



Annual Meeting Workbook

<https://my.lww.org/massachusetts/wellesley>

May 2024

**THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF WELLESLEY
INVITES YOU TO OUR
86TH ANNUAL MEETING**

**WEDNESDAY, MAY 15, 2024
6:00PM**

**HOME OF MARLENE O'BRIEN
158 GLEN ROAD, WELLESLEY**

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear Members of LWV Wellesley,

Thank you all for a wonderful year. LWVW is a stronger, more active organization in 2023-2024 thanks to your feedback and involvement. Your energy and commitment to empowering voters and defending democracy continue to astound me. I am grateful for the opportunity to serve you. Thank you.

We had new Board members this year who brought new energy and ideas to our work. Rama K. Ramaswamy continued from last spring as our DEI director. Under her leadership, we examined the intellectual underpinnings of diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging, while also delving into our own personal experiences and feelings. Our new VP of Voter Service Jenn Fallon did a terrific job of drawing on the wisdom and experience of longtime VP Erry Johnson, as she brought her own energy and drive to the task of coordinating the many events LWVW is famous for. We wish her all the best as she continues to serve in town government. We were incredibly fortunate to have Deb Codispoti slide smoothly into the important role of Treasurer, building on Jenny Zannetos' legacy and bringing her own fresh take on structuring the budget. Marguerite Chatelier became our new high energy VP of Program, with the continuing support of Irene Flint and Ann-Mara Lanza. We also owe a debt of gratitude to our previous Co-Presidents Laura Brown-MacKinnon and Wendy Garber for bringing us through the COVID epidemic into a new, challenging world of national, state, and local politics. Many thanks to you both for your personal warmth and dedication to maintaining the reputation of LWVW as the backbone of voter support in Wellesley. Many thanks go to Niki Brinkman-Ofenloch for maintaining our membership records and setting up the mailing lists in our new Constant Contact email platform. We will miss her next year but are proud she is now on the School Committee. We will also miss Margie Palladino who managed to get LWVMA to support legislation against abusive litigation, but whose personal efforts also contributed substantially to the passage of such legislation.

Shout out to our Nominating Committee this year for bringing us a strong slate for 2024-2025. Ellen Hallett, who has served in many capacities on the Board, graciously returned to Nominating Committee to lead her recruiting team of Marguerite Chatelier and Odessa Sanchez.

Our goals as an organization in 2024-2025 include:

- Continuing to support Town Clerk KC Kato during a challenging national election
- Transitioning to a new nationally based membership structure
- Establishing a strong local financial base for LWVW
- Using our mission statement and a frank analysis of our strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and challenges to produce a 3-5-year Strategic Plan

Thank you again for your trust and support in 2023-2024 and in the challenging year ahead.

-Bonny Nothern, President LWVW

Annual Meeting Agenda

6:00pm	Hors d'oeuvres and refreshments
6:30pm	Potluck Dinner
7:00pm	Dessert and Meeting Call to Order Welcome, Meeting Overview, and Land Acknowledgement President - Bonny Nothern Secretary - Ellie Perkins Parliamentarian - Ellen Hallett
	APPOINT Committee of Three Members to Read 2024 Annual Meeting Minutes
7:15pm	Presentation of Operating Budget (see pages 4 - 6) Treasurer, Debra Codispoti
	VOTE: Adoption of FY2025 Operating Budget (see page 6)
7:30pm	Presentation of Proposed New Study (see pages 7-8) Member - Rekha Sampath
	VOTE: Approve Voting Age Study by LWVW (see page 8)
7:45pm	VOTE: Readoption of Local Program (see page 8) Program Director, Ann-Mara Lanza
8:00pm	Presentation of 2024-2025 Slate (see page 9) FY24 Nominating Committee - Ellen Hallett
	VOTE: Election of FY2025 Officers, Directors, and FY2025 Nominating Committee (see page 9)
8:15pm	Highlights from Annual Reports (pages 10-20)
8:30pm	Directions to the Board from Members
8:45pm	Closing Remarks by President
9:00pm	Adjournment

Land Acknowledgement

We acknowledge that Wellesley is part of the ancestral and traditional land of the Massachusetts people. We commit to strengthening our understanding of the history and contemporary lives of Indigenous peoples and to steward this land.

Adapted from Wellesley College Land Acknowledgement, approved by the Wellesley College Board of Trustees in October 2021, https://www1.wellesley.edu/davismuseum/about-davis/directors-message/DEAI_Plan/landacknowledgement

Current FY2024 LWVW Board

President	Bonny Nothern	Director- Program	Ann-Mara Lanza
Secretary	Ellie Perkins	Legislative Envoy	Margie Palladino
Vice President -Program	Marguerite Chatlier	Membership	Niki Brinkman-Ofenloch
Vice President -Voter Service	Jenn Fallon	Newsletter/Website	Laura Brown MacKinnon
Treasurer	Debra Codispoti	Publicity/Marketing	Tanvi Venkata
Director -DEI	Rama K. Ramaswamy	Social Media.	Ivy Wang
Director -Program	Irene Flint	At Large	Marlene O'Brien

LWWV Operating & Proposed Budgets

		23 - '24 budgeted	23 - '24 actual	* Expenses in the spring	24 - '25 budgeted
Income					
Dues		\$6,560.00	\$5,880.00		\$6,100.00
Grants		\$300.00	\$0.00		\$400.00
Donations (note 4)					
	Member	\$2,300.00	\$1,165.00		\$1,100.00
	Non-member	\$50.00	\$0.00		\$50.00
	Corporate	\$4,500.00	\$4,500.00		\$4,500.00
Fundraising		\$300.00	\$0.00		\$300.00
Investment return (Note 5)		\$600.00	\$479.00		\$500.00
Reserves appropriations (Note 14)		\$1,893.00	\$0.00		\$3,005.00
Total Income		\$16,503.00	\$12,024.00		\$15,955.00
Expenses					
Operating Costs (Notes 6,7, and 8)					
	Board expense	\$450.00	\$179.00		\$500.00
	Membership	\$500.00	\$90.00	*	\$500.00
	PMP National	\$3,472.00	\$3,440.00		\$3,440.00
	PMP State	\$2,421.00	\$2,400.00		\$2,400.00
	Publicity/outreach	\$800.00	\$848.00		\$1,000.00
	Nominating Committee	-	-		\$100.00
Conventions (Note 9)					
	National	\$1,500.00	\$0.00	*	\$0.00
	State	\$0.00	\$0.00		\$530.00
	Other	\$0.00	\$0.00		\$0.00
Advocacy					
	Local	\$100.00	\$0.00		\$100.00
	State (Day on the Hill)	\$25.00	\$16.00		\$25.00
	National	\$25.00	\$0.00		\$25.00
	Legislative Envoy	-	-		\$75.00

		23 - '24 budgeted	23 - '24 actual	* Expenses in the spring	24 - '25 budgeted
Program (Note 10)					
	Opening Meeting	\$300.00	\$4.00		\$300.00
	Annual Meeting	\$225.00	\$0.00	*	\$250.00
	Events	\$500.00	\$222.00		\$600.00
	Studies	-	-		\$100.00
Voter Service (Notes 11, 12, and 13)					
	Candidates Night	\$500.00	\$96.00		\$300.00
	Election Guide	\$200.00	\$240.00		\$250.00
	How to run for office	\$75.00	\$0.00		\$25.00
	Town Meeting Prep	\$25.00	\$0.00		\$25.00
	WHS Book Award	\$100.00	\$0.00	*	\$100.00
	Postcard	\$4,200.00	\$3,850.00		\$4,200.00
	Vote 411 (software)	\$400.00	\$400.00		\$450.00
	Election resources	\$125.00	\$152.00		\$200.00
	Special Civic Projects	\$0.00	\$0.00		\$200.00
Diversity/Equity/Inclusion (Note 2)		-	-		\$200.00
Fundraising		\$60.00	\$0.00		\$60.00
Honoraria (Note 3)		\$500.00	\$0.00		-
Total Expense		\$16,503.00	\$11,937.00		\$15,955.00

Budget Notes

1) 2023 -2024 amounts which will occur in the spring:

Phonathon income and expenses, National Convention costs, annual meeting costs, WHS book award, final investment return numbers. This helps to explain why our actual numbers are lower than our budgeted numbers for the 23-24 year.

2) Line items added to the budget this year:

How to Run for Office event, DEI expenses, Legislative Envoy expenses, Studies, Program events (includes coffees, brown bag lunches, other programs), Nominating Committee expenses.

3) Line items removed from this year's budget:

Town Meeting Handbooks (now electronic): Honoria - budgeted \$500 for the past year = will now be included in the budgets for each meeting and program, e.g., opening meeting honoraria is under opening meeting, candidates' night honoraria under candidates night, etc

Budget Notes -continued

- 4) Sponsorship donations is renamed corporate donations
- 5) Investment return includes interest from checking accounts, savings accounts, and from CD's
- 6) Board expenses include:
room rental (board meetings), expenses for the executive board members, Zoom expense.
- 7) State and national PMP amounts are yearly bills paid quarterly - the amount under actual expenses is the yearly amount, since this is already known (i.e., not the amount as of 4-10-24).
- 8) Publicity/outreach includes:
website, constant contact, and the domain name expenses.
- 9) State and national convention occur in alternating years - 2024-25 will be the state convention
- 10) Program budgets for Opening Meeting and for Annual Meeting include:
honoraria, room expense, supplies, refreshments, publicity, and workbook
- 11) Postcard is a town-wide postcard mailing with a reminder of the March town elections, details of Meet the Candidates Night, Vote 411.org, and voter registration information, generally funded through corporate donations
- 12) Election resources include:
I voted stickers, vote signs, voter registration.
- 13) Special civic projects:
unforeseen needs the League would like to address.
- 14) Reserves Appropriation - the amount needed to balance planned income and planned expenses - will be calculated once the budget is finalized, and it comes from our savings.

Approval of Proposed FY2025 Budget

MOTION: To approve the FY25 League of Women Voters of Wellesley Budget as recommended by the Budget Committee and approved by the Board

Proposed Voting Age Study by LWVW 2024-2025

Type of Study: Consensus

Scope: On March 12, 2024, the Board of the League of Women Voters of Wellesley voted unanimously “To recommend to the membership at Annual Meeting a study relating to minimum voting age.” This study was precipitated by a citizen’s petition brought to the 2024 Annual Town Meeting by two student members of our League, asking that the Town vote to authorize the Select Board to petition the General Court to enact “an act providing for voting by qualified residents aged 16 and 17 in town elections in the town of Wellesley.” The petition failed 60%-40% after a robust discussion with several key objections stated.

Our study will investigate the benefits and drawbacks of lowering the voting age in Wellesley, including topics suggested by the discussion at the 2024 Annual Town Meeting. The study committee will refine the study scope as information develops. Questions to be considered may include:

- Should the age be lowered to 16, or only to 17?
- Should voters under age 18 be allowed to run for Boards and positions which currently restrict membership to “Registered Voter”: Select Board, Assessors, Health, School Committee, Moderator, and Town Clerk?
- How will younger voters be educated on topics/candidates on the ballot?
- How does voting age relate to other rights granted at certain ages?
- Will lowering the voting age increase voter turnout, both in the short and long term?

Outlook for Work: The committee will plan a timeline; develop questions to be answered; and review, study, and consider materials from sources such as:

- The previous studies leading to the current voting age positions and any relevant similar studies by other local or State Leagues, specifically reviewing the study of the LWV of Maine
- Articles by experts on voting age
- The work of national and local organizations that study/advocate for the voting age.
- State legislative process and history on voting age
- Wellesley town bylaws
- Primary research: WHS and Dana Hall survey of students; “Voices of Vote16” podcast

Proposed Voting Age Study -continued

After gathering this data, the study committee will:

- Write a report on their findings.
- Present at least one educational program to LWV W members and the public.
- Prepare consensus questions for the members to discuss.
- Prepare a final report.
- For additional information, please research materials on adolescent cognition, found in reports from the Office of Population Affairs section of the Office of Health and Human Services and all cited studies, as well as National Institute of Health cited research on adolescent cognition.

Approval of Proposed Voting Age Study

MOTION: To approve the Voting Age Study for the League of Women Voters of Wellesley as recommended by the LWVW Board of Directors and Officers.

Readoption of LWVW Local Program

As per the By-Laws of the League of Women Voters of Wellesley:

Article IX, Section 3, (c) *A majority vote by the voting members present and voting at the annual meeting shall be required for adoption of subjects in the Proposed Program as presented to the Annual Meeting by the Board of Directors (Member Guide 2023, p. 18)*

MOTION: To readopt the League of Women Voters of Wellesley Local Program on pages 26-36 in the Membership Guide and Directory June 2023

Election of FY25 Board & Nominating Committee

The following is the nomination slate for the FY2025 LWVW Board of Directors and Nominating Committee as recommended by the FY24 Nominating Committee. Nominations from the floor are also in order.

OFFICERS:

President	Bonny Nothern
Co-Vice-President, Voter Services	Marguerite Chatelier
Co-Vice-President, Voter Services	Diane Hemond
Co-Vice-President, Program	Irene Flint
Co-Vice-President, Program	Ann-Mara Lanza
Secretary	Ellie Perkins
Treasurer	Debra Codispoti

DIRECTORS:

Diversity, Equity, Inclusion	Rama K. Ramaswamy
Legislative Envoy	TBD
Membership	Rekha Sampath
Newsletter & Website	Laura Brown-MacKinnon
At-Large	Marlene O'Brien

NOMINATING COMMITTEE:

Odessa Sanchez
TBD

-As proposed by the FY2024 Nominating Committee: Ellen Hallet, Odessa Sanchez, Marguerite Chatelier

Election of FY2025 Board & Nominating Committee

MOTION: To elect the FY25 League of Women Voters of Wellesley Board of Directors and Nominating Committee as recommended by the FY24 Nominating Committee

LWWW ANNUAL REPORTS

Programming 2023-2024

We had another full year of activities for both our members and the wider community.

Opening Meeting: *Who Is Protecting Your Right To Read*

Our Fall Opening Meeting took place on Wednesday evening, **September 27th**, in the Wakelin Room of the Wellesley Free Library. Our guest speakers were Mary Ann Cluggish, from the Mass Board of Library Commissioners, Jamie Jurgensen, the Director of the Wellesley Free Library, and Linda Chow, a member of Wellesley's School Committee. Ms. Cluggish explained the current state of book challenges in Massachusetts and across the nation, and shared pending State legislation which attempts to protect access to books at both public and school libraries. The audience then had the opportunity to ask questions of all three guests.

Wellesley Volunteer Fair

On Sunday, **October 1**, and Monday, **October 2**, we co-sponsored the first Wellesley Volunteer Fair with the Wellesley Free Library. This event, which featured many of Wellesley's civic organizations, was held in the Wakelin Room of the Wellesley Free Library. Residents were invited to explore opportunities for volunteering their time to the community. Some of the organizations who participated: Sustainable Wellesley, Building a Better Wellesley, Wellesley Rotary, Wellesley ABC, LWWW, Village Table, COA, Town Government, Wellesley Conservation Land Trust, Wellesley Symphony Orchestra, and the Town Democratic Committee. We hope this becomes an annual event.

Fall Brown Bag Lunches

On Friday, **October 27th**, we had beautiful weather for an outdoor Brown Bag Lunch at Margie Palladino's home. Ellen Korpi was our guest to discuss ways of strengthening community that the Town was trying to do via different programs offered by the Municipal Light Plant.

On Friday, **November 17th**, we enjoyed a presentation by Greg Reibman, President of the Charles River Regional Chamber of Commerce at a Brown Bag Lunch held in the Warren Recreation Center. He talked about some of the problems business communities experience due to the housing crisis. It can be difficult for a variety of businesses to hire employees from out of the region if they can't find affordable housing. Massachusetts is losing many younger people to states in different areas of the country due to housing cost. This is reflected in declining school enrollment, especially in elementary schools.

Public Forum: MBTA Communities Act Requirements, How Is Wellesley Complying?

On **November 30**, we hosted a public forum with guest speakers Meghan Jop, Executive Director of General Government Services, and Eric Arbeene, Wellesley's Planning Director. The program introduction outlined the reasons the law was enacted, and the benefits compliance could bring to Wellesley. Then, Ms. Jop and Mr. Arbeene shared Wellesley's plan for compliance. This event was co-sponsored by Building a Better Wellesley, Sustainable Wellesley, and The Charles River Regional Chamber. World of Wellesley, The Racial Justice Initiative of Temple Beth Elohim, The Village Church, St. Andrews, UU Wellesley Hills, and the Greater Boston Interfaith Organization.

Programming 2023-2024 -continued

Our **January 27th** program was a Saturday morning meeting, also at the Warren Recreation Center, with two of our High School League members, Anya Khera and Skye Jacobs. They gave us information about the nationwide Vote16 movement which works to enable 16- and 17-year-olds to vote in local elections. While this is a local option in only a few communities in this country, the voting age is 16 or 17 in several countries in Europe. Neither our local nor state LWV has studied this idea but at Wellesley's Annual Meeting on May 15th, we will be voting on whether we want to do a local study on this.

Did you know the LWV was founded over 100 years ago on February 14th? What better way to celebrate with a Valentine's Day Social on Sunday, **February 11th**? Several of our High School members planned out the event, held at Marguerite Chatelier's home, as a treat for all our membership. There was an excellent turnout of members from 15 to 83! We look forward to doing it again next year.

The **Ides of March** had a political theme but no historical drama at our Brown Bag Lunch to discuss some of the Warrant Articles that would be discussed at Town Meeting later in the month. We met informally at Barbara McMahon's home with several members of various Town Boards as well as the Director of the Planning Department to discuss Planning Board articles notably the MBTA Communities article. We also had one of the proponents of a Citizen's Petition to allow for a local option for citizens who are 16 or 17 years old to vote in local elections in Wellesley.

Our last scheduled activity for this League year before Annual Meeting is an **April 25th** book discussion of Just Action by Richard Rothstein and Leah Rothstein. It will be a wine and cheese event taking place in the evening at Marguerite Chatelier's home. As we "go to press", it hasn't occurred, but we hope it will be a lively well attended event.

- Irene Flint & Ann-Mara Lanza, Program Directors

LWV Voter Service 2023-2024

Voter Registration:

To kick off the 2023-24 LWV season, Voter Services organized voter registrations at Wellesley High School on National Voter Registration Day, September 19th, 2023. The National League sent wonderful free signs (in English, Spanish & Mandarin) promoting the events that were put up all along WHS by League Members Ivy Wang & Skye Jacobs. They worked on publicity of the event with Principal Dr Jamie Chisum and his executive assistant John Malone. Ivy & Skye were joined by another student LWV member, Tanvi Venkata, in getting their fellow classmates to register to vote as they managed classes and volunteering. Only one student was heard refusing to register, and he was moving to California for college and said he would register there!

We pre-registered 41 students and at least a half dozen more took forms home as they needed to locate their social security number on "that scrap of paper" (their social security card). It is important to note that all the new registrants were students 16-17, as the 18-year-olds were already registered. The state of Mass allows the pre-registration, so many students were already pre-registered from when they received their driver's license.

LWWV Voter Service 2023-2024 -continued

How to Run for Local Office:

This exciting event was chaired by Lucy Costa and was held December 6th at the Warren Building. Lucy had the great idea to evolve the event from a focus on Moderator Mark Kaplan to highlighting people in town who have successfully run for Local Office. We were so grateful to have Christina Horner from School Committee and a Town Meeting Member (TMM), Jeff Weschler from Board of Public Works and a TMM, and Michael D’Ortenzio, current Natural Resource Commission and TMM as well as former member School Committee.

All three attendees kindly shared their experiences in decision making, campaigning and what they do on their respective boards. It was a fascinating evening that was recorded by Wellesley Media. Unfortunately, attendance was low and mainly LWWV voters, perhaps owing to the December date and most certainly tied to what a time-consuming experience it is to not so much run for office but hold that office. Next year we may move it to early November, which has less holiday conflicts. This would hopefully be a less busy time of year and give people more time to consider running for public office. But like this year, we would push out the recording post event on social media channels, our website, and Swellesley Report.

Meet the Candidates Night:

Our main event of the year was held Thursday, February 15th in the Wakelin Room at the Wellesley Free Library. It was wonderful to be back in person after years on Zoom and we extended the event another half hour due to three contested races in town, including 4 people running for 2 open seats on the Select Board. Diane Hemond was our chair, and she was assisted by Erry Johnson, who from her years of running the event, certainly knows her stuff! We had almost 100% attendance for Meet the Candidates Night, just two non-contested races had one person each who could not attend. Joann Berry from the Acton League was our moderator. Attendance was very high - 100 people at a minimum. Wellesley media recorded this event. It can be found on our website as well as theirs.

Vote411.org Election Guide:

Since LWWV member Ann Mara Lanza was in an election race, our Vote411 guide was spearheaded by members Mary Crown, Ann Swanson and Jenny Zennatos. They were non-stop in their efforts to get everyone running for both town-wide and town meeting to fill out their Vote411 information. The election guide went live the day before Meet the Candidate Night (MTCN). We had hundreds of copies of the one sheet with all town-wide and town meeting races printed so that they could be given out at MTCN. Erry Johnson amazingly wrangled three large donations of \$1,500 from Jarvis Appliance, Wellesley College and Roche Brothers so that the Vote 411 postcard, which also had MTCN details on it, was able to be mailed to every household in Wellesley.

On March 5th, 2024, for the first time in Wellesley in recent history, we had both a town election ballot as well as a presidential primary ballot. When LWWV members (more than a few!) volunteered at both early voting and on election day, the one sheet of those running was on site and utilized by multiple people. It was most helpful at early voting as many people came to early voting stating they weren’t going to vote in the town election, only the presidential primary, as they didn’t know the local candidates. We would then send them home with the one sheet, Vote411.org link as well as directions on how to watch the recorded MTCN on our website or on Wellesley Media.

LWVW Voter Service 2023-2024 -continued

Special Town & Town Meeting Prep:

League member Barbara McMahon once again ran both the Special Town Meeting (STM) prep as well as Town Meeting (TM) prep. This year STM was held at the Tolles Parson Center due to a conflict at the Kingsbury Room in the Wellesley Police Station. While a fee was incurred to rent the room, the League felt it was a nice idea to showcase the relatively new and beautiful TPC. Attendance was strong at STM on Wednesday November 1st, 2023, with 54 town meeting members who came to listen to Moderator Mark Kaplan as well as staff & board chairs who had articles before STM including Executive Director Megan Job, Planning Board Chair Tom Taylor, and Director of Planning Eric Arbeene.

Town Meeting Prep:

Town Meeting prep was held at the Wellesley Police Station in the Kingsbury Room, again hosted, and organized by Barbara McMahon, on Thursday March 21st from 7-9pm. There were approximately 60 people in who attended and listened to staff and board chairs including Madison Riley, Advisory Chair. MBTA Communities and Vote 16, to name two articles, engendered a lot of conversation. The service that the LWVW does to the town with these sessions is invaluable.

Candidate Handbook:

Led by Erry Johnson, this guide is published while papers are available for those wanting to run for office in Wellesley. Erry and her teamwork with Town Clerk KC Kato, as well as the town's Board Chairs to gather this information that includes:

- Candidate Checklist
- Election Calendar
- Open Seats for 2024
- Candidate Tips

Town Government Handbook:

Every year, the LWVW prepares and distributes an updated Town Government Handbook after the Annual Town Election to the new crop of Town Meeting Members. It really is the nuts and bolts of how Wellesley works. The amazing editors this year were Gig Babson, Marjorie Freiman and Erry Johnson. Shout out to Gig who was an original author/editor in 1976.

Town Meeting Attendance & Voting Record

A very important piece of information that is provided to the LWVW from Town Clerk KC Kato is the attendance record and how each TMM voted on all articles for the previous year's STM & ATM. This info is on our website and pushed out in social media and emails and is extremely valuable for the town to learn how their Town Meeting representative both attended and voted.

- Jenn Fallon, Vice-President for Voter Services

Treasurer's Report FY2024

This year we developed a new format for the League's budget to make the budget easier to understand and to simplify the inputting of expenses into correct categories. Due to these changes, some of the budget items have changed, and a few new line-items have been added to the budget.

The National League has proposed and will adopt a new dues structure and process, in which dues will be paid directly to the LWVUS, and they will distribute money to the state and local leagues. This is due to begin in January of 2025, so our League will already have collected dues for the 2024-2025 fiscal year, making budgeting for this coming year a bit easier. More information about this will be available in the future.

Account balances as of April 4th, 2024:

Current assets

Needham Bank:

Checking account:	\$ 1,981.93
Savings account:	\$ 9,490.79
6 month CD (matures 7-30-24):	\$ 9,669.63
3 month CD (matures 4-23-24):	\$ 5,716.53
Secure CD (maintained to secure our credit card, matures 5-8-24):	\$ 2,041.43

Mutual One Bank:

7 month CD (matures 6-9-24):	\$ 5,131.71
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Total Checking/savings/CD's: \$ 34,032.02

As of April 4th, 2024, the League's income year-to-date was \$ 12,023.69 and expenses totaled \$ 10,477.39.

Income Notes

Dues decreased from last year by \$180.

Grants - we did not apply for any grants this year.

Member donations - decreased from last year by \$1100.

Phonathon - funds are collected in the spring and represent a percentage of funds raised during the state league's fundraising appeal.

Corporate donations were received from Jarvis Appliance, Babson College, and Roche Bros., which helped to defray the costs of the town-wide postcard sent to advertise Vote 411, Meet the Candidates Night, and the spring town election.

Expense Notes

Operating costs

-Room rental - no charge from the town to use the Warren building for board meetings this year

-Publicity/outreach - Zoom (board expense), constant contact, domain name, website expenses

-PMP state and national - amount paid to the state and US Leagues each year - 4th quarter payments will be paid in the spring

-Membership- dues notices will be mailed in the fall - expenses to come include the Membership Guide and Directory printing and mailing

Treasurer's Report FY2024-continued

Conventions

Funds are available for this year's National Convention this coming June.

Program

This includes expenses for Opening Meeting in the fall, annual meeting in the spring, and other events such as the Valentine's Day party and the Vote 16 event held this year.

Voter Service

- Events including *Meet the Candidates Night*, *How to Run For Office*, and Town Meeting Prep sessions were held this year with no rental cost for the rooms
- Election Guide - a handout available to voters at the polls
- Vote 411 software - purchased from the US League to provide information to voters
- Election resources - includes I Voted stickers (purchased for the town of Wellesley), vote signs and voter registration expenses (none this year)
- WHS book award - awarded to students at the Wellesley High School in the spring
- Postcard - see description above under corporate donations - as this includes the postage for the mailing, it is expected that the cost will continue to increase each year
- Special civic projects - in the past this was for the Postcard, which now has its own line item. It is to be used now for unforeseen needs the League would like to address in the future.

- Debra Codispoti, Treasurer

Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, Belonging & Justice 2023-2024

In Spring 2023, the League of Women Voters embarked on a journey of gaining understanding and implementing Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, Belonging and Justice (DEI) practices within our organization. Our approach has been systematic, starting with defining each term through dedicated sessions that allowed for introspection into both our professional and personal experiences.

To spearhead these efforts, we appointed a dedicated DEI Director to the board, tasked with guiding our organization-wide initiatives. While there is a national impetus for integrating DEI into local League infrastructures, we acknowledge the disparity in DEI expertise on the local level. Consequently, our approach emphasizes continuous learning and capacity-building to ensure effective and meaningful integration of DEI principles at every level of our organization.

Diversity, Equity, Inclusion...2023-2024 -continued

One initial and pivotal aspect of our exploration has been the differentiation between internal and external racial self-identity, elucidating how our comprehension, or lack thereof, influences our work within the League. By delving into these interactive exercises, we have gained a deeper appreciation for the intricacies of DEI and its relevance to our organizational ethos. Central to our discussions has been the distinction between equity and equality, recognizing that while equality ensures everyone receives the same resources. Equity acknowledges that not all people are guaranteed access. This realization has prompted us to critically examine the presence or absence of these concepts within our League practices.

In our most recent workshop, held during the April board meeting, we undertook a comprehensive survey involving board members and select League members. This survey served as a self-assessment tool, evaluating our alignment with core values and our dedication to the League's mission statement. Furthermore, it gauged our commitments towards allocating time and resources to integrate and embody DEI principles in our operations. We are also proud of suggestions made to the Questions Committee regarding the addition of DEI perspectives for Meet the Candidates Night.

As we reflect on the progress made thus far, we recognize that our journey towards fostering a culture of DEI (including belonging, and justice), is ongoing. However, with unwavering commitment and collective effort, we are poised to cultivate an inclusive environment where all voices are valued, and every member feels a sense of belonging and empowerment within the League of Women Voters Wellesley.

-Rama K. Ramaswamy, Director DEI

LEGISLATIVE ENVOY - LWVMA 2023-2024 updates

For the legislative session ending July 31, 2024, your LWVMA Legislative Action Committee has been dedicated to advancing the League's priority bills. The LWVMA has been supporting conference committees for wage equity, firearms, and preventing abuse and exploitation, including coercive control; if each chamber votes favorably on the final bills, they will reach Governor Healey's desk.

The LWVMA has supported and applauded Senate passage of bills relating to the Healthy Youth Act (HYA), Common Start, and increased access to menstrual products, and is urging the House to take quick action on these bills. (With respect to HYA, there's still time for you to urge your representative to call for a floor vote to ensure students receive medically accurate sex ed.) The LWVMA has urged the conference committee on the bill concerning the banning of firearms from polling stations and asks you to contact your legislators on this matter as well.

LEGISLATIVE ENVOY - LWVMA 2023-2024 -continued

Additionally, the LWVMA has asked lawmakers to reject Governor Healey's request concerning public meetings in the municipal bond bill so that public meetings remain public virtually or hybrid. The LWVMA has requested that the Affordable Homes Act and the FY 2025 budgets include money for a statewide access-to-counsel program. In coalition with others, the LWVMA has also worked on supporting electrification of public transportation and removal of subsidies for woody biomass energy.

Finally, in April 2023 Margie Palladino and the LWV of Wellesley jumpstarted bills on coercive control and abusive litigation. Since then, the Senate and House have passed bills regarding nonconsensual distribution of explicit images and coercive control. (Examples of coercive control include threatening to share explicit images, regulating or monitoring a family or household member's communications and access to services, and isolating a family or household member from friends or relatives.) Marge was at the forefront of raising awareness of these bills in their early stages, and the LWVMA is continuing to push for passage.

Thank you to Margie, Jen Muroff and all in the LWVMA, and the League's coalition partners, including, among others, the Election Modernization Coalition, Jane Doe Inc., the Massachusetts Coalition for the Homeless, MA Public Health Association, and the Together Rising Above Coercion Coalition (TRAC). These individuals and organizations have made significant contributions to legislative action on League priorities over this past year.

~ Marlene O'Brien, FNB, LWVW At Large

LEGISLATIVE ENVOY - LWVUS 2023-2024 updates

For the LWVUS, this past year's challenges have included monitoring and addressing disinformation, voter suppression and attacks on voter assistance. Through the Democracy Truth Project in particular, the League began leveraging its expertise to (i) provide new tools for participating in our democracy, especially those who are new voters or whom campaigns traditionally ignore or forget; (ii) empower voters with reliable nonpartisan information via Vote 411 and beyond; and (iii) litigate in federal and state courts and lobby in Congress and state legislatures in accordance with the LWVUS' top priorities.

Current LWVUS priorities include voting rights (for example, expanding voter access, redistricting, money in politics, and fighting voter suppression), elections (for example, educating voters, increasing voter registration, and supporting Vote411), and health care, the environment, immigration, and the census.

LEGISLATIVE ENVOY - LWVUS 2023-2024 -continued

As always, the LWVUS document “Impact on Issues”, available online and in print, provides a comprehensive list of League positions on which LWVUS actions have been taken. In 2023 and 2024, LWVUS used some of these carefully developed positions to engage, for example, in actions opposing attempts to purge voter rolls in Michigan, opposing robocalling in New Hampshire, and supporting the civil rights of the unhoused in California.

The recently deceased 20th president of LWVUS, Deborah Turner, MD, JD, had designated 2024 “The Year of the First-Time Voter”. In carrying out the intent of this brilliant leader, the League has begun doubling down on its efforts to help students, newly naturalized citizens, and others register and educate themselves to vote and make their voices heard.

Towards this end, the LWVUS “Transformation Journey” project has launched, with the aim of making the League more impactful, equitable, and people powered. Increasing number and diversity of members, which is also among the goals of local and state Leagues across the country, will strengthen the League’s grassroots power. The first phase of the project created, after much careful study, a new business model that aims, among other things, to address data needs, build state League capacity, and ease the process of joining, renewing and managing membership in the League. As you may recall, Dr. Turner in her presidency emphasized intergenerational collaboration. She understood that by leveraging experience and introducing new innovative ideas, the League would become more vibrant, diverse and resilient. Embarking on the Transformation Journey, she said, “will take dedication, adaptability, and strength of spirit” as well as “friendship, gratitude, and rest.” The LWVUS is determined to carry on with this journey.

Finally, this year’s biannual LWVUS Convention will be June 27 to June 30 in Washington, D.C. Every League member is welcome to attend. We hope you will join fellow LWV of Wellesley members in coming to this extraordinary gathering of devoted League members.

- Marlene O’Brien, FNB, LWW At Large

MEMBERSHIP 2023-2024

As of March 31, 2024, our total membership was 139: 100 Primary Members, 12 Additional Members (households with a second member), 8 Lifetime Members (LWV members for 50 years or more), and 19 Student Members. The LWV of Wellesley welcomed 24 new members, including 13 new student members, between April 1, 2023, and March 31, 2024.

We are delighted to welcome these new members (* denotes student member):

Tanvi Venkata*	Owen Shorris*
Laura Cavanaugh	Baya Wozny*
Miyabi Kadowaki*	Jacqui Van Looy
Janaki Kapadia*	Riley Alessi*
Michelle Chalmers	Serena Sheen*
Marie Kemmler	Maureen Febiger
Natalie Kiss*	Ashley Song*
Mary Prosnitz	Sofia Dobado*
Jay Prosnitz	Julia Cao*
Deirdre Donovan	Rekha Sampath
Ann Sattler	Caroline Jaffe*
Anya Khera*	Christen Deveney

In Memoriam:

Dona Kemp
Mary Sullivan
Richard Watts

- Niki Brinkman-Ofenloch, Membership


Newsletter and Website 2023-2024

LWW Newsletter: We switched our platform to Constant Contact in September. This had made a huge difference in ease and format. Our newsletter is emailed once per month, usually in the week following a board meeting. Currently, 207 contacts consisting of 138 Wellesley League members/students, 69 League Friends and 7 media and/or town organizations (e.g., Swellesley Report, Wellesley Media, Executive Director’s Office) are receiving the newsletter. About 68% of the newsletter recipients open it each month. This is more than double the industry average for email newsletters. We also use Constant Contact to publicize specific Wellesley League events, such as Opening Meeting, “Meet the Candidates Night” and our Brown-Bag Lunches and Book Club.

LWW website: The Wellesley League uses the California-based MyLO platform. Any member who chooses can access the “Members Only” page, which contains private materials including member contact information and Board meeting minutes. Please contact us if you’d like to have access. Our most popular pages since this past September are (in order of popularity): Home page, “Meet the Candidates Night” event/video, Elections, and Road Map to Running for Office.

-Laura Brown-MacKinnon, Newsletter & Website

Social Media 2023-2024



@LWWV_EVENTS


Reach

Last 90 Days ▾ Dec 22 - Mar 20

127
Accounts reached +

+23.5%

82
Followers



+36.3%

45
Non-followers

Impressions 591

+75.3%

- Our Instagram is updated with Facebook once every few weeks, usually for our League or League-sponsored events.
- Instagram stories (temporary 24-hour posts) are a great tool for reminders and provide convenient access to links for sign-ups or websites.
- Two “highlights” for important Links and past Events have been added. This makes past Instagram stories permanently available on our profile.
- Followers increased from 120 to 177 in the past year. Several of them are Wellesley High School students or faculty.
- The Instagram account has gained traction among the Wellesley High School community. High school teachers and students repost our graphics, especially ones about the Town Election and Meet the Candidates Night.
- Steady monthly increase of accounts reached (people who see the posts) and accounts engaged (people who react to the posts such as liking, commenting, or sharing).
- Post engaged 82 followers and 45 non-followers over 90 days.

- Ivy Wang, Social Media Director

Directions to the Board

Closing Remarks
Bonny Nothern, President LWWW

Adjourn!

League of Women Voters of Wellesley

Previous Annual Meeting Minutes

May 17, 2023 / 7:15 p.m. - 9 p.m.

Home of Marlene O'Brien, 158 Glen Road, Wellesley

Members present: Wendy Harris Garber, President; Beatrice Bezmalinovic, Phillipa Biggers, Niki Brinkman-Ofenloch, Laura Cavanaugh, Mary Ann Cluggish, Deb Codispoti, Laura Brown-MacKinnon, Marguerite Chatelier, Jenn Fallon, Irene Flint, Tim Flint, Ellen Hallett, Diane Hemond, Christina Horner, Susan Hurwitz, Erry Johnson, Lori Johnson, Hugh Jonhston, Ellen Korpi, Ann-Mara Lanza, Raina McManus, Susan Mangiacotti, Catherine Mirick, Bonny Nothern, Marlene O'Brien, Margie Palladino, Ellie Perkins, Rama Ramaswamy, Susan Ryan, Odessa Sanchez, Ann Swanson, Anne Turtle, Ivy Wang, Kathleen Woodward, Jenny Zannetos

The meeting was called to order by President Wendy Garber at 7:40 p.m. A quorum was present.

1. Welcome and Meeting Overview

- a. President Wendy Garber welcomed members to the 2023 Annual Meeting, our first time in-person for several years, due to COVID restrictions. She reminded us that the Massachusetts League of Women Voters (LWVM) has been challenging local leagues to explore the LWVM programming priorities: to empower voters and foster civic engagement, to improve our elections, to advocate for justice and equality, to address the climate emergency, and to advocate for equitable access to basic human services. We have been and will continue to focus on these priorities.

- b. Wendy read a Land Acknowledgement to begin the meeting:

We acknowledge that Wellesley is part of the ancestral and traditional land of the Massachusett people.

We commit to strengthen our understanding of the history and contemporary lives of Indigenous peoples and to steward this land.

- Adapted from Wellesley College Land Acknowledgement, approved by the Wellesley College Board of Trustees in October 2021, [https://www.wellesley.edu/about/campus/land acknowledgment](https://www.wellesley.edu/about/campus/land%20acknowledgment).

- c. Wendy indicated that we will be following Robert's Rules of Order, and that Ellen Hallett has agreed to be our parliamentarian for the evening. She drew attention to the Annual Meeting agenda in our workbook. Wendy explained that we will take three action item votes this evening: to elect a new Board and Nominating Committee, to adopt the Fiscal Year 2024 Budget, and to adopt the Local Program.

2. Appointment of Committee of Three

A Committee of Three must be formed to assist the secretary in ensuring that the minutes appropriately capture the sense of our meeting. Irene Flint suggested Niki Brinkman-Ofenloch, Jenn Fallon and Susan Ryan and they agreed to help. The meeting was recorded to facilitate accuracy of the minutes, as was announced to those attending.

3. Election of FY24 Officers, Directors, and Nominating Committee Members
 Nominating Committee member Susan Ryan read through the nomination slate.

Executive Board		Elected Directors	
President	Bonny Nothern	Program	Irene Flint
Vice-President, Program	Marguerite Chatelier	Program	Ann-Mara Lanza
Vice-President, Voter Service	Jenn Fallon	Membership	Niki Brinkman-Ofenloch
Treasurer	Debra Codispoti	Newsletter/Website	Laura Brown-MacKinnon
Secretary	Ellie Perkins	Legislative Envoy	Margie Palladino
		DEI	Rama K. Ramaswamy
		Publicity/Marketing	Tanvi Venkata
		Social Media	Ivy Wang
		At Large	Marlene O'Brien
Nominating Committee Ellen Hallett Odessa Sanchez TBD (Board member)			

- a. Wendy asked if there were any nominations from the floor, especially for the Nominating Committee. Odessa Sanchez generously volunteered, and her name was placed into nomination. The member of the Nominating Committee who is a Board member will be determined at the June League of Women Voters of Wellesley (LWWV) Board meeting.
- b. Wendy moved to elect the FY2024 LWWV Board of Directors and Nominating Committee as amended. Laura Brown-MacKinnon seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

VOTED: To elect the FY24 Board of Directors and Nominating Committee, as amended, and as recommended by the FY23 Nominating Committee.

- c. Wendy thanked the 2023 Nominating Committee for the terrific job they did this year. She also thanked the new Board members and the returning Board members, as well as the retiring Board members.
- d. Newly elected Board members Bonny Nothern, Jenn Fallon, Deb Codispoti and Marlene O'Brien introduced themselves. Bonny introduced Tanvi Venkata in her absence.

4. Adoption of FY24 Budget

- a. Irene Flint reviewed the Budget and indicated that we expect to raise \$16502.75 in income, mainly from dues, but also from grants from State League, member and non-member donations, the State Phonathon, our invested CDs, reserves appropriation and several community sponsorships to fund our pre-election postcard mailing.
- b. Our expenses reflect programming, operating expenses, funding sent to National and State Leagues, room rentals, Voter Service, the web site, and naturalization ceremonies which might in the future be held again.

- c. The motion was moved and seconded to approve the budget and the motion passed unanimously.

VOTED: To approve the FY24 LWVW Budget as recommended by the Budget Committee and approved by the Board.

5. Adoption of Local Program

- a. Ann-Mara Lanza pointed out that in the back of our directory we list our Local Program. This is a list of all the positions we have developed and voted on over the years, based on our studies. We use the positions when we decide whether or not to advocate for an issue. Most recently we took a position on the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Resolution, Article 17, at Town Meeting, based on a National League position. Anyone in the League can suggest a topic for us to study for a year, vote on and possibly adopt as one of our positions. Every year we need to re-adopt our positions.
- b. Ann-Mara read the list of positions that have already been established. In 2017 we reviewed all the positions to see if they were all currently actionable. Every position that is bolded in the directory is a position that we believed we still could take action on. The positions in italics appeared to require further study and would need to be updated in order to make them actionable. Ann-Mara encouraged members to bring to the Board any ideas for study or positions to be updated.
- c. Ann-Mara moved that we re-adopt our Local Program and her motion was seconded by Irene Flint.

- Kathleen Woodward, not in her capacity as a Planning Board member, asked about the MBTA Communities Law which will be coming up before the Town and would be a potential zoning change intended to promote more diverse housing. She asked if our League would ever support such a proposal? Ann-Mara explained that our position on housing included sustainability, diversity, and affordability, so our position might allow us to support this initiative. Any League or even non-League member could ask us to consider an issue like this. We might have a coffee, learn more about the issue and then vote on whether we wanted to take a position.

- Odessa Sanchez asked if the League has ever or has recently looked into a study on the untold stories of the women of color among League members and into improving outreach to women of color, both in Wellesley and nationwide. Ann-Mara explained that the history of the League has been spotty and that our board is now addressing this issue with our Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion initiatives (DEI).

- d. A vote was taken, and the motion passed unanimously.

VOTED: To re-adopt the LWVW Local Program on pages 25-35 in the Membership Guide and Directory June 2022.

6. Highlights from Annual Reports

- a. Bonny began by thanking Laura Brown-MacKinnon and Ann Rappaport for the impressive Workbook.
- b. In 2017 the League of Women Voters of the United States (LWVUS) made DEI a major part of their initiatives and highly recommended that all Leagues prioritize DEI issues. This year we created a new position on our Board and welcomed Rama Ramaswamy as our first Director of DEI. Rama is an author, a journalist, and a scientist. She explained that in June of 2018 LWVUS updated their policies, fully committing to DEI.

They intend equity to mean equal opportunity and access. This year LWVW launched a series of conversations on DEI at each Board meeting to support better understanding and better practice of DEI. Wendy pointed out that all our meetings are open, and everyone is welcome to attend. She noted that our meetings are now held in the Warren Building because of our commitment to inclusion, acknowledging that it might be uncomfortable for some to attend meetings not held in a public place.

- c. Our retiring Vice President for Voter Service, Erry Johnson reminded us that the mission of the League is advocacy and to encourage active participation in government at all levels. With many volunteers, we do voter registration, and we go to various sites in Wellesley to encourage people to become engaged in voting. Our two big events are Meet the Candidates Night and that is accomplished by over 25 volunteers; and the Vote411.org Election Guide, a complete list of candidates including their statements that is publicized widely in town. We also publish a Candidate Handbook that lists detailed descriptions of each elected town-wide office and the responsibilities of each, as well as the Town Government Handbook which is sent as a PDF to all elected officials. Every Voter Service activity is always a significant team effort. Erry thanked everyone for the support she has felt throughout her tenure.
- d. Ivy Wang pulled together a fabulous high school registration and has expanded efforts to advertise our events and activities to everyone on social media. She has expanded our presence on social media by tweaking the algorithm and we are having excellent results with steady growth. Ivy is no longer the youngest Town Meeting Member (TMM) as she has recruited a friend who is younger than Ivy. Wendy mentioned that she noticed several high school TMMs who had great questions and were very involved and committed to a variety of issues.

7. Directions to the Board from Members

The meeting was opened to suggestions and other highlights.

- a. Odessa mentioned that we have so much to offer the young people in town when we engage with them. After contact with the League several have joined the League and/or run for public office.
- b. Odessa cited a book that we could use to study the history of the League and its inclusion of women of color: The Untold Story of Women of Color in the League of Women Voters by Carolyn Jefferson-Jenkins. In the past, women of color were told to start their own league for “their kind” and, although dues-paying members of the League, they were not allowed to speak. We decided that this would be an excellent Book Read for us. Marlene cautioned us to make sure we are not just checking off boxes. We need to go beyond a book discussion to examine what is being done at the State and National Leagues. To acknowledge the situation and be accountable would raise participation by counteracting the impression, which is correct according to history, that this is a White women’s organization. Margie recommended that we make a concerted effort to reach out and encourage women of color to join our League, knowing that it is daunting to come into a room filled with mainly White women. We are losing out if we don’t become more diverse.

8. Closing Remarks by New President

Bonny gratefully recognized the contributions of the Board members who are leaving the Board this spring. She acknowledged departing Board members listed below and opened the floor for comments:

- a. Erry Johnson - Ellen Hallet reminded us that Erry took over a program that was good, but she expanded it immensely over her eight years of service, leaving a multifaceted, smoothly working program.
- b. Jenny Zannetos - Wendy mentioned that although Jenny is deceptively quiet and steady, she has been constantly alert to our best interests and deeply concerned that we maintain excellent standards.
- c. Wendy - Ann-Mara emphasized how grateful we are that Wendy took on the presidency even as a new League member and was amazing in her willingness to dive in and take the helm.

Bonny asked if there were any other questions and Phillipa Biggers asked if women's rights being under siege has been an issue. Our Legislative Envoys (Margie Palladino and Bonny Nothern) have been in communication with State and National Leagues and also have closely followed the activities of our representatives throughout the year, following this issue as well as others. Bonny Nothern did ask Jake Auchincloss about the likelihood of the ERA being passed but, unfortunately, he wasn't hopeful about it passing in this Congress. Mary Ann Cluggish, Marlene O'Brien, and Ann Rippy Turtle were at the national convention in 1974 when the ERA was being supported. And here we are, still.

We thanked Marlene for hosting this meeting at her home. There was a motion to adjourn, and it was seconded and approved. The meeting was adjourned at 9:02 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Ellie Perkins,
Secretary