



# Santa Cruz VOTER

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF SANTA CRUZ COUNTY

June 2021

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## Calendar

Saturday, June 26, 2021  
 10:15 Check in  
 10:30 a.m. to noon  
 LWVSCC Annual Meeting  
 Virtual Meeting Via Zoom  
 To attend, email  
[rsvp@lwvsc.org](mailto:rsvp@lwvsc.org) or phone 831-325-4140

Tuesday, July 13, 2021  
 10 a.m. to noon  
 LWVSCC Board Meeting  
 Virtual meeting via Jitsi  
 To attend, email  
[rsvp@lwvsc.org](mailto:rsvp@lwvsc.org)  
*Due to the pandemic, we will be using Jitsi, a secure and free video conferencing system, for June 8 Board of Directors meeting.*

Don't forget to  
 renew your  
 membership!  
 See page two  
 for details.

## League of Women Voters of Santa Cruz County 56th Annual Meeting

Featuring a Keynote Address by  
 California State Senator John Laird

Saturday  
 June 26  
 10:30 a.m. – noon

*A virtual meeting via Zoom; check in opens at 10:15 a.m.*

*To reserve your place and get full Zoom details, email [rsvp@lwvsc.org](mailto:rsvp@lwvsc.org). Include your first and last name, phone, and the names of any other members who will be viewing on your Zoom link.*

*Download the [Annual Meeting Kit](#) at [lwvsc.org](http://lwvsc.org).*



Our League will hold its 56th annual meeting via Zoom on Saturday, June 26. Along with our usual business, we will feature a keynote talk by California State Senator John Laird. We look forward to seeing you, our friends, with whom we share a commitment to bringing the vote to all eligible voters, educating the public about ballot measures, and providing programming about important community issues.

We will vote on the budget for our next fiscal year, elect next year's officers, and confirm our program for the year. In addition, we will be voting on several changes to our bylaws (see article on page 4). Members can read details on all of those items in our [annual meeting kit](#), which is available at our website, [lwvsc.org](http://lwvsc.org). We recommend members download and print the kit for reference during the meeting.

During the meeting we will give thanks to three individuals who have contributed years of service to our Board: Dorothy Fry, eight years; Marilyn McCusker, three years; Kit Hein, one year; and Pam Newbury, ten years. We will also welcome other women to the Board who will dedicate their creativity and energy to a year of intriguing programming. We plan to have in-person programs once the state clarifies guidelines.

The meeting will begin promptly at 10:30 a.m., so we ask that participants check in at 10:15 a.m., so that we may confirm a quorum and to make certain all is right between your computer and the Zoom world. You may chat with people you know when entered into the Zoom room. We will begin with our business meeting, which continues until 11:20 a.m., when we will have a short break to stretch and socialize.

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At 11:30 a.m., State Senator Laird, who is a member of our League, will begin his speech, “California coming out of the Pandemic: What Challenges do we Face?” Following the talk, we’ll have an opportunity to ask questions. Senator Laird was elected to represent state Senate District 17 in November 2020. Prior to his senate service, Laird served as secretary of the California Natural Resources Agency, and he was a member of the State Integrated Waste Management Board. He also represented California’s Assembly District 27 from 2002–8. He served two terms as mayor of Santa Cruz in the 80s, making him one of the first openly gay mayors to serve in the United States.

Send an email to [rsvp@lwvscc.org](mailto:rsvp@lwvscc.org) to reserve your place and get the full Zoom details.

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## Membership Report

The League of Women Voters of Santa Cruz County has appreciated your support and commitment to the education of our voting community. We look forward to a time in the future when we can resume gathering in person for our informative and educational program events and greet you personally. Our VOTER newsletter is one of the benefits of membership, as it is a great resource for county, state, and national issues as well as notification of our events and programs.

Thanks to all who have already renewed their membership in our League for the 2021/22 fiscal year. If you haven’t had a chance to do so yet, it’s quick and easy to renew online at [lwvscc.org](http://lwvscc.org) (you can also download and print a [renewal form](#)).

To renew by mail, simply send a check (made out to LWVSCC) for \$65 individual membership, \$100 household membership (two adults at same household, please be sure to list both names; for additional members at same address add \$35 each), or \$10 student membership, to Post Office Box 1745, Capitola, CA 95010.

We look forward to your continued support for an informative year ahead!

In gratitude,

—*Lydia Nogales Parker, Membership Chair*

## President’s Message



Our League of Women Voters 56th Annual Meeting is a great time to meet other members, to vote on our direction for the coming year, and share the experience of this highlight event. If at all possible, I strongly encourage you, as a

League member, to join via Zoom this year’s annual meeting on the morning of June 26. Please read and print the [annual meeting kit](#), (available to download on our website at [lwvscc.org](http://lwvscc.org)) in advance to preview what will be happening.

I have enjoyed working with our board of directors and being president of the League of Women Voters of Santa Cruz County this past year as well as coordinating our legislative interviews. I look forward to our future programs and to attending the [California League’s convention](#) in June.

—*Barbara Lewis, President LWVSCC*

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## LWVC Convention Mysteries Revealed

All League members can sign up to virtually observe the [California state League’s convention](#) for just \$25 as non-voting attendees. This is a great way for League members to discover what the convention is all about and learn how the League works at the grassroots level. The conference is scheduled for Monday June 7 through Sunday June 13. It’s easy to [register online](#), and registration is open until the event date.

Non-voting attendees may observe plenary sessions, workshops, and caucuses. The [convention workbook](#) and [conference schedule](#) are available online. If you want to know more about how the conference works and find out just what a plenary session is, check out their [FAQ page](#).

## Legislative Interview With Senator Laird

In February, members of four different Leagues that lie within California State Senator John Laird's District 17 interviewed the senator via Zoom to discuss current issues.

Asked about the challenges of converting California's natural and working lands from being net emitters of greenhouse gases to lands that remove and sequester CO<sub>2</sub> from the atmosphere, Senator Laird acknowledged the complexity of the issue. He supports the preservation of agriculture and working lands as part of the solution and noted that the state has goals that include their preservation. California also has the first forest plan of any of the states. However, we have a particular problem in that 50% of our forests are under federal jurisdiction and 48% are privately owned—leaving the state in control of only 2% of our forests. This means negotiating with the federal government and others to be able to work with their lands.

The drought of 2011–14 killed 120 million trees, causing real issues with forest management by increasing fire danger in the state and releasing carbon from the biological breakdown of the dead trees. Various agencies have been removing dead trees, but they prioritized only those near towns, roads, and power lines.

Senator Laird said that California also needs to increase development in the existing urban footprint to preserve agricultural and natural lands as part of the climate solution. If we develop outside of that, we risk developing in unsuitable areas such as in forests, and on flood plains, steep slopes, and prime agricultural lands. Some existing programs, such as conservation easements for prime agricultural land, will help control development. Money for this is being provided by California's cap and trade legislation, but the question is how reliable a source this will continue to be and whether or not it will be enough as conservation plans expand.

Governor Newsom has a goal of conserving 30 percent of California's land and coastal water by 2030, but we currently have no programs designed to support this goal. Senator Laird wants to work

on this in the legislature by designing some specific programs and pursuing funding for those programs. Programs revolve around money, but they also revolve around educating the public: if you're on the ground in King City or Watsonville, for example, you need to understand the impacts of preserving natural and agricultural lands.

Other major climate goals include developing renewables and an electricity portfolio, getting back to our emission levels of 1990, building more energy efficient buildings, and adapting to the climate changes already happening.

The next topic of discussion revolved around housing, homelessness, zoning, and affordability, which Senator Laird described as a "thermonuclear issue" in local communities. He provided historical background connected to his time serving on the City Council in Santa Cruz. In 1979, the city voted to adopt greenbelts to prevent urban sprawl. After the 1989 Loma Prieta earthquake, residents accepted the rebuilding of Santa Cruz's severely damaged downtown, which kept the economic engine going and provided a tax base to support greenbelts. As part of this development, 700 affordable units were built with the help of federal subsidies. While people accepted the greenbelts and the redevelopment of downtown, they didn't totally accept higher densities for affordable housing in the city.

Today, Senator Laird pointed out, land is more expensive and less available, and the federal government has walked away from housing programs, so we have to leverage the money in different ways, as well as find ways to develop within the existing footprints. This ties into our climate goals, but leads to higher densities in some areas.

Senator Laird mentioned a bill introduced by Senator Scott Wiener to override local zoning and provide higher density for housing. Because it didn't take into account local issues, municipal governments, who felt it was a violation of local control, opposed it. In Laird's district, those issues include Morgan Hill, which has met its housing goals; the de facto limit of development on the Monterey Peninsula due to water scarcity; and the effect on Santa Cruz of the demand for housing by UC Santa Cruz students.



Senator Laird supports a middle ground, like allowing fourplexes on corner lots; this would allow for upzoning (process of increasing the zoning density) in a way that would be more consistent with local zoning restrictions. He also supported an amendment to the Wiener bill to exclude smaller counties, thus guiding increased density to urban areas where it could work with mass transit systems like BART. He also hopes that the federal government might once again engage in subsidizing affordable housing.

The next topic focused on what can be done to ensure that California's COVID-19 recovery is equitable and focuses on the needs of those most impacted.

Senator Laird said one key issue is making sure that there are vaccination priorities for the thousands of migrant farm workers expected to arrive in the Salinas Valley in the spring. The senator also spoke about the California State Senate's efforts to revise Governor Newsom's proposed school reopening plan so that the money is distributed by the Local Control Funding formula, rather than requiring an application process; the concern being that the more affluent schools would have the resources to apply quickly and would thus get more funding than disadvantaged schools. He would like to see foster kids, special needs students, homeless students, English language learners and other students who were disadvantaged by the digital divide, be prioritized for school reopenings.

Senator Laird acknowledged that the vaccine supply has been uneven and the rollout somewhat clumsy and uncoordinated, since it was left up to counties and to health care providers within the counties. We need to make sure that the vaccines get to those most in need. It is our moral responsibility.

The final question dealt with Senator Laird's personal priorities. What other major issues do you think the Legislature must deal with in 2021? What are your personal priorities?

Senator Laird said that the state code is sexist and needs revision to be gender neutral. For example, in November 2020, Amanda Ray was sworn in as commander of the California Highway Patrol. She is the first woman and second person of color to hold that position, yet every section of

the code refers to 'he' or 'him'; when referring to the Commander. Laird has introduced SB 272, a bill to make the Highway Patrol code gender neutral. This would also apply to fire, the conservation corps, and police.

Laird's other priority is fire. He would like to see a 5- or 10-year framework, with an annual plan and budget, for forest management and controlled burns. We must pivot from fire suppression to living with fire, and we need to plan for it. What happened last year is not unique; it will happen again and again and will affect everyone, whether they are breathing smoky, polluted air, or losing their homes.

Attendees were Barbara Lewis, Pam Newbury, Dinah Sapia and Marilyn McCusker from the Santa Cruz County League; Gloria Hoo and Vicki Alexander from the San Jose/Santa Clara League; Howard Foster, Dennis Mar and Karen Paull from the Monterey County League; and Julie Rodewald, Patti Dale and Kim Murray from the San Luis Obispo County League. Also in attendance was Clint Weirick from Senator Laird's district office.

—Marilyn McCusker, Secretary

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## Bylaws Revisions

At this year's annual meeting, members will vote on several changes to our League's bylaws. While bylaws are not a glamorous and fun aspect of the League, they are the guiding document for how and what we do. When reviewing these revisions, we encourage all members to read the full bylaws ([available online](#)). The full text of the six proposed revisions can be found in the [annual meeting kit](#), but here's an overview of what we're doing and why.

The national League, all state Leagues, and all local Leagues have their own bylaws. The first three articles of the LWVUS bylaws set forth the League name, present the League's purpose and policy, and define membership in the League. The first three articles of all local and state League bylaws must be consistent with those of the LWVUS in order to define and maintain the unity

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Membership in the League of Women Voters is open to men and women of voting age who are U.S. citizens. Others are welcome to join the League as associate members.

Send your check payable to League of Women Voters of Santa Cruz County or LWVSCC with this form to LWVSCC, Box 1745, Capitola, CA 95010-1745.

\_\_\_ \$65.00 Individual annual membership  
\_\_\_ \$100.00 Two members in a household  
\_\_\_ \$10.00 Student membership  
\_\_\_ Contribution \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Checks made out to LWVSCC are not tax deductible.

To make a tax-deductible donation, write a separate check to LWVC Education Fund.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

[Join the League](#), renew your membership, or [make a donation](#) online at [lwvsc.org](http://lwvsc.org).

[Find us on Facebook](#).

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The League of Women Voters, a nonpartisan political organization, encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy.

## Bylaws Revisions

Continued from Page 4

of the organization and the powers and privileges of members. Any amendments to those articles made at a national convention must also be made to local and state League bylaws.

Usually this happens automatically by a simple resolution of the board and announcement to the members; our bylaws should include a section allowing the board to make bylaws changes without membership approval when required by law or by changes to the bylaws of the LWVUS and LWVC. However, our bylaws do not include this section. One of the changes we are proposing corrects this oversight by adding a section to Article XIII as follows: “Section 2. When required by law or amendment of the LWVUS or the LWVC bylaws, these bylaws may be amended by the board of directors.”

Without that wording in Article XIII, we must ask members to approve two recent amendments to Articles II and III of the LWVUS bylaws that were approved at the 2020 national convention. Members voted to add a Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Policy to Article II, Purpose and Policy, of the US League bylaws, and added a definition of student membership to Article III.

The League is an organization fully committed to diversity, equity, and inclusion in principle and in practice, as that is a fundamental value of the League and is key to the organization’s current and future success in engaging all individuals, households, communities, and policy makers in creating a more perfect democracy. The change to Article II adds the following: The League is fully committed to ensure compliance—in principle and in practice—with LWVUS’ Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Policy.”

The change to Article III, Membership, adds the following definition: “Those who are students are defined as individuals enrolled either as full or part time with an accredited institution.”

Two other proposed changes came about because, as a result of the pandemic, in-person meetings were not allowed. We have been holding virtual meetings on an emergency basis, as otherwise League business could not have proceeded for the past year and a half. Changes to Articles V and VIII allow remote participation and give the board greater flexibility in choosing meeting formats that meet their needs and requirements. These changes broaden the definition of alternative meeting formats for board and other meetings.

Finally, the change to Article VII, Financial Administration, Section 2, deletes specific policy about half-year membership dues that conflicts with our [current membership policy](#) as adopted in 2019. Changes to membership and dues policies are within the powers of the board, and the details do not need to be mentioned in the bylaws.

If you have any questions about these changes, please send us and email at [newsletter@lwvsc.org](mailto:newsletter@lwvsc.org).

—Pam Newbury, VOTER Editor