

**MINUTES OF THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS/LOS ALAMOS BOARD MEETING
TUESDAY MARCH 26, 2019
MESA PUBLIC LIBRARY, LOS ALAMOS, NEW MEXICO**

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
Leslie Wallstrom, Second Vice President
Lynn Jones, Voter Services
Kathy Taylor, Treasurer
Rosmarie Frederickson, Outgoing Secretary
Rebecca Chaiken, Incoming Secretary
Akkana Peck, Director at Large
Jody Benson, Publicity
Amy Birnbaum, Reservations
Sandra West, Newsletter Editor

Minutes

The February Minutes were approved unanimously.

Treasurer's Report

For February 2019, Kathy Taylor reported having a checking account ending book balance of \$1,541.64, which includes total receipts of \$60; disbursements of \$146.48; and \$.02 interest. The savings account ending book balance was \$20,775.32, which includes \$.80 interest.

The 2020/2021 budget, which had been sent electronically for consideration following the February meeting, was discussed. Akkana Peck expressed concern that we are operating with a negative balance. After some discussion it was agreed that it is okay to have an unbalanced budget; we received a substantial grant from the Delle Foundation; and we are not in debt. Although we are spending more than we have taken in, we are spending down the grant, similar to our use of fund drive monies.

The website bill arrived and the amount was the same as in the past. Because we plan to expand the website, the budget will be increased accordingly.

LWVNM Convention Plans

Our keynote speaker at the banquet will be State Land Commissioner Stephanie Garcia Richard. Topics we want her to address in her speech were discussed. Several items of interest included: the history of state lands; where and what are the state lands; a brief history of United States trust lands; the difference between state lands, state trust lands, and parks; how can the land commissioner say no to a proposed project such as "the wall;" and what changes will she attempt to undertake. It was also suggested that she discuss the failure of her proposal that some income from state lands be devoted to early childhood education and how the legislative session impacted her agenda. It was unanimously agreed that PAC 8 would record her remarks at a cost not to exceed \$300.

It is hoped that the convention will be an opportunity for networking and discussing topics such as mentorship of "mini Leagues" in places such as Deming and Magdalena. LWVLA can appoint five local delegates. Becky Shankland, and Lynn Jones agreed to represent our League. Three additional delegates will be needed. Barbara Calef and Akkana Peck will attend as delegates of the state board. The next edition of the LWVNM newsletter, *La Palabra*, will include the schedule of events, proposed positions, and nominations.

The local board members are invited to the Friday evening reception to be held at the home of Kyle and Mike Wheeler. The convention begins Saturday morning with opening remarks by Council Chair Sara Scott and national League liaison, Liz Bander, followed by the official program. During lunch, Christine Chandler will speak briefly about her first experience as a legislator. Tables will be arranged by topics of interest such as voting and the environment. The afternoon will be an opportunity for more networking, tours of the area by Atomic City Tours, and a hike led by Barbara Calef. Dinner on Saturday evening will be held at Pig and Fig in White Rock at a cost of \$40 per person. The Sunday morning session will include remarks by the various League presidents about what their individual Leagues have undertaken. Finally, the delegates will make decisions about the makeup of the new board, positions, and bylaws.

The topic of "goody bags" containing materials provided by the Chamber of Commerce was discussed. It was agreed that a table with materials be provided so participants can take what they wish instead of bags being given to everyone. We want to avoid unnecessary waste and any use of plastic. It was also agreed that the convention brochure would be provided to everyone. In terms of "swag" it was agreed that pens would be a good choice. The convention subcommittee will discuss this matter further and make the final decisions.

Annual Meeting

Our annual meeting will be held on April 16, 2019, at the Mesa Public Library, immediately following Lunch with a Leader. This meeting will include a yearly wrap-up as well as reports from our various committees. We will also discuss the local League positions, which members will be asked to readopt.

Nomination News

It is hoped that Jean Dewart will take over the Newsletter from Sandra West. She has been approached and she advised that, if she were to take over this project, she would use Word rather than learning the design software currently used.

There will be no April 2019 newsletter.

Lunch with a Leader

April's Lunch with a Leader will feature Lieutenant Governor Howie Morales and the May event will feature several "zero waste" speakers.

Membership Report

Becky Shankland advised the Board that we have approximately 90 members on paper but that number is expected to decrease based on non-payment of dues and members otherwise leaving the group. Becky also noted that our dues (\$45) are the cheapest in New Mexico.

Voter Services

Lynn Jones had no new information to report. It was noted, however, that April 4 is the deadline for Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham to sign bills passed by the legislature. Voices of Los Alamos has a list of what bills were passed and Barbara Calef noted that the next edition of *La Palabra*, would contain a tracking sheet of what we supported and what passed.

It was also noted that our Probate Judge, Anne Nobile, will need to leave her position in order to care for an elderly parent out of state. People can volunteer for the position and the County Council will select her replacement.

BPU Observer Corps/Webmaster

Although Julie Williams-Hill could not be present for the meeting, she submitted the following information electronically:

Joint Board and Council Meeting on March 19th - the Department of Public Utilities presented an update on the Carbon Free Power Project (small modular reactor - nuclear generation facility). In April 2018 the Council and Board had authorized spending up to \$80,000 for the County's portion (\$6 million from Utah Associated Municipal Power Systems - UAMPS). It was thought last year, that in March 2019 this year, the funding would have been spent, and Council and Board would need to decide whether to continue or exit the project. This funding has not been spent down yet. Therefore, the DPU will come back to the Board and Council in late summer/early fall for these bodies to decide if we continue or not in this project.

Update on the Board Meeting from March 20th - the Board approved the Department of Public Utilities' budget. This will now go to the County Council in April.

Upcoming - at the April 2 County Council meeting, the Council will consider whether to adopt the proposed water rate increase. At the April 17th BPU meeting, the DPU will present to the BPU proposals that have been received on expanding solar (photovoltaic) at the landfill and/or adding solar to the Municipal parking lot.

Also, a new invoice for the website has been requested from the California LWV and the website changes are still in process.

Kathy Taylor provided her insight into the small modular nuclear reactors. The Department of Energy will fund the first two modules constructed. One will be used by Idaho National Laboratory (INL) for demonstration projects such as hydrogen production; and one for electrical energy for INL. It is expected that the first units will be online in 2026 and the plant will be fully commercial by 2027. Regarding the nuclear waste, Kathy said we know what to do with it but it is not politically feasible. She agreed to write up a summary of the issue for the newsletter if it is not otherwise done by Julie Williams-Hill.

Legislative Session Wrap-Up

Barbara Calef provided a summary of the 2018/2019 legislative session. On a positive note the ethics bill passed and there will be an article on this in the next edition of *La Palabra*. Further, the national popular vote succeeded despite lots of opposition. Unfortunately, HB 51, which would have decriminalized abortion, failed. A "letter of disappointment" was written by Becky Shankland and Barbara Calef and submitted to our local papers. This letter was published by the Los Alamos Daily Post but not the Los Alamos Monitor. HB 6, which would have raised taxes, also was gutted based on a faulty argument (that the state had sufficient funds from oil and gas production). The use of land grant money for early childhood education was killed in the Senate Rules Committee. The Iowa-redistricting model passed in the Senate Rules Committee but did not advance. It is possible the governor will put it on her agenda for the 2020 session.

There was a snafu regarding money for the census. It was incorrectly thought that all of the funds were coming from the federal government, so the necessary funds were not initially included in the budget. Individual counties are working on preparing for a complete count.

The issue with dummy bills (vehicles state lawmakers use after the deadline passes for introducing new legislation) has been brought to the attention of Speaker of the House Brian Egolf, but there is a problem with logistics - a bill can be amended only so many times. Further meetings are needed with Egolf and Senate Majority Leader Peter Wirth.

Other News

The outcome of our February 20 program-planning meeting was presented and was also published in the March newsletter. Areas of interest continue to include transportation; sustainability; environment, land use; administration; education; and legislative reform.

Recycling continues to be an issue of interest. It was suggested that a "Frequently Asked Questions" about recycling and/or an article in the newspaper might encourage more recycling by making it easier to understand. For example, it could include where and how to recycle things such as unwanted clothing (shelters such as Pete's Place in Santa Fe will accept these donations). It was agreed that this will be discussed again following our May "zero waste" Lunch with a Leader. The next newsletter will include information from the environmental services website.

Rebecca Chaiken will write up the notes from the February Lunch with a Leader with Richard Skolnik for the next newsletter and a shorter version will be submitted to our local newspapers. Becky Shankland will write up her notes from the most recent Voices of Los Alamos meeting.

Kathy Taylor brought up the important issue of the carbon footprint of our local buildings. Currently the County is taking no action to demand energy efficient building practices by private builders. The County should be insisting on good building practices such as more insulation, daylighting, proper siting, and elimination of natural gas for heating. However, the County Council will not take action because it does not want to discourage private development. They hope to achieve the "magical" population figure of 20,000, which they say is necessary to encourage more retail business. If we knew how to focus on this issue, we could take the lead. It was suggested that we find a friendly councilor to advise us on the issue.

Important Dates

The next board meeting will be April 23, 2019, from 12:00 to 2:00 p.m. at the Mesa Public Library.

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

Submitted by Rebecca Chaiken