

ISSUES

The order of the following items does not denote priority and thus leaves the League (LWVW) the flexibility to act as situations warrant.

I. COUNTY GOVERNMENT

A. BUDGET

Review, analyze, and take action on the Westchester County budget as a fundamental tool for implementing County government policy with particular emphasis on League positions.

OUTLOOK FOR WORK

1. Search for and monitor progress on the recommendations we have made in past budget statements.
2. Continue to monitor the budget adoption process, with emphasis on the interaction between the executive and legislative branches of County government.
3. Urge improvements in the format of the County operating and capital budgets to ensure a better understanding by the general public.
4. Critically examine both the operating and capital budgets as soon as they are available, enlisting all available avenues of information gathering, with continuing attention to estimated revenue streams, such as sales tax forecasts, and paying particular attention to funding of pension costs and union contract settlements. Focus on the impact of proposed allocations on existing government programs and services on which the LWVW has particular positions. These would include, but would not be limited to, our support of fair and affordable housing; our particular concern for the work done by the Board of Elections; and our continuing encouragement of County support of essential human services, the environment, and infrastructure.

B. EXECUTIVE AND LEGISLATIVE BRANCHES

Monitor and take action on the operation of the Westchester County Government with particular attention to all matters that affect issues with which LWVW is concerned, financial matters, the election process and the items listed below.

OUTLOOK FOR WORK

1. In collaboration with the Voter Service committee, help educate voters on where and how to vote, make recommendations for modernization of the voting systems. Review and act on relevant LWVNY positions, including that which would prevent Elections Commissioners from simultaneously serving as heads of their respective political parties. Discuss with the Board of Elections issues and possible problems in relation to voting reform.
2. Support redistricting processes and enforceable standards that promote fair and effective representation at all levels of government with maximum opportunity for public participation. Take an active role, in collaboration with LWVUS, LWVNY, and LWVW Voter Service, regarding redistricting measures that would preserve municipal

boundaries, standards of compactness, and contiguity that would be consistent with federal requirements for population equality, with consideration of diversity, equity, and inclusion best practices.

3. Work to promote county-wide revaluation, supporting those municipalities and communities that have been undertaking reassessments and urge others to do the same. Educate the public on the many merits of regularly updating property tax assessments in order to achieve a more transparent and equitable system.
4. Assess any moves to consolidate municipalities and/or municipal services, applying the LWVNY criteria of 2009.
5. Lend support to items recommended in 2013, but not legislatively adopted, by the Charter Revision Commission on which we reached consensus. This includes the appointment, rather than the election, of the County Clerk.
6. Follow the progress of Playland's overall development, including contracts.
7. Monitor County environmental initiatives that impact our air quality, energy use, land use, waste management, and water quality.

C. HOUSING AND LAND USE

Evaluate and take action on land use, with particular emphasis on the development of housing of all types in collaboration with the Environmental Committee. This includes a renewed emphasis on participation with local Leagues.

OUTLOOK FOR WORK

1. Although future development in Housing and Land Use is uncertain within the County (as this is being written), every effort will be made to become current on projects in various phases of development prior to cessation due to the Coronavirus pandemic, with updates provided, as in the past.
2. Track the County's 2019 Housing Needs Assessment and its analytical use by the Housing Opportunity Commission, with particular attention to encouraging development that affirmatively furthers fair housing (AFFH) throughout Westchester.
3. Beyond the Court-approved final closure of the Consent Decree/Housing Settlement Agreement of 2010, advocate for further development of fair and affordable housing. Identify all income groups by for-profit and not-for-profit developers at a level comparable to that of the years in the County prior to the Federal lawsuit.
4. In conjunction with the LWVW's County Budget Committee, continue to advocate for increased support of staffing in the County's Planning Department, so that such programs as Community Development Block Grants funding and Section 8 voucher support are adequately provided for despite the many other demands made on that department.
5. Encourage more engagement of local boards and agencies dealing with land use and housing.
6. Continue to access the progress of the Board of Legislators Labor & Housing Committee and Housing Opportunity Commission.

II. ENVIRONMENT

Urgently promote an environment beneficial to life through the wise management of natural resources in the public interest by recognizing the interrelationships of air quality, energy, land use, waste management and protection of water resources.

OUTLOOK FOR WORK

1. Further develop the new Committee on the Environment to:
 - a. Work with LWVNY to declare a climate emergency and lobby for legislation to further mitigation efforts.
 - b. Support municipal efforts to reduce their emissions via public educational campaigns and workshops.
 - c. Work with youth to help them in their environmental outreach efforts.
2. Through the LWVW annual County budget review process, promote the care, acquisition and preservation of open space by the County that will not compete with land for fair and affordable housing.
3. Monitor and take action on any proposals that impact stormwater and wastewater treatment and management.
4. Promote public education on environmental issues with emphasis on water quality, stormwater and wastewater treatment and management including septic systems and on renewable energy.
5. Take action on climate change, paying special attention to: greenhouse gas emissions; alternative energy resources and conservation; electric cars, buses and charging stations; building codes; an effective countywide septic management plan; Indian Point Nuclear Plant decommissioning; the siting, safety and expansion of pipelines and compressor stations; the Westchester County Airport; Playland; Army Corps of Engineers Hudson River storm barrier project; and US Coast Guard regulation of barges parked in the Hudson.
6. Support measures to improve environmental management and legislation by county government.
7. Monitor meetings of the Board of Legislature's committees in relation to the environment.
8. Promote environmentally and economically sound food scrap collection, recycling and composting in Westchester County.
9. Promote accessibility to the Internet, especially to underserved communities as well as safety issues in siting towers.

III. WOMEN'S AND CHILDREN'S ISSUES

Monitor and take action on issues concerning women's and children's development, health, safety and welfare in coordination with LWVNY.

OUTLOOK FOR WORK

1. Support initiatives aimed toward improving women's and children's access to healthcare and safety measures in cooperation with other organizations and coalitions

dedicated to these goals, including gun control regulations and measures to counteract human trafficking, sexual abuse and harassment.

2. Support efforts at the county level to implement the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), as adopted by the County Board of Legislators on May 19, 2020. The Westchester Human Rights Commission has been tasked with this but needs a coalition of women's advocates to assist in implementation.
3. Work in coordination with the county budget review to examine funding for programs promoting women's and children's health and safety issues, with particular emphasis on funding libraries, after-school programs, health clinics and day-care services.
4. Support and alert members to childcare initiatives to improve availability and quality of services with particular concern for the disabled.
5. Act as a liaison between public officials and the LWVW and remain informed on proposed or contemplated legislation. Lobby legislators as appropriate.

IV. HEALTH CARE

Gather and disseminate information, as needed, about the structure, functions and initiatives at the county, state and national levels of our health care system. Track the progress of key legislative bills, with action alerts in accordance with League positions. Maintain contact with the groups working to improve health care and make recommendations in regard to cooperating with such groups to co-sponsor their events.

OUTLOOK FOR WORK

1. Promote single-payer, universal health care and grassroots public awareness of its benefits. Hold public forums, lobby lawmakers in Albany, write op-ed article and letters-to-the-editor, collect signatures on petitions, make presentations to community groups and work together with the Campaign for New York Health, advocating for the New York Health single-payer bill.
2. Monitor a number of health care concerns such as: the allocation of medical resources to underserved areas, health promotion and disease prevention, school-based health services, women's health issues such as women's rights for freedom of choice, cuts to the Tobacco Control Program, end-of-life issues, pain management, long-term care and prescription drug expenses.
3. Work to implement the provisions of the newly approved LWVNYS Update of our positions on Healthcare and Healthcare Financing, which call for separation of health insurance from employment, safe staffing, affordable universal access, equity, an expanded definition of essential care services, and long-term care.

V. DIVERSITY, EQUITY, INCLUSION

LWVW is an organization fully committed to diversity, equity, and inclusion in principle and in practice. 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.

There shall be no barriers to full participation in this organization on the basis of gender, gender identity, ethnicity, race, native or indigenous origin, age, generation, sexual orientation, culture, religion, belief system, marital status, parental status, socioeconomic status, language, accent, ability status, mental health, educational level or background, geography, nationality, work style, work experience, job role function, thinking style, personality type, physical appearance, political perspective or affiliation and/or any other characteristic that can be identified as recognizing or illustrating diversity

OUTLOOK FOR WORK

1. Develop and implement a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion learning journey, from a variety of resources, for county and local League board members. DEI programs can be made available to the membership as deemed appropriate.
2. Develop a DEI Plan of Action:
 - a. Coordinate, conduct, and engage in conversations to become familiar with issues affecting communities of color; multilingual communities; multicultural communities; disabled persons; non-gender persons; multi-generations; and others if decided.
 - b. Once issues are identified, advocate for solutions to disparities.
 - c. Utilize LWVUS, LWVNYS, and other resources.
3. Normalize conversations about all DEI communities, sponsoring and hosting educational programs and discussions, and speaking out about issues as they arise. Strive to build community relationships and collaborate with other community organizations.
4. Transform membership of LWVW to be more representative of the Westchester County general population.
 - a. Analyze Westchester County demographics, County Census 2020 data; voter registration and election turnout metrics
 - b. After analysis, determine people, organizations, groups to target.
 - c. Develop networking strategies in order to build relationships.
 - d. Encourage all LWVW Board members to forge relationships by inviting diverse peoples to informal meetings (ie, a Zoom or in-person coffee, or a phone chat) to actively listen and learn about them, share your experiences, talk about LWVW advocacies and programs, and determine if there is opportunity for collaboration. Make introductions to local leagues' Membership Chairs.

VI. YOUTH CORPS

The League of Women Voters of Westchester Youth Corps encourages youth to become active and informed participants in government and to ensure that young adult voices are heard. The Youth Corps is inviting young adults and high school students to participate in its new 2021 Action Plan.

OUTLOOK FOR WORK

1. Run Voter Registration drives at local college campuses and high schools.
2. Run Get Out the Vote educational and promotional drives.
3. Organize LWVW “chapters” on local college campuses.
4. Boost social media messaging on important and emerging issues.
5. Sponsor Running and Winning and explore involvement in other similar programs.
6. Sponsor student(s) to attend the LWVNY’s Students Inside Albany program.
7. Join other LWVW committees: County Government; Environment; and Voter Service.
8. Coordinate with other youth groups across the state for relevant opportunities as part of the burgeoning state NYCI (New York Youth Civics Initiative) program.



ANNUAL REPORT 2020-2021

VOTER SERVICE

Voter service programs continue to be a primary function for the ILO as well as for all Leagues throughout the County. The election season of 2020 was challenging for many reasons. We had to shift gears many times as the governor changed deadlines for elections and candidate filings, absentee voting increased and COVID-19 restrictions necessitated changes in our voter registration drives and get out the vote (GOTV) efforts.

Vote411 – 2020 Report

Vote411 is the LWV's online voters guide, which is used by the national, state and local Leagues throughout the country. Any user of the online guide may see who is running for all of the elections in her residential voting district, simply by entering her address; she may also print out a sample ballot to help her visualize how her ballot will appear at the voting polls. Candidates are able to enter their own information, including their pictures, directly into Vote411. We then extract information and format it for use in the printed Voters Guide. In 2020, Vote411 received national recognition for the information service it provides to voters, when it won the People's Choice Award for Best Government and Civil Innovation Website at the 24th Annual Webby Awards. Gathering accurate information for Vote411 is a collaborative effort. In 2020, representatives from eight local Leagues worked tirelessly to collect candidate information for county and local races. Candidate information for federal (U.S. Congress) and state (NYS Assembly and Senate) races was collected by the NYS League. The Westchester County Board of Elections continued to support Vote411 by including a direct link from their homepage to Vote411 and including the League's name with the clickable icon. This year, in Westchester County, there were 3 county and local contested primaries, with 9 candidates, and we went live with the primary election information in late May. 2020's General Election involved 2 local propositions, as well as 28 county and local races with 51 candidates, 47% of whom provided their information using Vote411 before the printed Voters Guide was published. There were 3 U.S. Congressional District races with 10 candidates, and 90% of these candidates were included with information in the printed Voters Guide. Including the race for NYS Supreme Court Justice (9th District), and NYS Senate and Assembly races, there were 15 state races, with 30 candidates, and 53% of these candidates were included with information in the printed Voters Guide. This understates the overall participation rate, as additional candidates added their profiles to Vote411 after the printed Voters Guide was published. Vote411 went live for the General Election in early September. Megan Brown, the LWVUS Vote411 Administrator, provided Google statistics on local Vote411 usage. It should be noted

that her statistics included activity with no identifiable community location, so it is possible that the Westchester statistics are understated. From January 1 – November 3, 18,482 users accessed Vote411 in Westchester in 24,518 sessions. The voting patterns changed because of the pandemic, with many people voting early in October, and so Megan broke out the Google data for October 2020 and also October 2018. There was a significant increase in Westchester's Vote411 usage for October 2020, compared to October 2018's usage, with 8,262 users in October 2020, compared to 4,237 in October 2018, an increase of 95%. The number of Westchester's Vote411 sessions in October 2020 was 10,702, compared to 5,171 sessions in October 2018, an increase of 107%.

Mary Beth Gose, Vote411 2020 Chair

Printed Voter Guides

The final copy of the Guide was approved and sent to the printer on September 30, so copies should be ready for delivery and mailing sometime the week of October 5. The total print run will be about 27,000, about 12,000 less than last year. Guides will be mailed to about 10,000 households; about 4500 through the Westchester Library System the remainder delivered to about 100 different community organizations as well as to our local leagues; a pdf was posted on our website. Many thanks to Mary Beth Gose whose work made it possible for on-time completion. Because of COVID-19 restrictions, fewer Vote411 guides were printed than usual. In total, 26,707 were printed and distributed: 4525 through the Westchester Library System, 10,582 through bulk mail and 11,600 delivered to community organizations.

Get Out the Vote (GOTV)

Judie Gorenstein (LWVNY board member) was instrumental in updating and distributing GOTV toolkits with input from local leagues. Kathy Meany, Suzanne Kavic and Joan Alexander coordinated outreach to local colleges for National Voter Registration Day.

Civics Education

This year, election protection was done jointly with Common Cause. League members fanned out to check on polling sites and helped especially at hot spots at the 2 libraries in Yonkers. They even brought food to voters waiting in long lines.

- LWVW collaborated with the Westchester Library System and facilitated 23 virtual workshops, *Vote 2020! Register to Vote!* and *Prepare to Vote 2020: 3 Ways to Vote*; ~125 total attendance. All libraries posted access to self-paced tutorials and reference handouts:
 - *How to Complete a NYS Voter Registration Form*
 - *Your Vote Matters*
 - *General Election 2020 Voting*
 - *3 Ways to Vote*
- LWVW developed self-paced tutorials to be viewed on the LWVWEF YouTube Channel:
 - *Prepare to Vote: 3 Ways to Vote* – 287 views
 - *Voting Plan of Action*, developed by the LWVW Youth Corps – 213 views

Face Masks

LWVW designed, distributed and sold *VOTE!* red, white, blue face masks with the LWV logo.

Takeover Tuesday

LWVW was invited to takeover News12 Westchester journalist Tara Rosenblum's Instagram account for Takeover Tuesday on 9/15/20 from 8am-8pm; we posted Youth Corps members' and local presidents' 30-second videos and GOTV graphics messaging; journalist has a following of 8,000. LWVW Youth Corps shared the Takeover Tuesday Instagram on their YC Instagram account too.

Election Monitoring

Fall 2020, election protection was done jointly with Common Cause. League members fanned out to check on polling sites and helped especially at hot spots at the 2 libraries in Yonkers. They even brought food to voters waiting in long lines.

Candidate Forums

Stephen Cohen and Suzanne Kavic coordinated the ten Candidate Forums that had been scheduled around the county, all to take place before early voting began. They covered Westchester D.A., House of Representatives in CDs 16, 17, and 18, and several districts for NYS Assembly and Senate. Invitations to the forums were sent to all candidates; not all agreed to participate. Ultimately virtual forums were held for Assembly District 95, Congressional District 17, State Senate District 37, State Senate District 38, and State Senate District 40.

Mary Kirsch, Stephen Cohen, Joan Alexander, Suzanne Kavic, Judie Gorenstein, Kathy Meany

NATURALIZATION COURT

No report for 2020-21 due to court closure.

FAIR CAMPAIGN PRACTICES COMMITTEE

Created in 1991 by the LWV of Westchester but wholly independent in its deliberations, the Westchester County Fair Campaign Practices Committee (FCPC or Committee) continues to be a powerful tool in the pursuit of fair campaigns in the county. During calendar 2020, the Committee issued two Findings, as compared to three, nine, eleven, seven, fourteen, and four in the previous six years. Findings of the Committee and guidelines are posted on the site: www.faircampaignpractices.org. Its paper archive is housed at the Westchester Historical Society.

In March, 2021, FCPC members met with the Executive Committee of the Westchester County Democratic Committee to provide them with an overview of the FCPC and answer questions. A similar offer was extended to the Westchester County Republican Committee.

As of December 31, 2020, the Committee was comprised of the following seventeen members: Susan P. Guma, [Chair], Jennifer Mebes Flagg [Coordinator], Elizabeth Bermel, Gisele Castro, Miriam Cohen, Victor J. Goldberg, LaRuth Gray, Kyle-Beth Hilfer, Lee Kinnally, Robert C. Kirkwood, Carole Princer Levy, Don Marra, Paul Bennett Marrow, Joy Rosenzweig, Susan Schwarz, John Stern, and Evelyn M. Stock. The Committee needs a quorum of five to hear a complaint. Representatives from the political parties serve *ex officio* and are part of each Hearing and the discussion that follows to determine an outcome; their participation throughout the years has been essential to the continued effectiveness of the Committee, as is the participation of the press in publishing the results.

The FCPC continues to encourage candidates for any and all elective offices with a Westchester constituency to come forward if they feel that their opponents are stepping beyond the bounds of fair campaign practices. Its guidelines are reviewed every year to keep up with current practices; for example, outside money is funding local campaigns and it is necessary to ensure that candidates disavow activities that are false or misleading. The Committee is continually grateful to the Westchester Community Foundation (WCF) and the BOCES administrative office, which have both generously allowed the use of its conference rooms for hearings and meetings. WCF has supported the Committee throughout its history.

Jennifer Mebes Flagg for FCPC

YOUTH CORPS

The League of Women Voters of Westchester Youth Corps (YC) was formed in 2020 to encourage youth to be active and informed citizens, to participate in all levels of government and to ensure that the youth voice is heard.

The YC is now actively recruiting high school students and young adults to participate in our 2021 Action Plan. This year we are striving to:

- Run voter registration and Get Out The Vote educational drives
- Produce social media messages on important issues to youth
- Join a County League committee to represent youth and participate in Environment, County Government, and Voter Service efforts
- Coordinate with the State League/NYYCI youth program to develop a statewide youth and organization volunteer database.

We are the perfect organization for students looking for civic engagement/community service credits for school from a variety of summer and beyond projects!

To learn more about the YC in its early days please watch this video.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sUG_3bPw8Ds&feature=youtu.be

Joan Alexander

ISSUES

I. COUNTY GOVERNMENT

A. COUNTY BUDGET

From July 2020-June 2021, members of the LWVW Executive and Legislative Branches Committee viewed online meetings of the Budget and Appropriations Committee of the Board of Legislators, monitoring revenue reports and expense appropriations that impacted the County's adopted budget for Fiscal 2021. Of particular interest were those meetings at which Budget Director Larry Soule gave his quarterly reports.

In September 2020, County Executive George Latimer and Budget Director Larry Soule met virtually with the LWVW County Government committee for an informal discussion about the County budget situation during the Covid-19 pandemic that began March 2020. The committee received insights for our study of the proposed Operating and Capital Projects budgets for 2021. A date was set for CE Latimer and BD Soule to present the LWVW's November public meeting about the budget, and then for LWVW members to discuss and reach a consensus statement.

The League's well-attended meeting about the County Budget was held via Zoom on November 19, 2020. CE Latimer and BD Larry Soule gave an overview of both Operating and Capital Budgets, demonstrating transparency of reduced revenues and increased expenses due to the Covid-19 pandemic, and the devastating effects to the County. They each also shared how the County immediately assessed the financial challenges prior to the full outbreak in March, and took pragmatic steps to address the potential fiscal challenges. By making immediate adjustments, they were able to thwart issues that could have had dire financial effects on the County. Their presentation was followed by a Q&A period. All guests left the meeting and LWVW members stayed to discuss matters that should be stressed in our consensus statement.

Work by committee members on the consensus statement and its approval by the Executive Committee were completed in time for its distribution to members of the Board of Legislators, the County Executive, and the media prior to the BOL's final virtual public hearing on December 9, 2020. The statement was read at that hearing by Kathy Meany.

County Government Committee

B. EXECUTIVE AND LEGISLATIVE BRANCHES

During 2020-2021, the League's Legislative and Administrative Oversight (L&AO) Committee followed and at times took action on these issues:

All COVID-19 related county and state legislation; Census 2020 in Westchester County; Election matters, both current and proposals for modernization; County finances; Fair and affordable housing.

We continued to support the efforts of the Board of Elections as it coped with multiple primaries and elections with ever-changing scheduling as affected by numerous legislative

revisions through the NYS Governor's Executive Orders. We continued to support efforts in Albany that would prevent heads of political parties from also serving as Elections Commissioners.

Due to COVID-19 crisis in Westchester County, the historic Playland Park was closed but may open May 2021. We will continue to monitor the contract agreement for Standard Amusements to run Playland, as it begins.

LWVW has been invited by the Westchester County Board of Legislators to study and provide a statement about the Code of Ethics referendum that will be on the fall 2021 ballot. Study and discussion is currently being reviewed. County Deputy Attorney Justin Adin provided the committee with an overview and explanation of the legalities at the May 13 meeting. Legislator Kitley Covill and County Attorney John Nonna will speak at the LWVW Annual Convention on June 3 to address this proposed legislation.

Kathy Meany

C. HOUSING AND LAND USE

In spite of the pandemic and its far-reaching effects, this year's Housing & Land Use summary is far more positive than any of us might have anticipated. For in spite of the "eviction tsunami" predicted by those most involved in Affordable Housing, Westchester is in a far better place at present due to recent federal and NYS funding, and also to County programs quickly put into place to avoid large-scale homelessness.

As already widely reported, the American Rescue Plan will pump \$188 million into the County, with a sizeable portion being devoted to keeping vast numbers of residents from being evicted and also protecting small landlords, in particular.

At the same time, a number of Fair & Affordable developments are ready to welcome residents or are nearing completion. Among the largest are the long-awaited 'Hunts Place' complex in Chappaqua, Harrison's 'Avalon' and 'Dayspring Apartments' in Yonkers.

Other current actions related to Fair & Affordable Housing include legislation before the County's Board of Legislators to require cooperative apartment boards to provide written explanations of refusals of prospective buyers; proposed NYS legislation to allow Accessory Apartments to be added to, or converted within pre-existing structures; and a proposal by the Westchester County Housing Opportunity Commission which would protect residents displaced in low-income housing by the creation of new developments or "gentrification" actions. The annual Fair & Affordable Housing Expo was presented virtually, as have many other such workshops having to do with finding affordable rental housing (Westchester's biggest current need); assisting Seniors in making late-life decisions on housing; and the challenges of home ownership, presented by the County's NFP organizations.

As of mid-May 2021, the Federal Court still awaits the completion of a couple projects before closing the 2009 Housing Settlement Agreement/Consent Decree, although a 'final report' was

submitted to the Court by the Housing Monitor.

And once again I would urge LWV local units to monitor Housing & Land Use in their respective communities, particularly in view of the County's large-scale efforts to encourage Economic Development to lower residential tax rates for all types of home ownership.

Karen Schatzel

II. ENVIRONMENT

A Committee on the Environment committee was formed this year with three co-chairs, Marcia Brewster, Camilla Calhoun (Rivertowns) and Susan Schwarz. Committee members were recruited. The first project was a Climate Smart Community Workshop to help municipalities find funding and resources for their projects, with about 100 attendees and more continuing to access the link. Co-sponsors for the April 7 event were Westchester County, Sustainable Westchester, FCWC and ELLA. We also were part of a panel at the April 1 Westchester County Sustainable Westchester conference.

Three members of the LWVW Youth Corps joined our committee and are working with their high schools and communities (Rye and Mamaroneck) on food scrap recycling. We are developing educational campaigns on electric vehicles, and charging stations, including school buses, as well as plastics, packaging and other urgent recycling issues.

Since LWVNY will be issuing a declaration of climate emergency, we will finally be able to lobby for legislation under that umbrella and have signed on to a petition to the state legislature to support electric school buses. We continue to follow the decommissioning of Indian Point, the airport, the Army Corps of Engineers' plans for sea level rise, and will continue working with other organizations such as Mothers Out Front to grow our efforts.

Marcia Brewster and Susan Schwarz

III. HUMAN RESOURCES

A. HEALTH CARE

The League of Women Voters of Westchester Healthcare Committee has continued to support the single payer bill in New York State, however, due to the Corona virus pandemic, we were unable to do much of the grassroots, in-person educational presentations. We did participate in Zoom activities to support the New York Health Act. The LWV of NYS recently completed an Update to our healthcare positions. Although the League has supported SP healthcare since 1991, much has changed in 30 years. In the past year, 31 Leagues around the state almost unanimously approved a much stronger position, emphasizing separating healthcare from employment and including dental, hearing, vision and long-term care as part of essential coverage. The new position pointed out how co-pays and deductibles often prevent patients

from getting the medications and care they need. As a result, the new Memorandum of Support reflect this much stronger position.

Madeline Zevon

B. RUNNING & WINNING

The Running & Winning virtual workshop, that the LWVW and the AAUW of Westchester co-sponsored this year, was in a reimagined format. On May 18 an evening two-hour webinar was held. Participating in this program were 30 junior and senior high school girls from 17 Westchester high schools and 12 women elected officials from New York State and Westchester County government. You may watch the video:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yVIM6tdIFio>

Cheryl Feldman

C. STUDENTS INSIDE ALBANY

2020 and 2021 marked a very challenging time for the Students Inside Albany conference.

In 2020 the Westchester League was able to recruit two high school juniors, one from Mt Vernon High School and the other from Roosevelt High School in Yonkers for the May in person event. With much regret, but for the safety of all, this conference was cancelled due to the Covid-19 Pandemic.

In 2021, with the help of virtual conferencing and some experience with a more sophisticated use of this platform, Students Inside Albany was redesigned by the NY State League and the conference went live in May, 2021. The Westchester League was fortunate that the two students recruited in 2020 where able to attend this virtual 2021 event.

Students Inside Albany Committee will monitor this well-loved New York State League program. We anticipate the continuation of this event on a virtual platform for 2022 and will begin to recruit in January, 2022. We have begun to develop some good relationships at these local high schools and will endeavor to strengthen these connections in the months before recruitment begins in earnest.

Deb Pekarek

D. DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION

The Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) committee advanced the support of DEI in LWVW by facilitating the virtual workshop, *The Untold Story: The Alienation of Black Female Suffragists and Women of Color*, on July 1 and 15, 2020, in collaboration with the YWCA of White Plains and Central Westchester and the Westchester County African American Advisory Board. Following the presentation by Dr. Carol Faulkner of Syracuse University and inspiration by Rev. Kym McNair, workshop attendees were divided into small groups and brainstormed how to move forward, with the goal of developing action steps. Attendees reconvened on July 15 to continue discussion and action planning.

The DEI Committee continued its work by customizing the prescribed LWVUS DEI Mission Statement to better fit LWVW. Part of the proposed mission statement will be presented for approval as an addition to the LWVW Bylaws at the LWVW Annual Convention and voted upon by voting delegates. The more complete reworked statement will be considered to be added to the LWVW Policies and Procedures by the 2021-22 Executive Committee.

The DEI Committee further developed a proposed Plan of Action that includes:

- Racial equity training for the LWVW Board
- Develop a racial equity action plan
- Normalize conversations about race and racism
- Proactively transform membership of LWVW to reflect Westchester County demographics
- Establish a LWVW scorecard to make goals/strategies visible and measure progress
- Evaluate success of action plan

The proposed DEI Committee Report/Work Plan will be reviewed and considered for implementation by the 2021-22 Executive Committee.

Beginning in July 2020, the LWVW joined the LWVNYS Task Force to further advocacy of DEI locally and throughout New York State, and has become a core contributor to date in strategy, action planning, types of metrics, and development of a learning journey that includes formal, experiential, and social learning.

DEI Committee

LEAGUE ADMINISTRATION

I. DEVELOPMENT

Steve Meyers chaired our Annual Appeal drive which began in November. Despite the Covid-19 pandemic, donations to our annual appeal were strong at more than \$11,000, the same as 2019-20. Our donation list expanded with about 20% of our donors new to our fundraising efforts. All donors will be thanked by receiving the *2021 Directory of Officials*.

League programs continued to be the beneficiary of vital corporate and foundation funding. These sponsorships of our activities are essential for our efforts to educate the public and encourage broad participation in our democratic institutions. We thank Humanities New York for a \$500 grant to fund our DEI program, *The Untold Story: the Alienation of Black Suffragists and Women of Color*. LWVW also thanks LWVNYS for a grant of \$750 to fund Voter Service programs during the 2020 election season.

We thank Consolidated Edison Company of New York, Inc. for its continued grant of 9,000 toward the costs of the *2020 Directory of Officials* for Westchester County, Cities and Villages. (See Publications) Due to the Covid-19 pandemic and not printing the *2020 Directory*, Consolidated Edison approved restricted grant funds to be reallocated to development and printing of the *2020 Voters Guide*. In November 2020, Consolidated Edison graciously provided LWVW with another \$9,000 to put towards the costs of the development of the *2021 Directory*, and \$10,000 towards the costs of the *2022 Directory*.

Once again we applied for and received a grant from the Westchester Community Foundation (WCF) for \$2,500 to offset the costs of the 2020 Running and Winning program, which was cancelled due to the pandemic. LWVW is retaining the WCF funds in reserve for a 2022 in-person program. (See Running and Winning)

Kathy Meany

II. PUBLICATIONS

The *Directory of Officials* for Westchester County, Cities and Villages is updated annually following the village elections in March, with the assistance of staff from the Board of Legislators, the Office of the County Executive, the Judiciary and the Westchester County municipal clerks. An essential tool for voters, advocates, public officials, and business people, the Directory is in great demand by the public and, after the *Voters Guide*, is our most widely distributed publication.

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic and elections scheduling changes, the *2020 Directory of Officials* was not developed and printed. However, the *2021 Directory of Officials* has been completed, distributed, and ready for sale. Funding for the preparation and free distribution of the Directory to all public offices is provided by a grant from Consolidated Edison Company

of New York, Inc. The LWVW charges the public for the Directory.

July 2020 marked the initiation of a monthly electronic update that was distributed to the LWVW membership mid-month. The intent was to have a one page easily readable informational that informs the membership of timely LWVW activities. Electronic buttons and links allowed for more detailed information to be accessed by those interested in the topics presented.

Renée S. Baylor and Kathy Meany, Production and Distribution Administrators

III. LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

A. MODERATING CANDIDATES FORUMS

The Westchester League has a roster of trained and experienced moderators who, following League practice, preside over candidate forums in communities other than their own, and never in a race where they vote.

Of course, the current pandemic has completely altered our procedures. Traditional forums have been out of the question since March of 2020. Virtual forums have been the standard since then, up to the present, all using the Zoom system. And while we anticipate returning to live events as soon as this fall, the future may find us using some hybrid format, since, in the silver lining department, we've discovered some unexpected advantages in the online format. Some audiences have been larger; simultaneous translation has been used; questions submitted in advance were more coherent and organized and, for the moderator, much easier to deal with than scrawled notes on cards; the webinar audience sees and hears, perhaps better than in the school auditorium, but is unseen and unheard. So sure, we would all prefer to go live, but we may be able to keep some of these features for people who, for one reason or another, are at home.

Since our last report one year ago, when so much was uncertain, we have conducted many virtual forums. In the spring of 2020 we moderated sixteen, mostly school board forums. We also handled state assembly and senate primary contests. In fall of 2020 we were disappointed by the cancellation of a number of planned forums, but did cover CD 17 and three state senate races.

In early 2021 we moderated at a couple of local village elections. As I write this we are almost through the school-board season, covering seventeen, and a couple of library board contests. Additionally, we have three forums on the calendar, with candidates competing in June primary contests.

Our yearly orientations for new moderators also moved online. In September of 2020 we conducted two Zoom sessions. These were attended by sixteen people, We have added four new moderators to our roster. We would like to find a way to encourage more participation. I have frankly been disappointed by the rate of retention. My opening spring email to my list

brought, along with enthusiastic responses, several who said they were not available, and, most surprising, a number of non-responses. Each local League should be contributing to the team of qualified moderators, and encouraging members to sign up. It's not rocket science! And it's rewarding, and enjoyable. We will continue to carry on this vital function of the League: educating voters by scheduling and conducting non-partisan forums where competing candidates can be heard, questioned and fairly evaluated.

Paul Schwarz, Coordinator

B. LEAGUE LEADERSHIP

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic challenges, in-person leadership meetings were not able to move forward. However, a two-hour local presidents' meeting was held via Zoom on March 6, 2021 to discuss league strategies, advocacies, and other important issues. As members of the LWVW Board of Directors, local league presidents attended BOD meetings in July, December, and April. Collaborative committee meetings were also organized for Voter Service and Redistricting, of which, several local league presidents participated. With continuing health and safety improvements, we hope to restart quarterly local league presidents' meetings and strategy meetings.

Kathy Meany

IV.COMMUNICATONS

LWVW remedied the loss of in-person meetings and public gatherings by using Zoom Meetings and Zoom Webinars. Successful meetings included all the Board of Directors, Executive Committee, the December Holiday Luncheon with guest speaker, Dr. Deborah Turner, LWVUS President, the Untold Story DEI event. Successful candidate forums were facilitated using Zoom Webinars, as well as Running and Winning. We increased our social media presence, reaching a wider audience using Facebook and Instagram. These platforms allowed us to provide repeated educational messaging around changing New York State voting procedures, especially concerning the new 2020 absentee ballot rules and early voting options. Social media also gave us a tool to communicate rapidly changing information, such as the extension in early voting hours while voting was already underway. Although social media has its strengths, we also relied on our website to house detailed content, funneling users from social media to our website where they could find more comprehensive information and links to additional resources as needed. The new LWVW website, *lwvw.org*, was launched in 1st Quarter 2021, and is now fully transitioned to the MyLo platform. With a new pro bono webmaster, we will continue to improve the look and content. Other electronic social media platforms were used to broadcast notices of important dates and information throughout the election season in addition to promoting League events and publications and recruiting volunteers. We anticipate that as we need to rely less on virtual and social media going forward, we will continue to employ these technology tools when appropriate.

Robyn Weintraub, Kathy Meany

V. EVENT PROGRAMS

The Holiday Party followed the December 4, 2020, Board of Directors virtual meeting. Participants met other league members in breakout lunch sessions, and then were inspired by guest speaker, LWVUS President, Dr. Deborah Turner.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O23a4Gij5wI>

The LWVW Convention will be held virtually on June 3, 2021. Guest speakers include Legislator Kitley Covill, District 2; and County Attorney, John Nonna, to present the proposed Code of Ethics that will be included on the November 2021 ballot as a Referendum.

Kitt Rosenthal

VI. OFFICE AND STAFF

LWVW is fully relocated to its new office at the Regus Corporate Office, 520 White Plains Rd., Suite 500 in Tarrytown. We are realizing significant savings due to a reduced rent expense. We eliminated another office expense by eliminating our Optimum telecommunications services for telephone and wifi, because these services are automatically included in the rent fee. This will result in a savings of \$3,200 annually. Being we are notified of all telephone messages through email or can access remote dial-in, there is no need for support staff at this time.

Kathy Meany



NOMINEES FOR OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS 2021-2022

CONTINUING TERM 2020-2022

TWO YEAR TERM 2021-2023

1st VICE PRESIDENT
Suzanne Kavic, New Castle
3rd VICE PRESIDENT
Stephen Cohen, White Plains
TREASURER
Tracy Tang*, Scarsdale
DIRECTORS
Susan Schwarz, Rivertowns
Marcia Brewster, Rivertowns
Monica Getz*, Rivertowns
Louise Perez* Larchmont/Mamaroneck

PRESIDENT
Kathy Meany, Rivertowns
2nd VICE PRESIDENT
Mary Kirsch, New Castle
SECRETARY
DIRECTORS
Joan Alexander, New Rochelle
Deb Pekarek, Scarsdale
Susan Robinson, Rivertowns

2022 NOMINATING COMMITTEE**

Marylou Green, Chair, Scarsdale
Leah Dembitzer, Scarsdale
Betsy Shaw Weiner, New Castle

*One year remaining of a 2-year term
**Off Board, 1-year term

Bolded names of Officers, Directors and Nominating Committee are nominations for election at the Annual Convention.

NOMINATING COMMITTEE 2021-2022 The LWWV Bylaws provide that the three elected members of the Nominating Committee "shall not be members of the executive committee" and that "two additional members shall be members of the executive committee and shall be appointed by the executive committee..."

Submitted by the Nominating Committee 2020-21: Susan Maggiotto, Chair, Rivertowns; Leah Dembitzer, Scarsdale; Susan Schwarz, Rivertowns; Renee Baylor, Scarsdale



PAST PRESIDENTS

Mrs. Casper Whitney	1921 - 1923
Mrs. Henry Dey	1923 - 1925
Mrs. Robert L. Shape	1925 - 1926
Mrs. William H. Lough	1926 - 1929
Mrs. Walter H. Gilpatric	1929 - 1931
Mrs. Frederick Silver	1931 - 1938
Mrs. Frank Ewing	1935 - 1941
Mrs. Joseph Meigs	1938 - 1941
Mrs. W. Carson	1941 - 1942
Mrs. William J. Kelley	1942 - 1945
Mrs. Harvey Conover	1945 - 1947
Mrs. S.F. Conybeare	1947 - 1949
Mrs. Charles F. Hazelwood	1949 - 1951
Mrs. Leon C. Laub	1951 - 1953
Mrs. Hans-Arnold	1953 - 1955
Mrs. Morris Krantz	1955 - 1957
Mrs. Kenneth W. Greenawalt	1957 - 1959
Mrs. Jonas R. Cowan	1959 - 1961
Mrs. Martin J. Brennan	1961 - 1963
Jean Pollak	1963 - 1965
Rita Zatz	1965 - 1967
Dee Topol	1967 - 1969
Elizabeth Sluder	1969 - 1971
Marcy Kahn	1971 - 1973
Mary Whitehead	1973 - 1976
Zita Loewe	1977 - 1979
Nancy Craig	1979 - 1980
Paula Willey	1981 - 1983
Ellen Milberg	1983 - 1985
Evelyn Stock	1985 - 1987
Rita Malmud	1987 - 1989
Barbara Strauss	1989 - 1991
Inez Levene & Nancy Bassett	1991 - 1992
Amy Paulin	1992 - 1995
Harriet Goldberg	1995 - 1997
Jo Brill	1997 - 2000
Roberta Wiernik	2000 - 2002
Erin Malloy	2002 - 2004
Joy Rosenzweig	2004 - 2006
Rosemary MacLaughlin	2006 - 2007
Mary Beth Gose	2007 - 2009
Adelaide DiGiorgi	2009 - 2010
Mary Beth Gose & Marianna Stout	2010 - 2011
Sharon Lindsay	2011 - 2014
Marylou Green	2014 - 2020
Kathy Meany	2020 - present