

**League of Women Voters of Wellesley
Board Meeting Minutes
December 8, 2020 | 1:00-3:00 p.m.
Via Zoom**

Board members attending: Susan Clapham, Laura Brown-MacKinnon, Dana Desnoyers, Irene Flint, Ellen Gibbs, Ellen Hallett, Erry Johnson Ann-Mara Lanza, Ann Rappaport, Tanya Roy, Anne Rippy Turtle, Jenny Zannetos.
Members: Marguerite Chatelier, K.C. Kato, Bonny Nothorn, Mary Liz Van Dyck.

The meeting was called to order at 1:00 p.m. by Co-president Susan Clapham. A quorum was present.

1. Minutes of November 10, 2020

A spelling correction was made for Dana Desnoyers' name in item #4. A motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes as corrected.

VOTED: To approve the November 10, 2020 minutes as corrected.

2. Proposal for LWVW book discussion event – Marguerite Chatelier

LWVW member, Marguerite Chatelier, proposed a virtual book discussion on *Hood Feminism: Notes from the Women that a Movement Forgot* by Mikki Kendall. She has asked Christina Horner, World of Wellesley Co-president, if she would facilitate the discussion. The topic is relevant and in alignment with the League's state and national Diversity, Equity and Inclusiveness initiative. A date of January 31, 2021 at 3p.m. was determined. The event is open to LWVW members and friends. A motion was made to provide a stipend of up to \$100 to Christina Horner for facilitating the *Hood Feminism* book discussion. The motion carried unanimously.

VOTED: To provide a stipend of up to \$100 to Christina Horner for facilitating the *Hood Feminism* book discussion event on January 31, 2021.

3. Town Clerk Update – K.C. Kato

K.C. Kato gave an overview of the recent elections. She noted some "voter fatigue" with three elections in four months starting with the primary in September, Presidential election in November and Town bond exclusion vote in December. The addition of mail-in voting for these elections has been a significant factor. For example, of the approximately 4200 votes cast in the December 1 Special Town Election, about 3800 were mail-in and 350 were in-person at the polls. The ballot question regarding a bond exclusion for Wellesley Middle School infrastructure improvements passed.

The Annual Town Elections will be held on March 2, 2021. At this time, it is not certain if mail-in ballots will be permitted by state law. The question is before Governor Baker and will be decided within six days. If mail-in ballots are permitted, Meet the Candidates Night (MTCN), which is currently scheduled for February 25, 2021, will need to be moved to an earlier date. This will also affect planning for VOTE411, the Election Guide, and reservations with Wellesley Media to live stream the event. The Board discussed actions that would be required to accommodate mail-in voting. It was the sense of the board that, if mail-in voting is approved, the date for MTCN would be rescheduled to February 11 and that preparations for the Election Guide and VOTE411 would similarly be advanced to coordinate with the Town Clerk's mail-in ballot schedule. There was some debate about the Election Guide with respect to its usefulness and the tight timeline for organizing it under a mail-in voting scenario. This situation will be monitored closely and appropriate changes made.

4. Treasurer's Update – Jenny Zannetos

Total LWVW net assets as of November 30, 2020 were \$32,147.15. Dues received in November amounted to \$650. Expenses paid for in November 2020 included: renewal of LWVW's domain names, lwvw.org and lwvw.com, the second quarter national PMP and the cost to print the "How to Run for

Local Public Office” handbook. LWVW has a CD in the amount of \$5,179.67 at the Needham Bank that will mature at the end of December 2020. The members discussed interest rates and options available for reinvesting the CD. A motion was made and seconded to rollover the CD at Needham Bank to a 14-month CD. The motion carried unanimously.

VOTED: To rollover LWVW’s current \$5,179.67 CD at Needham Bank upon its maturity in late December 2020 into a 14-month CD at the Needham Bank.

5. Voter Service – Erry Johnson & Dana Desnoyers

How to Run for Local Public Office was presented online on Dec. 2. Twenty-six people registered and sixteen attended. The event was recorded and will be posted on the LWVW website. A review of the event noted that monitoring the chat box is important as well as ensuring eye-level camera position. The Town Moderator, Mark Kaplan, explained how town government works. His presentation could also serve as a good introduction to new residents about Town government. How to reach the right audience, encourage participation in town government and demystifying the election process are continuing challenges. The *Town of Wellesley 2021 Election Candidate Handbook* is posted on the LWVW website and 40 copies were delivered to the Town Clerk’s office. The *Wellesley Town Government Handbook 2021* is near completion. Ellen Gibbs will organize the Town retiree tributes this year.

6. Legislative Envoy Update – Tanya Roy

The Mass. Legislature has sent a \$46 billion FY2021 budget to Governor Baker containing provisions for vote by mail and the Roe Act. Education funding based on the Student Opportunity Act formula has been postponed a year largely due to unexpected COVID expenditures. WVMA is opposing the proposed cuts to MBTA service, a position which Mayor Walsh has also joined. LWVMA is closely watching the Governor’s response to key issues it has advocated for throughout the year.

A question about the LWV’s non-partisan policy was raised. The League appears to some people to favor positions held by one party and therefore to be partial to that party. Non-partisan is understood by the League to mean that it does not favor political parties or candidates, but rather advocates for policy positions it has studied and supports. In fact, LWVW members can “publicly endorse” issues the LWV opposes, but may not publicly speak on behalf of or otherwise represent the League on that issue. (The exception is the League President and Voter Service officer, who must have board approval for public endorsement of an issue that the League opposes.) It was suggested that the League’s non-partisan policy be clearly explained in materials for new members. LWVW does take positions on Town issues but not often.

7. Program/Calendar – Ann-Mara Lanza & Irene Flint

The Housing Study Committee has two subcommittees, one working on housing and sustainability and the other working on housing and diversity. A community discussion on affordable housing is planned for January 14, 2021 entitled “*Housing in Wellesley: Our Past, Our Future, Our Values*”. It will feature Jennifer Raitt, the Director of Planning and Community Development for the Town of Arlington, MA and Don McCauley, Wellesley’s Planning Director. This event will focus on questions such as “how Wellesley’s zoning created our desirable community, but also contributes to Wellesley’s increasing lack of affordability. How can we ensure that Wellesley’s housing supports our values? What action steps can we take to allow a greater diversity of people to call Wellesley their home.” It is co-sponsored by various community organizations and churches.

The Study Committee meets monthly to develop and coordinate the study questions. It plans to present its work to the board in February and to hold a Consent Meeting with the membership in March.

8. Membership – Anne Rippy Turtle

There are currently 106 members of which 84 are individual, 10 households, 4 students and 6 Life members. Anne has sent emails to members who have not yet renewed. She suggested that a movie club might be another way to engage members perhaps with a women's rights theme.

The Nominating Committee is busy securing next year's board nominees.

9. Other Business

Members were reminded to complete the board job descriptions.

A survey of the LWVW membership to ask about their interests was suggested. Susan and Laura will aim to prepare and such a survey in January.

Earlier in the meeting, Laura took a Holiday Zoom photo of the group!

The meeting was adjourned at 2:57 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Ellen Hallett
Secretary