

**MINUTES OF THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS/LOS ALAMOS BOARD MEETING
THURSDAY DECEMBER 9, 2021
VIA ZOOM DUE TO THE COVID-19 OUTBREAK**

Call to Order

Barbara Calef called the meeting to order at 12:01 p.m.

Board Members Present

Barbara Calef, Co-President
Becky Shankland, Co-President
Ellen Mills, Second Vice President
Rebecca Chaiken, Secretary
Rosmarie Frederickson, Treasurer
Karyl Ann Armbruster, Lunch with a Leader
Akkana Peck, Director at Large
Lynn Jones, Voter Services
Jody Benson, Publicity
Felicia Orth, Director at Large
Amy Birnbaum, Reservations

Guests: Jean Dewart, Membership
Dina Pesenson, Vice Chair Environmental Sustainability Board

Minutes

The October minutes were accepted as presented.

Julie Williams-Hill

Julie has been promoted to Public Information Officer for Los Alamos County. Her new duties will preclude her from acting as our BPU Observer and she may not be able to continue as Webmaster. Barbara will discuss this with Julie and report back to the board. There are two League members who expressed an interest in working on the website (Dr. Garimella and Helena Whyte). They will be approached about this opportunity if Julie wishes to step down.

Legislative Preview

Barbara reported that all of our legislators said they will participate in our upcoming Legislative Preview event. Judy Prono with AAUW, our partner organization, asked that we include Kurt Steinhaus to review what the Public Education Department is asking of the legislature. Becky thought this was an excellent idea, while Jean and Karyl Ann suggested that three speakers were enough

for this event. If we have three speakers, the event will be scheduled for 1.5 hours; and if we have four speakers it will be scheduled for 2 hours. No vote was needed.

Lunch with a Leader

Karyl Ann reported that our planned speaker for December, the new superintendent of Bandelier National Monument, Patrick Suddath, cannot participate. Instead, she has invited Elizabeth Allen, Municipal Judge. Mr. Suddath is now scheduled for February. For January, Jean suggested that we invite the new Economic Development Coordinator for the county, Dan Ungerleider. He could discuss economic development, small business support, the empty businesses in town, and the workaround of the no-donation clause used in the land transfer for the planned Marriott development. Everyone agreed this was a good choice. Karyl Ann will contact the board via email if he is unable to participate in January.

Treasurer's Report

The Treasurer's Report for October 2021 reported a checking account beginning book balance of \$6,819.97 and an ending balance of \$3,052.97, which includes total receipts of \$1,140.05 and disbursements of \$4,907.05. Receipts included dues (Allen, Walker, Morris, Hopkins, Forman, Sartor), donations (Enterprise Bank, Morris, and Shankland), and \$.05 interest. Disbursements were to the LA Daily Post (Voter Guide), Rosmarie Frederickson (stamps), LWVUS (PMP), and for PayPal expenses. The savings account ending book balance was \$33,304.12, which includes \$.85 interest.

The Treasurer's Report for November 2021 reported a checking account beginning book balance of \$3,052.97 and an ending balance of \$3,432.73, which includes total receipts of \$405.05 and disbursements of \$25.29. Receipts included dues (O'Neil, Lemmick, Carpenter, Emerson), donations (Izraelevitz, Howell, Carpenter), and \$.05 interest. Disbursements were to Aspen Copies and for PayPal expenses. The savings account ending book balance was \$33,304.94, which includes \$.82 interest.

The spelling of Emerson was corrected. Akkana moved that the amended Treasurer's Report be accepted and Rebecca seconded this motion. All voted in favor.

Rosmarie asked the board for permission to complain to the treasurer for LWVUS. She has received five stamped letters regarding the PMP payment with each letter correcting a mistake in the previous letter. If these multiple letters went to all Leagues, the expense of the stamps is extremely wasteful. Barbara suggested that Rosmarie write to the treasurer and include the LWVUS board.

Following a question by Rebecca, Barbara indicated that the Amazon Smile organization name has been corrected. Rebecca suggested that this should be

publicized so our members can find our organization on the Amazon Smile list of charities.

Membership

Jean sent the most recent membership report that reflects 107 individual members, via email. She would like to tinker with the way we record member interests and their interests in volunteering. Jean suggested that we review the categories we have on our membership application (both paper and online) and amend them as needed. This could be followed by an article in the newsletter that announces our April annual meeting. Everyone agreed that this was an excellent idea.

Announcements

Barbara reported that LWVNM met in November. Kathy Brook was elected as First Vice President.

Our various committees, including the Budget Committee and Nominating Committee, need to be prepared for our annual meeting in April 2022. Rosmarie said that Julie usually gets the Budget Committee organized, but Barbara indicated that Julie may not be able to do this any longer.

The Program Planning meeting will be held on January 24, 2022, beginning at 6:30 p.m.

The Annual Meeting will be held along with Lunch with a Leader on April 21, 2022. Jean observed that some members have indicated that they cannot participate in meetings during the day because of work commitments. Barbara said the Annual Meeting could be held either at noon or in the evening. Jean will inquire with those members who have indicated a conflict.

Ellen will find a date for our annual fund drive in early March 2022.

Christine Chandler told Barbara that legislators were told to expect a two-week special session. Christine was not pleased about the lack of reconciliation with the Pueblos and Native American communities in the Citizen Redistricting Commission maps for New Mexico House of Representatives. Senator Ivey-Soto is working with the Secretary of State on legislation to reinstate the emergency provisions of SB4, which have expired. Christine will also inquire with the Secretary of State about voting for ex-felons. The Governor intends to put a Hydrogen Hub, which will produce Blue Hydrogen rather than Green Hydrogen, on her call (LWVNM will oppose this measure.) Christine also told Barbara that she does not believe that the move to modernize the legislature, including salaries for legislators and lengthening the session, will happen during the short legislative session. Furthermore, the Governor is asking for a 7 percent raise for teachers in 2022. Christine favors a 7 percent increase for all state workers.

Healthcare and Broadband Concurrences for LWVUS

Akkana reported on two national-level concurrences that have been proposed. The first is for state and local Leagues to request concurrence at the June 2022 Convention with language excerpted from LWVNY's positions on Healthcare and Financing Healthcare. The New York position affirms the power of Single Payer systems, which some believe is only implied in the current LWVUS position. The New York position has been updated and modernized based on issues that have come to the forefront over the last 30 years (e.g., telemedicine). A letter has been sent to all state and local Leagues asking for support in getting this issue put on the June 2022 Convention agenda. After some discussion, Akkana moved that LWVLA support the National Healthcare concurrence being led by LWVNY; let them list our League as being in support; and fill out the national program planning survey to call for the healthcare concurrence at the national convention. Barbara seconded this motion and all voted in favor.

The second national-level concurrence proposed concerns digital equity. Akkana reported that the National Rural Caucus is focusing on broadband and pushing for national concurrence. Because this is such a technical and difficult issue, most Leagues do not have a position. After a brief discussion, Akkana moved "LWVLA recommends that the LWVUS Program Planning Committee puts the 'Universal High Speed Internet Access (Digital Equity) for All Residents of the United States, and Community Access and Public Affairs Media' positions on the agenda for discussion and voting at the 2022 LWVUS Convention." Amy seconded this motion and all voted in favor.

Becky suggested that we convey this information to our membership, and Akkana agreed to write an article for the *Update*.

Concurrence with California on Criminal Justice Position

On November 8, we held a forum on the California position on criminal justice, which they have asked all Leagues to endorse. Our forum was organized and moderated by Felicia. While participation was low, the input from the speakers was helpful. Based upon the information generated at this forum, Barbara put together a draft LWVNM Position on Criminal Justice, which she has sent to the LWVNM board. CNM also held a meeting but that focus was on crime in Albuquerque. It had nothing to do with the proposed position. Santa Fe also held a meeting and a representative from California was invited. They erroneously believed, however, that they could only accept or reject the California position. The Southern New Mexico League will hold its meeting later in the winter. Barbara will keep us posted.

Council Reports

Based on the need for additional volunteers and Jean's suggestion that we use her membership list to target specific individuals who expressed an interest in this area, Barbara wrote a letter to those who expressed an interest in local government and education. She asked them to volunteer for various meetings, including County Council and Planning and Zoning. She got no response from her first letter. She sent a second letter, and received a joint response from Craig Martin and June Fabryka-Martin, who agreed to cover the most recent Planning and Zoning meeting as well as the December 14 County Council meeting. They will then decide if this is something they wish to continue.

Jody will try and join the December 14 meeting and give the LWVLA statement on glyphosate.

Volunteers were solicited for future meetings on January 4, 11, 25, and 31 but none were forthcoming.

Ellen reported on the December 7 County Council meeting during which they voted to continue the Zoom/hybrid format of future meetings. The bulk of the meeting was spent discussing ordinances the county wants to put in place to address the new law legalizing cannabis in New Mexico. One local couple has applied for a license to produce and sell cannabis. There was a fair amount of public comment on this unprecedented issue. Because of this, the Council could not make progress on the issue and it will carry over to the January 4, 2022, meeting. Ellen said the Council also heard updated COVID numbers from Beverley Simpson and she learned that 92.7 percent of eligible adults in Los Alamos have been fully vaccinated. Furthermore, a booster clinic is being held this weekend and there will likely be more clinics based on the recent criteria that approves boosters for children aged 16 and 17. Julie Williams-Hill gave a presentation as the new Public Information Office for the County. There is now a COVID Committee, which is looking for a coordinator. Their first newsletter opened with a pediatrician encouraging those under age 18 to be vaccinated. The last portion of the meeting focused on having an electricity reliability plan in place.

Glyphosate

Dina Pesenson, the Vice Chair of the Environmental Sustainability Board (ESB), was invited to speak about the proposal submitted to the County Council to ban glyphosate. The ESB passed a motion unanimously to recommend to the County Council that the use of glyphosate-containing herbicides be banned and that public notifications of any chemical applications on County land be made. The Parks and Recreation Board voted unanimously to support this motion and it will be heard by the County Council on December 14. Both boards received over 50 individual comments, all but two in strong support of the motion. Dina's presentation to the Council will include a number of facts, including but not limited to: glyphosate is a patented antibiotic which mimics a basic building block of proteins, hormones, and enzymes; it accumulates in soil, water, plants, food, and humans; glyphosate has

been found in large amounts in human urine samples; over \$2.2 billion has been awarded against Bayer, the manufacturer of glyphosate, due to health issues arising from exposure; over 150,000 additional cases against Bayer are ongoing; Bayer is planning to stop sales of glyphosate-containing products for residential use by 2023; and the continued use of glyphosate is a legal liability for the County. Ms. Pesenson also noted that this motion will have very little effect on the county budget and may create more jobs through the need for manual labor. The League agreed to endorse this motion.

Important Dates

The deadline for the next newsletter is January 3, 2022.

The next board meeting will be January 27, 2022, from 12:00 to 2:00 p.m. via Zoom.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:00 p.m.

Minutes submitted by Rebecca Chaiken