise Morreale	Natural Resources	Richard Johnson
Board Moderator	Joanne Voorhis	Legislative	Judith Ziss
Annual Meeting	Alice Carey	Publicity	Olivann Hobbie
		Spokesperson	Sylvia Szulkin

Bulletin Editors: **Denise Morreale, Brenda Nolan**

*If you wish to join the League, membership dues are \$50 for an individual membership and \$25 for an additional household member.
Send your check made out to LWV of Falmouth, P. O. Box 450, Falmouth, MA 02541. Include your name, mailing address, email address and phone number.
Go to our website www.lwvf.org, "join or renew" to renew and pay online, You do not have to be a resident of Falmouth to join.*

MESSAGE FROM THE STEERING COMMITTEE

Kathy Mortenson, Local Study

At the February LWVF meeting Joan Boyer asked the question "What will the League look like post COVID?" What lessons have we learned? What do we want the League to look like in the future? How will the League modernize? If you have thoughts or comments, let us know.

League member Olive Beverly was an infant during the 1918 pandemic. Family members told her that the doctor came to their home in Natick where she, her 2 siblings and her parents were all sick. There were few hospitals in 1918. The doctor told Olive's father to take care of the children but her mother, the sickest, was to go upstairs to bed. During the pandemic Olive's aunt was a nurse visiting the sick at home and she said how difficult it was to visit so many sick families in a day. After the pandemic was over, Olive's aunt quit nursing. The Falmouth Historical Society has pictures of local nurses visiting homes in Falmouth during the 1918 pandemic. The doctor's office in the Wicks house also has a doctor's logbook from 1918 listing the residents the doctor visited in Falmouth and who died. In the news we are learning young people are applying to enter the health fields after experiencing how their lives have been upended and radically changed this past year. We will never forget this long year. We have changed and the League of Women Voters is adapting.

FALMOUTH LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS' ESSAY CONTEST

The Voter Services Committee is sponsoring an essay competition on the importance of voting in local and state elections. The competition is open to all Falmouth and Bourne students in grades 9 through 12. A committee of readers of the 500-to-750-word essays will determine the winners of the three cash prizes in the form of gift certificates.

Challenge: Why Vote Local?

Write an essay on the importance of local elections.

You can focus on State, County and/or Town level races.

LWVF FRIENDS 2020

Sally Fritz
Christina Jacobi
Maria Moniz

Robert and Barbara Schneider
Freddy Valois

LWVMA DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION PEER GROUP DISCUSSION

Meghan Hanawalt, Treasurer

On a recent Saturday zoom meeting, Denise Morreale and Meghan Hanawalt joined 14 of their peers from 11 LWV MA leagues for a DEI discussion. They met to share local league DEI efforts, share resources and brainstorm on ways each local league can proceed on their Diversity, Equity and Inclusion path.

Discussions ranged from adopting the State and National DEI policy statement, applying a DEI lens to all local activities and outreach, hosting panels on racism in the community, hosting a book club, reviewing Caste and How to be an Anti-Racist, as examples, and reaching out proactively to marginalized groups in their community.

These peer connections are so important to advance the mission of the LWVMA. From the LWVMA DEI policy:

"Diversity, equity, and inclusion are central to the organization's current and future success in engaging all individuals, households, communities, and policy makers in creating a more perfect democracy."



LWVMA Resource list

Our site, which includes links to some LWVUS DEI material, is more stable and easier to navigate than the national site.

To locate...

- Go to lwvma.org
- Scroll to bottom blue section.
- Under "Quick Links," click on "Diversity, Equity, Inclusion Resources"

MARCH 18TH LWVF & FCTV PRESENTATION LOOKING UNDER THE HOOD: COVID 19 ELECTION AND LESSONS LEARNED

On Thursday, March 18, 2021, the League of Women Voters of Falmouth, in partnership with Falmouth Community Television (FCTV), will present a program entitled "Looking Under the Hood: COVID-19 Election and Lessons Learned," which will be broadcast live by FCTV at 7:00 p.m. on

Channel 13. The program will feature State Senator Susan Moran, State Representatives David Vieira and Dylan Fernandes, and Falmouth Town Clerk Michael Palmer. First, Mr. Palmer will take the audience behind the scenes to describe how the 2020 election was conducted and protected under Covid-19 conditions. A panel discussion will follow, during which Senator Moran, Representatives Vieira and Fernandes, and Town Clerk Palmer will discuss which rules adopted due to the health emergency should become permanent.

The program also will include a question-and-answer period. Before the broadcast, please email your questions to falmouthlwv@gmail.com and they will be read to the panel. Last-minute questions also may be submitted to that email address during the broadcast itself. As many of your questions will be included as time permits.

The program will air live on FCTV Public Channel 13. The recorded program will be replayed on Channel 13 at 9:30 PM on Wednesday, March 24; at 8:30 AM on Thursday, March 25; and at 2:00 PM on Friday, March 26. The program will also be available via the FCTV website, www.fctv.org for computers and other devices.

SUMMARY OF LOCAL PLANNING AND OBSERVER CORPS PROGRAM

Kathy Mortenson, Local Stucy Chair

The February 18th Local Planning and Observer Corps meeting on Zoom was well attended and there were excellent discussions. Misty Niemeyer continues to set up and run Zoom meetings for LWVF. Misty was also the expert note taker at this meeting.

Planning

Meghan Hanawalt and Denise Morreale who attend the LWVMA Diversity Equity and Inclusion Group opened the meeting urging members to use the lens of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion in planning a study, and action priorities. The League of Women Voters mission is to empower voters and defend democracy and the League must engage in honest conversations about how to improve interactions between League leaders and new and diverse audiences.

The ideas presented for a local study were:

1. A restudy of Transportation which was last studied in 1996. Looking through a DEI lens there are many aspects to consider. The Falmouth Select Board appointed a Transportation Management Committee which meets on

Zoom and the League could monitor this Committee. The League's study should include transportation connections for the upper Cape and affordable housing needs.

2. An environmental study focusing on local invasive plants.

3. Effective Citizen Advocacy on the Upper Cape: How to Get Things Done Without Running for Office? What are the volunteer opportunities within town/local government? Consider a directory.

4. Determine what the League will look like post COVID.

5. Look more in-depth at County government.

6. A restudy of Education. LWVF's position is outdated. Is the new state mandate being implemented, particularly DEI and civics?

The 2021-22 proposed local study is Transportation

The local study in 2022-2023 post pandemic could be a restudy of Education.

Priority Action Items

Environment

Water Quality

The Effectiveness of Local Government

Education – understanding the LWV DEI positions

Continuing Action Items

Affordable Housing

Making Civic Engagement Collaborative

Observers Corps

What is an observer? A League Observer is the eyes and ears of the League. As an Observer, you are exercising that recognized right to be present at any public meeting. An Observer Corps is one way the League promotes government transparency and accountability of public officials.

Observer Corps members do not speak on behalf of the League without prior authorization.

Denise Morreale, the dedicated and inspiring leader of the Observer Corps Committee introduced three observers.

Marcia Easterling, observer for the Falmouth Public Library Board of Trustees; Carol Chittenden, observer for the EDIC, Economic Development & Industrial Corporation; and Stephanie Miele, observer for the Falmouth Board of Health all discussed what it is like to observe from home on Zoom during the pandemic. League observers have modernized! You will find their thoughtful and informative reports included in this Bulletin. Questions were taken and answered. Thank you to Marcia, Carol and Stephanie and all the LWVF observers for continuing to make time to watch these meetings from home and report back to the League. Many of the Boards observed have very lengthy meetings.

<p>LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS FALMOUTH OBSERVER CORPS REPORTS—FEBRUARY 18, 2021</p>
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THE FALMOUTH ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & INDUSTRIAL CORPORATION (EDIC)

Carol B. Chittenden, Observer

The Falmouth Economic Development & Industrial Corporation (EDIC) is the Town of Falmouth's primary agency responsible for creating and developing increased economic opportunities for both the present and the future.

Its stated mission is: To attract, advocate and support economic vitality and seek to constantly improve the business climate in Falmouth.

It is important to remember that EDIC is, technically, a public non-profit corporation and not a town committee. In some respects it functions as a committee, though with occasional aspects of an agency or department.

Created in 1981 to manage the 106-acre Falmouth Technology Park, EDIC evolves as times change. The Tech Park, now forty years on, is recognized as ripe for redevelopment, but remains too large a project with too little immediate revenue potential for concentrated attention, especially as the Development Agreement by which the Cape Cod Commission granted it authority has just been extended again. With that breathing room,

preliminary efforts continue, necessary for an eventual far-reaching overhaul.

Current major, active projects include the Falmouth Station restoration and redevelopment; landfill solar array; business gigabit project; Fiber Optic Network Feasibility study (one phase just completed); Community Development Block Grant to support small business recovery from pandemic quarantine pressures; and disposition of several small land parcels that are under the control of EDIC. There are also multiple projects and opportunities, large and small, at various stages. EDIC members are to be applauded for their continuous survey of needs and opportunities to gather resources, information, and collaborative openings with other groups. In sum, as of the moment, EDIC is a vigorous, positive organization.

This has not always been easy. As the pandemic quarantine weighed more and more – and more – heavily on local businesses, EDIC felt great urgency to find funds to help them hang on. One prospective source was a different division of the revenue from the solar array project, giving EDIC a larger share in order to grant funds to struggling businesses. EDIC pushed the Select Board very strongly to make the change, but the Select Board, anxious about analogous pressures on the Town's finances, declined to do so, to the intense disagreement of some EDIC members. New member, Selectman Sam Patterson (replacing Sue Moran who was elected to the legislature in May), spoke for the Town, acknowledging both needs, but standing firm, and advising that other revenue sources, differently administered, would be preferable. Indeed, after several potential programs were investigated, \$320,000 became available from the state in the form of Community Development Block Grants.



Meghan Hanawalt, Goatherd info@getmygoatscapecod.com
774-521-8745 www.GetMyGoatsCapeCod.com

Among major projects, minor projects, looming future projects, studies, grant possibilities, grant applications, and normal administrative business, it would be all but impossible for EDIC members to stay properly abreast of responsibilities were it not for the careful work of Executive Director Mike DiGiano and Administrator Lynne Broderick. In addition to keeping track of a mountain of details, they have made meetings work smoothly via Zoom since April. Furthermore, DiGiano has prepared an Executive Director's Report for each meeting, and that report is posted, along with minutes, on the EDIC website. It fills in vast amounts of dates, organizations, names, and dollar amounts, that don't necessarily appear in the agenda and the minutes. This is a significant improvement in transparency.

Postponed for many, many months, EDIC finally held a Strategic Planning meeting in September, and it was a productive exercise. Recognizing that needs will always exceed capacity, priorities were set,

including consideration of the staff time invested in each undertaking. For some time, in anticipation of need, a percentage in management fees has been built in to each grant proposal and project. By careful administration of the overhead and the many small revenue streams, projected budget deficits (due to the pandemic) will resolve, and reserves will gradually build a cushion (goal, \$200,000) that will provide stability, including the ability to act promptly on fresh opportunities. Top current project priorities are an overall development plan for Falmouth Station; Falmouth Station operations; and the Phase 2 Solar Project, which will provide revenue to both the town and to EDIC.

There was a general expression that EDIC's relationship with Town Government should and could be better; that EDIC ought to be more a policy expediter than an independent innovator. To that end, each EDIC member will work to establish closer communication and relationships with key parts of Town Government over the next six months, especially the Planning Board and the Select Board, and ideally, a report to April Town Meeting to raise awareness of EDIC programs and activities.

BOARD OF HEALTH

Stephanie Miele, Observer

The Board of Health has been meeting via Zoom since June. There is a tech person taking care of the technical end, so the meetings run quite smoothly. I am not on the screen but they are aware of my presence. There have been some outside attendees who are brought on when their agenda items are addressed. There seem to be far fewer septic issues presented but there have been a few other issues requiring testimony. One of these issues has been the problem at the Smithfield Horse Farm on Sandwich Road. When first presented the issue was the disrepair of the barn but subsequently a horse escaped and was killed on Sandwich Road and this has led to the need to address several other issues at the farm such as more horses than permitted and inadequate fencing. These infractions could cause suspension of the farm's license.

There were two agenda items having to do with failure to comply with orders to remove items on property that may be illegal and/or unsightly. In one case a person was paying rent to keep his RV on someone's property and was living in it. The Board ordered that it be removed but the RV owner refused to go, requiring the property owner to request a postponement of fines while he pursued court action. The other agenda item was a complaint from neighbors about a yard that looked like a junkyard. The property owners were called before the Board and given a plan of action to clear up the yard before fines would be levied. The first case has been going on for over one year and the second for more than five years.

The state has issued new tobacco regulations and a great deal of time has been spent comparing the Falmouth regulations to the state regulations and revising the Falmouth regulations to be certain that they comply with those of the state.

The most pressing item has been COVID. Scott McGann, the health agent, has been extremely diligent in this matter with his weekly reports and plans for testing and vaccines. Falmouth has partnered with the Barnstable County Health Department. The organization for all of this is mind-boggling. There is the physical end of planning for clinics which requires finding the location for the clinics, getting permits, organizing staffing, traffic flow, and supplies, but being at the mercy of the state for the vaccine itself. There is also the administrative end in making sure that people have their first and second appointments, access to appointments for people who do not have computers, and access to vaccines for the homebound. It came as a surprise when Governor Baker decided to open eligibility to people over 75 sooner than expected. The towns were on track for plan A but not ready for this. Scott is optimistic that more clinics will be opening soon, perhaps one at Falmouth High School. He also thinks that if enough people are vaccinated, we will have a more reasonable summer.

I have not had to miss any meetings and I would not mind if Zoom meetings continued.

A question about Zoom etiquette arose during a recent meeting. One concerned board member noted that there were many comments in the chat function during an ongoing and emotional discussion. He stated that ordinarily the public would not be permitted to make comments during the discussion. If they were present in person, they would have to be recognized by the chair. The same rules should apply in Zoom.

The members of the Board work well together and I find them to be courteous and respectful to the people who appear before them.

FALMOUTH LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Marcia Easterling, Observer

The Library Board of Trustees has continued to meet with the Library Directors via Zoom since March 2020 and throughout the year on the second Tuesday of each month. One important recent innovation has been the hiring of an official minute taker by the Town of Falmouth for Board meetings. This made it possible for complete and thorough minutes to become available to the public on the Town website in a timely manner. Agendas for the meetings are found there as well. Members of the public can attend the Zoom meetings, the link for which is available through the Town website. The Board and the Library Directors deserve praise for the exemplary transparency of their meetings.

Board attendance at the meetings is also exemplary. Rarely is a member absent and the meetings are well-organized and adhere to the order of items on the Agenda. The current presiding Board member is Judy Fenwick. Moreover, the commitment of the Board and the Directors to serve the public interest is reflected in many ways. The Trustees, working with the Directors, have supported significant improvements to the North and East Falmouth libraries and support providing picnic tables on the Main Library lawn when summer comes, as they did in 2020. Because this project was so successful last year, the Directors hope to provide even more tables this year. The Trustees' budget is separate from the Library budget and supports programs that otherwise would not be possible. A recent example is funding a three day online professional development workshop for a library staff member.

The pandemic has had a huge effect on the Library. However, throughout the year the staff has adjusted to full closing, partial opening, and full closing again and have continued to serve the public. Access to library materials has been exceptionally well-planned and implemented. There have been about 100 pickups daily in recent months. Because of the pandemic, no one may use the water fountains so the installation of a drinking water source for filling personal water bottles has been approved. Although Friends of the Library had to cancel the July 2020 book sale, Len Miele, head of the Friends, reports they continue to sell books on Amazon. These sales bring in enough revenue to help fund the Library wish lists.

This time of year marks the beginning of budget planning and the Directors met recently with two representatives of the Town Finance Committee. Moreover, this year the strategic planning process must occur. To that end four focus groups will be created to ascertain future direction and priorities for the Library. In addition, a survey will begin in March so that a draft of the Strategic Plan will be available for the April meeting of the Library Board.

Falmouth is fortunate to have such outstanding leadership as its Library Board of Trustees and Library Directors reflect. Observing the meetings has been a privilege and a valuable education.

Board Members:	Jenifer Alai Kathryn Elder Judy Fenwick, chair Margo Finnell Lindsay Hopewood Kathie Mount Sylvia Szulkin
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Library Director:	Linda Collins
Assistant Director:	Jennifer Woodward

LWVF RECOMMENDED READING

Joanne Treistman, Steering Committee

The Caste: The Origin of Our Discontents

The LWVUS suggests we see through the lens of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) in our activities, committees and membership inclusion. You can get a feeling for this subject by reading the non-fiction novel *The Caste* by Isabel Wilkerson. How did it become so difficult to talk to each other, to respect each other and to find common ground? Are we leaving people out that want to be included?

This book takes us to the India to look at an example of how and why people treat one another. Using India as an example works because we have all heard the sad story of their lower class: the Untouchables. How can we learn about ourselves from this example?

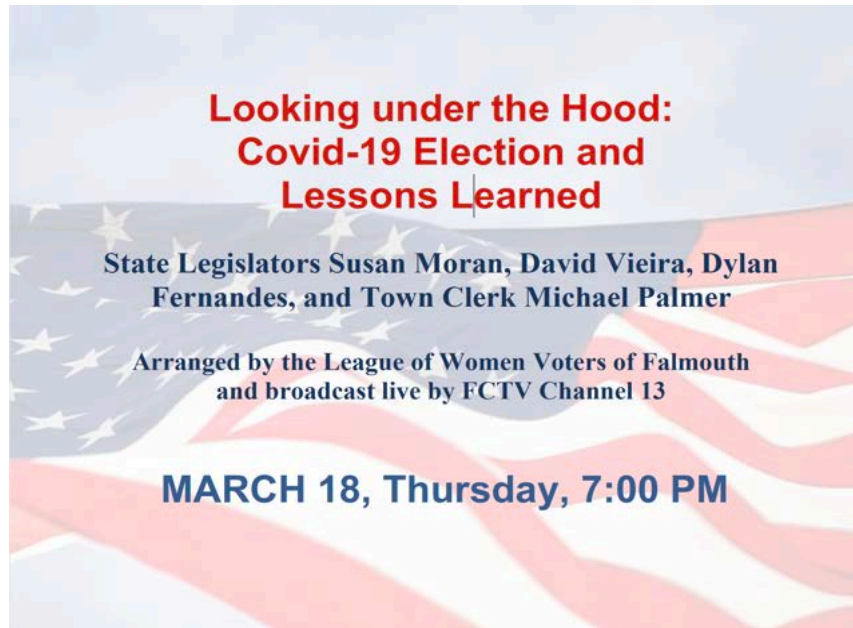
Interestingly, she reviews how the Nazi's worked to oppress the Jews during the 1930's, by looking to the example of the U. S treatment of slaves. Owning someone, feeding them minimally, working them to exhaustion and restricting who can interact with whom were allowed to interact with the superior race of white people. Have we lived with unacknowledged social divisions in American society? We certainly understand the social classes, but is that all. Do we also have a tradition of ignoring or mistreating people of color? Does this result from restrictions for how each group should behave, or how they can succeed? Once you begin to see the similarities and understand how other cultures view our treatment within our own caste system, it is difficult to unsee the truth.

In the US, the two caste system that had been in place, as far back as the first slaves brought to colonial Virginia. Currently, we live in a country where some tremble with indignation when asked to simply acknowledge that black lives matter. Congress has steadfastly refused even to debate reparations for the descendants of the people they enslaved. Have we missed the history of lynching even into the 1950's?

Caste joins the New York Times' "1619 Project" in exposing white privilege and how we came to understand American power and supremacy. It can be a painful read, but our times call for urgency.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Annie Dean and Clara Hulburt joined the Falmouth League in February



We thank the IFAW (International Fund for Animal Welfare) for donating the use of their Zoom account for our Board Meetings and communication

<https://www.ifaw.org>

International Fund for Animal Welfare
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P. O. Box 450
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JOIN

THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS
Democracy in Action

