**LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF NEW MEXICO**

**BOARD MEETING MINUTES**

**January 16, 2021**

**VIA ZOOM**

**BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT**

Hannah Burling, President

Barbara Calef, Second Vice President and LWVLA Co-President

Dick Mason, Action Chair

Rebecca Chaiken, Secretary

Suzanne Ronneau, Treasurer

Judy Williams, Past President

Chris Furlanetto, Program

Meredith Machen, Education/Immigration/Special Projects

Diane Goldfarb, Voter Services

Akkana Peck, Webmaster

Laura Atkins, Director at Large

Susan Haase, Director at Large

Karen Douglas, LWVCNM Co-President

Karen Wentworth, LWVCNM Co-President

Kathy Brook, LWVSNM Co-President

Eileen VanWie, LWVSNM Co-President

Becky Shankland, LWVLA Co-President

Jody Larson, Archives

Rebecca Álvarez, Temporary JEDI Liaison

**CALL TO ORDER and INTRODUCTIONS**

Hannah called the meeting to order at 9:04 a.m. All members introduced themselves and explained their position with the LWVNM.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA and APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

It was moved that the agenda be approved and this motion was seconded. Several amendments to the agenda were subsequently proposed and the maker of the motion accepted these amendments. All voted in favor.

It was moved that the November 21, 2020, board meeting minutes be approved and this motion was seconded. One amendment was subsequently proposed and the maker of the motion accepted the amendment. All voted in favor.

One amendment to the January 6, 2021, emergency board meeting minutes was proposed. It was moved that these minutes, as amended, be approved and this motion was seconded. All voted in favor.

**RESIGNATION**

Brittany Dutton-Leyda resigned as Director at Large. With regret, it was moved that her resignation be accepted and this motion was seconded. All voted in favor.

**PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

Hannah said she has participated in a number of communications and meetings with LWVUS on the attack on our capitol on January 6, 2021. There was a great deal of discussion on the LWVUS response and many objections to the press release. LWVUS is asking that all messaging use their wording so it is nationally coordinated. Meeting participants were provided with ways to personally stay safe if you are in a state capitol, including making sure your cell phone is charged and being aware of your surroundings. Individual Leagues may condemn their members of Congress who voted to oppose the election, but must stop short of asking for their resignations. It is also not our place to thank corporations that pulled financial support of these members of Congress. There will be many more communications about this and we will maintain our usual calm, non-partisan presence.

During a recent Spent Nuclear Fuel (SNF) informational meeting in Southern New Mexico, there were disruptions from members who challenged the nature of the study and the motivations for conducting it. We need to be prepared for further disruptions in the future and know how we are going to handle them. Hannah is looking to our civil discourse position and she is discussing her concerns with governance at LWVUS. We may need, on occasion, to remove a member. Judy and Eileen each offered suggestions. These included ensuring that only League members are allowed to participate and requiring registration. Rebecca Á. suggested that participants be required to mute themselves and raise their hand in order to speak, which helps address issues when some members feel more privileged to speak than do others.

Following our last meeting, which was quite chaotic, Hannah and Barbara discussed how to maintain an orderly meeting where everyone is heard. In addition to muting participants, Hannah wants to call on people for questions. She asked that we raise our virtual hand to speak and reminded us that comments can also be made by using the chat function. Hannah also mentioned our civil discourse position, which means mutually respectful, courteous, constructive, and orderly communication.

**TREASURER'S REPORT**

Suzanne provided the Treasurer’s Report and Income-Expense spreadsheet electronically. The checking account ending balance as of January 10, 2021, was $32,204.43. She has been unable to open a new Certificate of Deposit because no one has returned her telephone calls or emails. The correct balance of the EdFund is $1,460 since an additional $50 donation has been submitted. The correct Thornburg balance is $30,747.04 after some bills were recently paid.

Suzanne is not concerned with our total income of $6,165.66. All the PMPs from the local Leagues have been paid, which is virtually all our income. Although we planned on more income through an auction and grants for the centennial, our expenses are also lower than originally anticipated due to the pandemic.

**ACTION REPORT**

Dick reported that the Action Committee has recommended three legislative priorities, which need to be approved by the board: Fair Taxation and Revenue for Essential Services; Reproduction Rights; and Redistricting Reform. It was moved that the board accept these as our priorities and this motion was seconded. Hannah said she recognizes the importance of these priorities but, in light of the recent racial justice resolution by LWVUS, asked about including Racial Equity as a top priority. Meredith suggested we eliminate Reproductive Rights in favor of Racial Equity but this was uniformly objected to. Following a question by Rebecca Á., Dick said we limit the number of priorities due to a request from one of the legislators, but a fourth could be added. Several members emphasized that Native American issues are crucial and we should find a way to support Derrick Lente's bills. Based on this discussion, the maker of the motion withdrew the original motion. It was then moved that we accept the three priorities recommended by the Action Committee and add Racial Equity to the list of legislative priorities and this motion was seconded. All voted in favor.

Dick said the Action Committee decided not to support the Black Education Act because it has been our general policy to avoid supporting individual funding bills in lieu of fighting for more revenue in general. It was also too narrow. He noted, however, that because it is a small dollar bill ($200,000) he had no objection to retaining it while acknowledging that the complaints that it is not broad enough are legitimate. Some board members were opposed to this because the bill does not include other minority populations. Dick agreed to add this to the agenda of the next Action Committee meeting for further discussion. He asked that, in the future, members provide input during Action Committee meetings. Barbara added that this is not the time or place to discuss individual bills, most of which have not been read by members, and this should be left to the Action Committee.

The tracking sheet provided by Dick shows the bills that have been filed so far. He expects more bills to be filed once the session starts. League Day will be held virtually on February 18, 2021, from 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Amber Wallin will talk about revenue bills and Justice Edward Chavez will focus on redistricting reform. Dick is still trying to learn how written testimony is to be submitted during the session.

Justice Chavez and Judge Kennedy will be expert witnesses for the Senate bill creating a state redistricting commission. Dick noted that redistricting is a priority of the *Santa Fe New Mexican* and he expects a strong letter of support from the editorial board. Furthermore, he applauded Fair Districts for New Mexico as well as Justice Chavez and Judge Kennedy. The LWVNM website can be used as a resource for members and the public on how to navigate the session.

**VOTER SERVICES**

Hannah expressed regret that Diane will be leaving the board. Everyone concurred and thanked Diane for her extensive work done on Vote411.

Since our last meeting, Diane learned the cost for Vote411 for elections in 2021. There will be no statewide races but local Leagues could use Vote411 for local races. The costs, which total $1,600, will be as follows: Central New Mexico $500; Santa Fe $400; Southern New Mexico $400; and Los Alamos $300. Diane added that we previously discussed covering local races statewide this year, but she hesitates to leave the new chair with such a project. Adding Grant County should cost an additional $300, but if Southern New Mexico wants to include it that can be done for no additional fee. The new chair or designee will need to ensure more coordination such as making certain the local Leagues use consistent terminology. Because Vote411 has been a LWVNM project from the beginning and it is in the best interest of the state, it was moved and seconded that LWVNM pay $1,600 to LWVUS for participation of our local Leagues in Vote411 for 2021. Dick noted that we should have enough left from Thornburg to cover this expense. All voted in favor.

**NOMINATING COMMITTEE**

Meredith reported that three important board positions are open (First Vice President, Program, and Voter Services). She would also like to rename the Reproductive Rights committee "Women's Rights," which is a change supported by Eileen. Nominations can continue through the convention. Meredith hopes that someone from the Central New Mexico League will agree to chair Voter Services since they have most of the candidates in the state. Diane agreed to help identify her replacement. Meredith also asked that officers update their position description. The Constant Contact survey elicited responses but did not request responders to identify themselves. The call for nominations also did not make it into the winter edition of *La Palabra*, so each local League needs to make sure their members know that nominations are open.

**COMMUNICATIONS**

Janet was not present, but she and Hannah will reach out to members with an interest in social media. Akkana had nothing to report on the website or document storage.

**PROGRAM**

Since our last meeting, during which the proposed revisions of the Education Position were discussed extensively, a "clean" update was provided along with the rationale (pros/cons) and a color-coded document that tracked the changes. Meredith noted that the committee reorganized the content from the original position, made some corrections, reworded some language, "amplified" some language, and used League positions from other states as concurrence. The committee tried to focus the JEDI lens throughout the whole position.

A lengthy discussion followed. Several board members expressed their concerns that League process was not uniformly followed in creating the proposed document. While it was agreed that bringing language up to date for current circumstance and concurrence with other Leagues is appropriate, most also agreed that the revisions were extensive and consensus from local Leagues is necessary for League process to be followed.

Judy suggested that the position as written is overly complex and too extensive to absorb. She added that it is not a good idea to put so much detail into a position and something more general would be preferable. She suggested that the details could be put into a background paper and referred to in the position. Dick and Jody agreed, as did Barbara who suggested that we might need a separate position on Early Child Education and Care because the new department covers many areas not covered in a traditional education position. She was not sure if a study would be required or concurrence with another League. Becky, on the other hand, believes that the justifications contained in the new position are important and should be retained. Although she thinks the charter school section is too long, Becky believes the document is ready to go to consensus.

Chris and Judy asked if the proposed revisions would allow us to advocate for legislation that the current position does not address. Eileen responded that learning technologies and the huge digital divide are new issues and Meredith added that the position allows for more effective advocacy.

Akkana noted that it is unclear what in the new document is concurrence and what needs consensus. Meredith and Eileen agreed that consensus meetings with the local League would be needed by the end of February for portions of the position if it is to be adopted at convention.

Meredith moved that we concur with the higher education position from the League of Women Voters of Colorado (section 5.1 through 5.6) and this motion was seconded. Subsequent discussion focused on the terms "post-secondary" and "higher education" and it was agreed that the term post-secondary was more inclusive. With this minor change, all voted in favor. Barbara noted that concurrence does not need to go to the local Leagues unless it is controversial.

Meredith moved to "amplify" the Early Childhood Education section (2.1 through 2.4) and this motion was seconded. All but Jody voted in favor. Jody abstained because she does not know what "amplification" is or how it fits into League process.

Meredith moved that we accept the threading in of our JEDI multicultural language throughout the position and this motion was seconded. Several members expressed concern that we were being asked to vote on issues that still had not followed League process, went beyond what we should be approving today, and some parts of the document included changes not related to JEDI and are completely new. Meredith withdrew this motion.

Chris and Jody noted that if consensus meetings are held, consensus questions would be needed along with pros/cons relating to the questions. Chris and Jody agreed to help with this task. The questions will then be brought back to the board for approval.

The board was also informed of an update to the third paragraph of the position to omit the references to the now defunct State Board of Education and Superintendent of Public Instruction.

**BYLAWS and POLICIES**

Barbara proposed that we change our bylaws (Article V. Section 6. Electronic Board Meetings) to delete the term "telephone" in favor of "video." After a brief discussion, during which it was suggested the term telephone should remain, it was moved that the language change to "telephone and/or video." This motion was seconded and all voted in favor.

Barbara also proposed that we amend the Electronic Board Meeting policy, which was last amended in January 2020. Since that time we have gained experience with video conferencing and she suggested that several paragraphs could be eliminated. Other changes suggested included the requirement that the board packet be made available five days before the meeting and that explanatory material must accompany each agenda item. There were a few objections to these proposed changes. Based on these objections, Barbara proposed that we delay a vote on the issue. She asked that comments and suggestions be sent to her, which she will try to incorporate before the next meeting.

**JEDI**

Rebecca Á. provided the JEDI update. The New Mexico Virtual Women's March announcements have gone out to League members. Speakers and performers have been secured from all part of the state. This event is in lieu of a car parade because public health regulations prohibit car parades of greater than ten vehicles. Deb Haaland will introduce the march. Other committed speakers and performers represent most of New Mexico. JEDI is looking for more participation from the southern region of the state.

JEDI is shifting towards policy/advocacy work. The committee met with Dick on racial and social justice issues and with Chris regarding a LWVNM official study.

JEDI's primary issue for this legislative session is qualified immunity. They received approval from LWVUS through an emergency resolution to allow us to take a position on this issue.

The League does not have an official position on indigenous peoples' sovereignty rights. JEDI is proposing a study on this issue and will need the assistance from the Southern New Mexico and Los Alamos Leagues. Rebecca Á. would like someone who has experience with studies to help. JEDI anticipates submitting a proposal in April. Dick noted that to his knowledge no League has a position on this issue. He will set up a meeting with Arizona, the only League that responded to his query on this issue, after the legislative session.

JEDI will meet with the Southern New Mexico League on February 6. They will tell JEDI about their work in designing their strategic plan, which is rooted in JEDI principles. Liz Bander has provided JEDI some information on DEI implementation efforts at the state and national levels.

**JUDICIAL STUDY**

Suzanne said the committee met yesterday, the first time since November 2019. They previously thought they were "going full speed ahead" but ran into timing issues with the election and holidays. Committee members are very active in their local voter services activities. They are going to proceed but accept the idea that they will have to interview people and do court observations via Zoom in order to move forward. Retired Justice Nakamura will be asked to work with and advise the committee. Dick suggested Justice Chavez might also be a good source.

**FUNDRAISING**

Hannah's major concern has been how to pay for Vote411 and publicity, but she is pleased that we are financially healthy and can handle these expenses at this point.

Dick added that Thornburg is going to connect us with a national conglomerate of funders of good governing for our redistricting efforts.

**SPENT NUCLEAR FUEL COMMITTEE**

Karen D. reported that they already had two consensus meetings this month and others are scheduled with local Leagues later this month. The unfortunate situation during the presentation to the Southern New Mexico League led to improvements in the meeting held in Santa Fe. During the consensus meeting held with the Central New Mexico League, two members dominated the conversation and one member presented some misleading information. Based on these issues, Karen D. does not believe they reached a fully agreed upon consensus. Karen W. concurred that a second meeting may be warranted because of the lack of participation. Only five of 200 members participated and they were poorly informed.

Barbara, who was present at the meeting, agreed that the moderator should have called on other members to speak. She also believes that the pros/cons need to be rewritten because they did not relate to the question at hand. This will be addressed before the next consensus meeting with the Los Alamos League. It was also not made clear to participants that they were not tasked with rewriting questions. Eileen suggested that some of the questions also be revised before more consensus meetings are held.

Chris said she participated in the Santa Fe meeting and thinks that the subject overwhelmed most members and she suggested that the SNF committee reconsider the format. Specifically, the questions did not necessarily track with what the position is about and the pros/cons did not track with the questions. A better introduction at the beginning could also be useful. Although the board approved the questions, they did not really elicit discussion. Chris added that the discussion focused on Holtec when the position should be broader.

Karen D. is not sure if the lack of participation stems from low interest or discomfort discussing such a technical subject. Laura agreed that the topic is difficult to grasp. She suggested that "boiling down" the subject more coherently might reflect at least partial consensus. She would like to figure out a better way of explaining this technical subject to our non-technical members. Judy maintains that the presentations can be helped in simple ways. Explanations provided were often too detailed and extraneous to the topic. Jody suggested that when League positions deal with technical areas, the focus should be on *how* rather than *what*.

**LOCAL LEAGUE REPORTS**

Submitted in writing and will be included in the next edition of *La Palabra*.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS, INITIATIVES, AND OTHER BUSINESS**

Due to time constraints, the discussion of strategic planning was postponed.

Hannah will be calling a meeting of local League co-presidents to discuss what to do if a Zoom meeting gets hijacked by inappropriate language or behavior.

Hannah reminded the group of the virtual parade to be held on January 23. Registration is required.

Eileen asked us to think about whether we should hold a fundraising auction at the convention as we have done in the past.

Regarding election security, Barbara noted that eight states still do not have paper ballots (Texas, Louisiana, Tennessee, Mississippi, Kansas, Indiana, Kentucky, and New Jersey). She asked Hannah to communicate with these states and/or LWVUS and find out what they are doing about introducing paper ballots.

The next meeting is scheduled for March 6, 2021, at 9:00 a.m. via Zoom.

The Annual Convention is scheduled for April 24 and 25, 2021, via Zoom.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:00 p.m.

Written by Rebecca Chaiken (January 22, 2021)

Edited by Barbara Calef (January 22, 2021)