

# League of Women Voters St. Croix Valley

## Minutes of Board Meeting, February 21, 2023

**Board Members Present:** Carolyn Saunders, Beth Wood, Kate Manecke, Pam Girtz, Edna Early, Irene Bugge

**Committee Chairs Present:** Marla Olson, Nanette DelMonaco, Vicki Harmon

**Absent:** Barb Katt, Rita Kearns, Patty Van Nevel

### **Welcome/Call to Order**

Chair Carolyn Saunders welcomed participants and called the meeting to order over zoom at 5:34 pm.

### **Approval of Agenda**

The agenda was approved by consensus.

### **Approval of Minutes**

Beth Wood made a motion to approve the minutes from the January 21, 2023 Board meeting. Kate Manecke seconded. Motion carried. Beth Wood made a motion to approve the February 8, 2023 Addendum to the January 21, 2023 Board Meeting Minutes. Kate Manecke seconded. Motion carried.

### **Financial Report.**

The financial report was tabled until the next meeting.

### **Membership Update**

Current membership is at 68.

### **Membership Renewals**

Carolyn Saunders will write a letter to membership regarding membership renewal due in April with deadline to receive by 12/31/24.

### **Evaluation of 103<sup>rd</sup> LWV Birthday Events**

Positive review of League events held at Northwood Technical College, New Richmond, Chippewa Valley Technical College, and UWRF both in River Falls. Students were given cupcakes, US Constitutions, registration material, LWV material and information on the upcoming spring election. Between the three campuses we talked to roughly 160 students and staff. Well received at the campuses with follow-up with staff planned. Costs to our League, minus \$50.00 stipend from LWVWI was \$239.00. Consensus that this was an excellent ROI. Going forward, leadership will provide more information about evaluation metrics required by LWVWI to volunteers staffing League events.

### **Annual Meeting**

Reviewed information contained in the bylaws about the Annual Meeting to ensure that our meeting fulfills all requirements.

Continued detailing the Annual Meeting:

- ★ Date: Sunday, May 7, 2023
- ★ Time: 2:00 – 4:00 pm.
- ★ Location: Discussed possible locations/venues including Dancing Dragonfly, Dalles House, VFW in SCF; Balsam Lake Lodge in Balsam Lake, Amery Community Center. Vicki Harmon,

Edna Early and Irene Bugge volunteered to research venue cost and availability and bring recommendations back to the Board.

- ★ Program: Janet Ellinger and Panel from PFLAG of River Falls  
Maria Douglas, Senior DEI Specialist
- ★ Refreshments: Small plates menu to include savory and sweet snacks, appetizers and desserts.
- ★ Business: Proposed 2023-24 Budget, Financial Overview, Nominations/Election of Officers, Directors and Presentation of Committee Chairs, Committee Reflections

## **Committee Reports**

### **Diversity, Equity, Inclusion (DEI) – Edna Grotjahn Early**

- Edna Early is a member of the LWVWI Community Alliances Committee. She helped plan and was a present for the CAC program “Pathways to Addressing Incidents of Bias in the League of Women Voters” on February 16.
- She is researching how other League chapters are addressing DEI issues.
- She is also exploring how best to reach out to diverse populations including indigenous populations, Latinx, Hmong, youth.

### **Program Committee – Vicki Harmon**

- Social Events
  - 21 people attended January 21<sup>st</sup> Winter Gathering at Farm Table- Amery WI
  - Summer Picnics are coming up!
- Educational Events
  - Book Study on Politics Industry met twice 1/11/23 & 1/25/23  
12 people participated for the first one and 8 for the second
  - Sara Eskrich from Democracy Found presented to our League on February 8: 23 people attended. A donation was made to Democracy Found in recognition of Eskrich’s presentation.
  - Spring Book Study – dates TBD probably May 3 & May 17: Book under discussion- Beloved Child or Spirit Car- both by Diane Wilson.
- Special Events
  - Program Committee partnered with Voter Services Committee on 103<sup>rd</sup> LWV Birthday Events. See above.

### **Member Services Committee – Marla Olson, Nanette Del Monaco**

Not everything listed is under the purview of the Membership Committee. Many committees work in areas that support our current and potential members. In 2023 the MSC will focus on ways to bring committees together in this support.

We continue to move forward, albeit slowly. As the LWVSCV, **things we’re doing well** (according to the WI League’s focus) are:

- New member packets out
- New member orientations:
  - We have the PowerPoint (but need to be more intentional and consistent in its use)
  - The Friday Coffee groups can be part of this

- President outreach, or another leader, reaching out to new members with a phone call or email. Carolyn has been really good at this.
- Creating small opportunities to become involved. Our PowerPoint has some ideas for quick ways to be involved – calling a representative, etc
- Finding out member interest areas: we do this now by listing the committees on our application forms, but we need to do better with actual surveys. MailChimp will help us with this in the future. (Thank you, Tami!) The book club (Thank you, Vickie!) was great here.
- Keeping the League in front of peoples’ faces throughout the year, not only at election time. We do Farmer’s Markets, parades, etc.

**What we still need to work on:**

- Mentors for new members
- Trainings for all members on how to ask friend, family, acquaintances to join
- Trainings in areas of member interest, such as Braver Angels trainings
- Ways to make members feel special – thank you notes, recognizing long-serving members at the Annual Meeting and other events
- Discussion groups in areas of member interests

A meeting between the MS Chairs and the VS Chairs is being planned for the middle of March to get these committees moving from the same place. Hopefully more committees will be brought on board as the year progresses.

**Communications & Media Committee – Kris Surbaugh**

- We’ve submitted news articles in January highlighting the primary—submitted by voter services and one highlighting our birthday celebrations (thanks Irene).
- Tami updated and filed the membership roster by the January deadline. She has donated many hours working with membership committee and communications committees.
- Mailchimp can accommodate records such as who has filled out the waiver, personalize letters to members, segregate lists for communication, and conduct specialized surveys.
- We are working on encouraging members to ‘share’, forward, and ‘like’ LWV posts to amplify impact.
- The website continues to be updated in ‘real time’ Thanks Evanne! Currently attaching the new members power point for access to members. Always looking to update and keep current on our homepage.
- Online membership goes directly to member services and the payment goes to treasurer
- Kathie has Canva Pro so she has more capabilities to create personalized graphics/ads/posters for distribution.
- Newsletter is coming out twice a month.
- Communications committee is looking for a co-chair.

**Voter Services Committee – Patty Van Nevel and Rita Kearns – Written Report**

**Primary election**

- The primary election is happening at the time of this message. I know we are all excited to hear the results. I am very optimistic about having a great turnout at the polls. Katrina did a wonderful job getting new signs out before the election. Everyone who has a sign is encouraged to store it at their home and keep it for the next election cycle. Pick up the Vote Tuesday signs tomorrow and replace them with Thank an Election Worker.

- VS was honored to be part of the L WVSCV birthday party. Thank you program committee, Vicki, Beth, and Edna for the successful idea and implementation of this fun and exciting event. It was a perfect joint effort in working together to motivate young voters to register to vote.
- Tami Holcomb is such an important addition to our committee. Using Vote 411 will help us all to be informed voters.
- We are still waiting to get volunteers for Northwoods Tech in New Richmond on March 7, from 11 - 1. All supplies and materials will be provided! Deadline to volunteer is March 1. Patty will be there to help out too.
- We are also encouraging anyone and everyone who is even a smidgeon Irish to join us in the St. Patrick's Day parade on March 17. It will be fun! Deadline to sign up is Mar.8

#### Spring election

- Fine tune the process we used for primary
- Get into a few more high schools

Note: VS ordered free supplies from LWVWI in December. We haven't received them yet. Did anyone else get that package? Please let Patty or Rita know.

#### **New Business:**

##### **MLD Award**

Carolyn is working on the MLD Award application due May 10, 2023. She will be including Beth and Irene in the process.

##### **Conversations with Members – Irene Bugge**

The Conversations with Members project grew out of GROWW's Grassroots School that Beth, Kris and Irene attended. Membership Co-Chairs, Marla and Nanette along with Director Barb Katt volunteered to help reach out to membership before the Annual Meeting in May. Volunteers hope that personal calls/conversations with members will increase attendance at the Annual Meeting and that some of the calls may lead to opportunities to meet in person and or help engage/reengage members.

The project is ready to launch as soon as more details about the Annual Meeting have been determined. The membership roster has been divided up amongst the six volunteers and a list of topics to be covered in the calls has been developed.

#### **Other:**

★ **LWVWI DEI Surveys are due March 1**

★ **Voter Services Community Conversations**

March 21, Noon "Nonpartisanship in a Hyper Partisan World"

Link in Feb. 15<sup>th</sup> LWV SCV Newsletter

#### **Events:**

★ **Presentation on Insurance Needs for Local Leagues**

Wednesday, February 22, 4:30pm

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89530204278?pwd=Zzk2cWVzOFdsSHU0R0VbWxc25pUT09>

Meeting ID: 895 3020 4278

Passcode: 258782

★ **LWV SCV Coffee Klatch**

Fridays, 9:00am (scheduled through March 3)

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/81668918418?pwd=Ykh6S0J1OEo2Q0ZwWXN5YS9QeERNdz09>

Meeting ID: 816 6891 8418

Passcode: 209563

★ **St. Patrick's Day Parade**, New Richmond (LWV SCV Walking Sign Rally)  
Friday, March 17, 4:00pm (Line up at 3:00pm at 123 W. 3<sup>rd</sup> St.)

### **Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 7:35 pm.

**Minute Taker:** Irene Bugge. This is a DRAFT.

### **Upcoming LWV SCV Meetings:**

- ★ **Program Committee** ~ Thursday, February 28, 4:30pm
- ★ **Communications & Media Committee** ~ Monday, March 6, 5:00pm
- ★ **Board of Directors** ~ March 21, 2023, 3:30pm

## **ADDENDUM to the Minutes of February 21, 2023**

E-Ballot by Irene Bugge, Vicki Harmon and Edna Early submitted on March 1, 2023

The Amery Community Center checks all of the boxes for us. Central location. Adequate parking. Seating for 100. Two rows of seven banquet tables, ten or more square tables, a podium with mic. A screen with internet capabilities -- could be a hybrid meeting if we choose. A commercial kitchen with a Bunn coffee maker and a ten cup coffee maker. Plates, mugs, glassware, tableware, serving utensils and more. We would have use of the building for the entire day, so plenty of time for set up and tear down. We can bring in food and wine.

**We request that the Board approve using the Amery Community Center for our League's Annual Meeting on Sunday, May 7, 2023, beginning at 2:00pm and authorize payment of \$100.00 for the rental fee.**

**Unanimously Supported** (6 out of 8 voting)

Carolyn Saunders