**League of Women Voters of New Mexico**

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**Board Minutes**

**September 24, 2016, 11:00 am - 2:30 pm**

**HEC, Santa Fe**

Board members present: Dick Mason, Meredith Machen, Gwen Hanson, Carol Tucker Trelease, Wendee Brunish, Diane Goldfarb, Barbara Calef, Akkana Peck, Suzanne Schmidt, Karen Douglas.

President Machen called the meeting to order at 11:04 a.m. The minutes of the July 16 meeting were accepted with one correction. The corrected minutes will be sent out with the November agenda. Akkana Peck began her term as Board Secretary by taking minutes at this meeting.

The Empty Chair policy and the Non-Partisan policy were added to the agenda, which was then approved.

Discussion ensued regarding the cancellation of the Secretary of State forums and the difficulty the local Leagues were having getting Republican candidates to participate in forums. While LWVNM has a policy that both parties must participate in a forum or it will be cancelled, each local League can have its own Empty Chair policy.

Registered lobbyists received a letter from the Secretary of State about the changes in campaign reporting. Meredith clarified that all League lobbyists must file reports electronically whether they lobbied or not. They should report “Statement of No Activity.”

Dick will send out a notice to the Action list explaining what lobbyists need to know. We may not want to register people as lobbyists anymore; people who aren't registered don't need to follow the procedures in the letter. We will seek clarification on who needs to register from the SOS.

**President’s Report** Meredith reported on the great (but cold) LWVSFC celebration of "Wine, Women, and the Vote" the night before the board meeting and our very important Supreme Court victory and how it changed the NM Constitution and set precedent for all future elections. The Supreme Court agreed with the League that elections that expand the franchise only need a simple majority to pass—not a super-majority. We will cover the topic in the next La Palabra and get the word out. She also said that most of the Voter Guides are in final proofing and nearly ready to go.

Suzanne has in writing from the SOS that our Voter Guides are allowed at the polls. In 2014, the former SOS had banned them from polling sites saying they were partisan. Meredith got an informal opinion from the Attorney General at the time and challenged the SOS to show evidence that our Voter Guides were partisan. We had asked Congressional candidates to answer a question similar to this, “What if anything should the federal government do about climate change?” Sen. Rod Adair, who worked in the Elections Bureau, said that climate change was a partisan issue.

Gwen said that in the past the Las Cruces League had trouble with not being allowed to distribute Voter Guides at City Hall because only one party was visible above the fold. Since then they've been very careful to make sure that everything above the fold is non-partisan. Meredith said she'd asked Janet Blair, who was the former Public Information Officer for the courts, to help draft an op ed explaining the Constitutional Amendment and why we support it. Meredith had sent Janet information she'd gotten from Chief Justice Daniels explaining the purpose of bail bond reform. Meredith had prepared the summary and pros and cons of that Constitutional Amendment and also sent them to Janet, who will send us a draft op ed.

**LWVUS Report** We're supposed to encourage people to host debate watches on Monday night. Suzanne is speaking to a group in SF that night. Meredith will be on KSFR to comment on the debate on Tuesday.

**Treasurer's Report**

Wendee has all the bank accounts under control and has changed all the email addresses to go to treasurer@lwvnm.org. Meredith reminded all local leagues to pay their PMP right away -- the national league really needs the money.

We need to do a press release that the Voter Guides are up, and a Constant Contact message, and get Tarin to tweet it.

Tuesday 9/27 is National Voter Registration Day.

**Bylaws** Barbara explained the reason that we need to remove the words "residing within New Mexico" from the bylaws. The Board unanimously approved a motion to amend Article XIV to conform with LWVUS. The new section reads, "If LWVUS changes any of the first three Articles of their Bylaws, the LWVNM Board must change its Bylaws to conform; no vote is required at Convention."

**Charter School Consensus Questions** After going over all of the questions, Dick moved that Meredith, Barbara and Akkana may make any further changes in wording on the edited/amended questions they deem necessary without needing another vote by the board. The Board unanimously voted to approve the questions as amended.

**Action** Dick reported that the Governor is pushing for the death penalty again.

Common Cause is leading a coalition against it; Dick will be getting out information on this. Dick is also keeping on top of dates for the special session on the state funding crisis and will keep us informed. He also represents the League on committees looking at pharmaceutical pricing and cuts in Medicare and Medicaid.

He's talking to Common Cause about working more closely with them on issues where we have common interests (with them taking the lead since they have the staff for it).

Meredith reported that Sen. Ivey-Soto wants the League look at his draft bill on public accountability (ethics legislation), and we need to work on redistricting legislation with Common Cause, too.

The workshop on “Effective Citizen Advocacy at the Legislature” will take place on Saturday, December 10, 10 am -12 pm. Rep. Jimmie Hall and Sen. Peter Wirth are confirmed.

Hall will talk about the capital outlay process. We’ll have a "Save the Date" in La Palabra about this and the next League Day.

The LWVNM Convention will be May 20-21 in Santa Fe. LWVSFC has a committee that will find a location and organize logistics.

**Local League Reports**

Suzanne, SF:

Rollout of new website to rave reviews.

Personal meeting with mayor, who has committed to 4 events over the next year. The first meeting already took place. Candidate forums took place this week, along with a "Wine, Women, and the Vote" fundraiser last night.

Karen, CNM:

Voter Guide will go out soon (30,000 copies).

Program: went out of their way to ensure that no candidates who are running for office speak before the election (everyone agrees that should be a policy).

Identified several new funding sources: Amazon Smile, Wells Fargo (where they do their banking), and having members leave a legacy.

Everyone agreed that legacies are a great idea and all our leagues should discuss that.

Wendee, Los Alamos:

Candidate forums will be Oct 6 and 13.

Voted to adopt an empty chair policy (for future years) modeled on Minnesota; still tweaking the wording (specifically the wording of the announcement about why the candidate isn't there) but will send it out to the other leagues.

Meredith: Santa Fe already has an empty-chair policy.

Suzanne: Santa Fe's empty chair policy was on the front page of the New Mexican.

Wendee represented the league at an anti-voter suppression event by the Anti-Defamation League, attended by many different organizations.

Gwen, GLC:

They've been consumed by election activities this year.

They have committees on affordable housing, education, immigration, youth engagement (a new group). They're also involved with board of elections advisory council. This year, they're going into high schools.

Working with Spanish Cafe, who will do a Spanish translation for the Voter Guide.

This year they are no longer able to use Las Cruces council chambers for forums. Now partnering with KRWG instead, which tapes the meetings then broadcasts them several times. The public can attend, and people can submit questions via the station's website. Forums for county candidates will be at the County commission chambers, a new site they haven't used before. Gwen also passed around copies of a letter they sent to US Attorney Damon Martinez requesting information about their prosecution of cases under Title 8 of the US code, regarding prosecution of aliens. Major immigration forum coming up on September 29.

Meredith mentioned SFC's new idea of a "lightning round" of questions at forums, a series of simple yes-no questions, like Do you support requiring ID for voting? Do you support legalization of marijuana?

Dick suggested that we should have a discussion to share ideas and formats the various local leagues use for forums.

We should use Facebook events etc. to get the word about things like forums. Dick: the national league uses a company called Blue Spire.

Suzanne: our digital person has a degree in Computer-Human Interactions and will be giving a seminar soon on how to use Facebook more effectively.

Some discussion on whether the League has a position on end-of-life issues (no). Dick: maybe we should look at the Oregon League's website and see if we want to adopt by concurrence.

Other important issues where we might want concurrences include mental health and corrections.

Barbara, Natural Resources: nothing to report.

Diane:

Represents NM Coalition for Choice, which has lots of organizations working together for choice. Now they have a project called "Respect New Mexico Women" which all the organizations signed onto (including the League).

Meredith called it a model of how organizations can work together, and asked Diane to send it out.

The group is expecting a $150k grant to undertake a State Policy

Initiative: they want to fund a 5-state strategy, including NM, CO and MI to push agenda regarding reproductive rights, with 3 points:

 - Patient trust act: empower patients at places that would otherwise

 limit abortions, like Catholic hospitals;

 - require insurance carriers to provide 12 months of contraception

 (so patients don't have to keep going back to their doctor every 3 months);

 - require employers to provide for the needs of pregnant workers

They want to build public awareness, and find out how each organization could play a role and whether they need funding for it.

Is there something we could do, and would a grant of a few thousand dollars help?

Dick: maybe we could use money for things like paying expenses for someone who can travel to testify on the issue.

Suzanne: could that money be used for something like advertising in the New Mexican for League Day at the Legislature?

Diane and Dick will confer via email about how to proceed with this.

Suzanne: keynote speaker for Planned Parenthood event on February 7 will be Wendy Davis.

Meredith: Membership and Leadership Development: we need future leaders.

Meredith would like to be replaced at the Convention.

Diane and Dick will serve on the Nominating Committee. Peggy Howell will chair the committee assisted by Becky Shankland.

La Palabra updates needed ASAP: Barbara will have one for natural resources, Dick for healthcare, and the bylaws change will be there.

Estimate from an outside specialist is that 1 in 5 voters use our Voter Guides. We can get Vote411 to link to our state and local voter guides. Local leagues should also fill out the questions Meredith sent about how many voters they've registered.

Non-partisan policy: Karen wants a policy for CNM that's black and white, not open to interpretation, and wondered whether other local leagues had policies that are clear and specific. Suzanne says Santa Fe's policy is very clear, and is on their website; Barbara says the Los Alamos policy is "clear to us." Suzanne says the LWVUS website says if you're involved in any way with a LWV education fund, you shouldn't give any political contribution at all in your own name.

**Announcements, Initiatives, and Other Business**

The next meeting will be in Socorro on November 12.

**The meeting adjourned at 2:30 PM. Submitted by Akkana Peck, Secretary.**

**Revised by Meredith Machen and Edited by Barbara Calef. Board Approved 11/12/16**