

League of Women Voters of Wellesley
Board Meeting Minutes
December 13, 2022 / 12:30 p.m. - 2:30 p.m.
At the home of Niki Brinkman-Ofenloch, 24 Sabrina Road, Wellesley

Attending: Niki Brinkman-Ofenloch, Laura Brown-MacKinnon, Marguerite Chatelier, Irene Flint, Wendy Harris Garber, Erry Johnson, Bonny Nothern, Margie Palladino, Ellie Perkins, Jenny Zannetos

Absent: Ann-Mara Lanza, Ivy Wang

Guest: Susan Ryan joined briefly to discuss nominations.

The meeting was called to order at approximately 12:33 p.m. by President Wendy Garber and a quorum was present. The meeting was recorded.

1. Welcome - Wendy

Irene read a Land Acknowledgement written by the Unitarian Universalist Society of Wellesley Hills.

2. Discussion of Minutes - Ellie

A motion was made and seconded with one abstention to approve the November 15, 2022, board meeting minutes.

VOTED: To approve November 15, 2022 minutes

3. Treasurer's Report - Jenny

- a. Our assets total \$35,044.42. Dues and donations continue to come in with donations still lower than expected. Expenses included paying second quarter Per Member Payment to the State, paying for our two domain names (.org and .com), and for the \$100 honorarium in honor of our Opening Meeting speaker Wendy Parmet.
- b. Jenny reported that the Dover Town Hall has a banner saying "State Election: Vote Early Here at Town Hall". She wondered whether such a sign would be welcome and useful in Wellesley and if our league would be interested in sponsoring one. Jenny has asked KC Kato, but hasn't heard back yet. Discussed other options for placement in town like the RDF, although it no longer attracts the whole town, so it might not be a good place. Once we hear from KC, we will need to decide if we want to fund such an expense, given appropriate placement, the type of sign, and aesthetics. Erry reminded us that much of what we do is really for the Town Clerk's office and KC is very appreciative.
- c. We need to arrange a review of our finances and Jenny will look into this.

4. Membership Report - Niki

- a. Our total membership is 153, which includes 18 student members from the high school drive held earlier this fall. 18 members still haven't renewed, although some have been contacted and may renew soon. Erry suggested that in contacting people we mention what we are working on and what events for members are coming up.
- b. Niki said the video Ivy's student group made is excellent. The video was part of the school's weekly Friday video announcements. We will ask for a copy for our website and highlight it in our newsletter.

5. Programming - Irene

- a. Marguerite has arranged the January 20, 2023, coffee with Michael Reidy which will be held from 9:30 to 10:30 a.m. at Susan Clapham's house at 3 Atwood Street. We will need to prepare questions to follow his talk on civic education at the high school. Wendy will prepare an Evite.
- b. The coffee with Barbara McMahon has been switched to February 10, 2023, 10-11 a.m. on Zoom. She will discuss the Community Preservation Committee of which she is chair.
- c. The coffee with Alice Peisch on how a bill becomes a law has been changed from January to Saturday, February 4th at 11 a.m., perhaps at the Library. Margie has asked if the library would be interested in cosponsoring, particularly as we will be advertising to students. Other options: a large home, the High School or Middle School library, or Tolles Parsons. If we open up to the general public, we will need to get a sense of how many and who might be coming. We will need an Evite for members and maybe a link in an email to our website for outsiders.
- d. Wendy asked for thoughts on how we could increase attendance at events, because, although a number of people sign up, they often don't show up. Our program is not sophisticated enough to show helpful data on who opens our emails, so Margie has prepared a list of our membership so that we can each commit to inviting several people personally to each event. This might encourage more to show up.
- e. Marguerite participated in a LWVM zoom about attendance of the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) population. The most impressive league reporting was Concord-Carlisle where this is on the agenda for every monthly meeting, asking what have we done, how much money are we putting into this, how much time, who's attending and not attending, what's working and not working. Marguerite says for DEI, the question would be "Is the LWVW representative of Wellesley's community"? The answer is "No". And for DEI it is essential to be invited and made to feel welcome. Marguerite and Bonny offered to take a leadership role in this effort on our board. Membership should feel useful to potential members, a resource filled with opportunities, so that people don't feel targeted by race or ethnicity. However, when people already feel excluded, this may not feel like targeting, it may feel like inclusion. Also, how targeting is received may be generational. Marguerite recommends this be on our agenda monthly, it is about accountability, we need to know we'll be asked about this. We need to arrange a buddy system or something to get people to events. We need to look at what we are doing that month, what is coming up, how we can get these groups involved? Laura suggested that we go back to our registration lists for "How to Run" to reach out and offer the video and also ask how they found the event.
- f. Once again, at the How to Run meeting Wendy had a participant who registered only with initials and when Wendy asked them to fill out a complete form, they didn't respond, although they did attend. There was no problem this time, but it's hard to decide how to handle this without keeping people from feeling unwelcome.

6. Nominating Committee - Susan Ryan, Bonny

- a. Ellen Gibbs is also on this committee, but was unable to attend today. Wendy will also sit on the nominating committee. The committee will need a list of who is on the Board and who is rolling off, so we need to let Susan, Ellen and Bonny know asap if we plan to stay on or not.
- b. Bonny suggested we schedule a brainstorming session on what we look for in a president. Without a current co-president, the model of the past is no longer viable and a new president may need training. Both Wendy and Erry are definitely off the

board as of this May. Erry suggested looking at people rolling off other roles in town. Niki will highlight some people who were almost recruited last year. We will need a slate to be approved by the Board in our March meeting. Erry wondered if we wanted to consider at least one man on Board, because they are about 10% of our membership, although many of those we have are secondary members. We should also look at our league members who are active in World of Wellesley. We need to keep in mind the non-partisan aspect of these positions.

7. Voter Services - Erry

- a. Erry characterized this year's How to Run for Public Office event as the most successful in five years. The speakers were concise and to the point and Ivy Wang spoke beautifully about what inspired her to run for Town Meeting Member. In the past, if you took away all our league members, we might have had eight people who came because they were interested in running. This year 26 people signed up and 21 attended. One of the participants, Jayden Crawford, gave a welcome shout-out in the chat about how great our LWVW web site is. Following the event, Erry does post-event publicity: the event was recorded, Laura has tweaked the recording and the link is now ready to send out to people at the high school, WOW, and Swellesley Report, (she's thinking of not dealing with the Townsman in the future because they did nothing with our pre-publicity.)
- b. KC and Wendy both got questions from David Art, the Subscription Services Manager of the State House News Service who is interested in getting access to our resources on running for office in order to develop a civics guide for Massachusetts high school students. Erry has sent him the link to our website, Ivy's segment of the "How to Run" video, the roadmap, the one page resource list, the Town Government Handbook and the Candidate Handbook. He was very grateful and hopes this "will embolden some teens to think in terms of local involvement".
- c. Erry will be away in January and February and we will all need to pitch in. Wendy has letters ready to go out to candidates as soon as they make themselves known. An email has already gone out to the question committee. Although we invite questions from attendees and the campaigns, it is useful to have a core group of five or six people who develop questions. Laura is looking at this as a possible way to get people who might be interested in the League involved, as a first step. We will invite the public to submit questions in the January newsletter. The Election Guide team will be Marguerite, Mary Crown and Ann Swanson. In the past, Ellen Gibbs has prepared the recognition of retirees, and we hope she will do so again, as the current Townsman is clearly not available for this. Townwide nomination papers are due back on January 17, 2023. Susan Clapham has agreed to prepare the post card again. KC will send the ballots to the printer on February 3rd and they are mailed out early the week of February 13th. According to KC, our postcards should be mailed around February 10th. Meet the Candidates Night is Thursday, February 16th. Happily, Erry is interested in working on some pieces of these tasks in the future.

8. President's Update - Wendy

Tanya Roy has agreed to handle our data collection to be reported to the State League. She is very interested in this effort and believes we will receive valuable information from the data. Erry has already provided her with information on voter service activities. Wendy will go back in our records and give Tanya data from this year's other past programs. The programming team will need to select a person to share information about events in the future. This should cover meetings, coffees, services, publications, DEI efforts, etc. We will distribute the data collection form to the whole team, although it is slated to change.

9. Website/Newsletter - Laura

Wendy would like to publicize our Opening Meeting again now that the recording is available. The information was on Facebook and people were interested in getting the recording. Laura will check in with Ivy to get information on what is happening at the high school and whether she can post Ivy's Morning Meeting video. For now, Laura plans to do a Save The Date notice for the Alice Peisch event as we are not sure of the location. Nominating Committee: we do need a PR person on the Board.

10. Other

- a. We don't really have legislative updates yet, because sessions won't start until January. Margie and Bonny marvel at how difficult it is to enact a law.
- b. They split the representation and Bonny is assigned to Katherine Clark, our new Minority Whip. Bonny will send her a note of congratulations from us and let her know some of our priorities on state and national levels and assure her that we are here for her as a resource.
- c. Everyone please look at Margie's list and find a couple of buddies to invite to some of the different events and coffees. We will make a Google Doc so that we can each select the people we know and take two or three names for each event.
- d. Bonny would like us to develop an elevator pitch, less than 30 seconds, describing the League. If we can let Bonny know our thoughts, she'll pull them together for the next meeting.
- e. Erry drew the attention of our legislative envoys to the human composting opinion piece in the New York Times, a natural, environmental method of burial. There is a bill in our legislature and she would like the League to consider a position on this and offer support to the sponsor.

Reminder: Our next Board meeting will be Tuesday, January 10, 2023, 7-8:30 p.m. on Zoom.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 2:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Ellie Perkins
Secretary