****

Board Minutes

November 16, 2024

11:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Hybrid (in person at Deju House, NM Tech in Socorro and on Zoom)

**BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT**

Hannah Burling, Co-President

Kathy Brook, Co-President

Barbara Calef, Second Vice-President

Judy Williams, Past President and Program Director

Dick Mason, Voting and Elections Director

Akkana Peck, Action Chair and Webmaster

Meredith Machen, Education Chair and Special Projects

Edwina Jaramillo, Voter Services Director

Karen Douglas, Nuclear Issues Director

Janet Blair, Communications Director

Starlyn Brown, LWVCNM President

Felicia Orth, LWVLA President

Jo Galván Nash, LWVSNM President

Debbie Helper, LWVSFC Liaison

Jody Larson, Archivist

Heather Balas, Director at Large

Meredith Machen, Education Chair

Kim Sorenson, Treasurer

Janet Blair, Communications Director

**Guest**

Becky Shankland, Nominating Committee

**CALL TO ORDER AND INTRODUCTIONS**

Hannah called the meeting to order at 11:03 a.m. All members introduced themselves and explained their positions on the LWVNM board. In the absence of a board secretary (since Rebecca Chaiken has resigned), Edwina and Kathy volunteered to assist with the minutes.

**REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

A minor change was made to the agenda (adding a report of the Communications Committee prior to the Education Fund report). Meredith moved to approve the agenda as amended and Barbara seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

September 21, 2024 Board Minutes: Starlyn asked that the Treasurer’s report discussion in the minutes be amended to show that the increase in the office rent expense paid to LWVCNM is $200/year rather than $200/quarter. A motion to approve the minutes as amended was made by Barbara and seconded by Meredith. The motion carried unanimously.

**Co-PRESIDENTS’ REPORTS**

Hannah reported on the State leaders' National Webinar, also attended by the LWVUS Board of and a great many staff members, where several topics were discussed: 1) the many fundraising resources, especially the toolkit for Giving Tuesday, which Hannah will send to all the local Leagues’ fundraising chairs (Jo, Betsy, Felicia, Hannah). She asked the local Leagues to provide her the names of other fundraising chairs. 2) the LWVUS’s efforts in the remaining weeks of Biden's presidency to have him direct the archivist to publish the ERA. 3) the 2025 Council meeting in Leesburg, Virginia to be held June 26 through June 29th. Each State League sends two members to Council. LWVNM pays for registration, but it is otherwise self-funded.

Hannah shared her experience delivering Native American voter guides (NAVGs) across the northern half of the state. She took them to tribal liaisons at county clerk's offices and to tribal government offices – both great opportunities to make allies.

Hannah also reported on the successful lunch for Raúl Burciaga (who has retired from the Legislative Council Service), where we were able to deepen our connections with other advocacy groups. A League member from Wisconsin noted they partner with the American Society of Civil Engineers, and have held webinars about setting priorities for repairing crumbling infrastructure. Hannah thought this was a great idea and hopes someone will speak to a civil engineer.

Hannah also mentioned meeting with the founder of F-minus (formerly an advocate for Common Cause), a group dedicated to getting rid of oil and gas lobbyists.

Finally, a letter drafted by our partners at New Mexico Open Elections was reviewed. The letter to state legislators supports legislation that would enact semi-open primary elections in New Mexico. Under semi-open primaries, decline to state (DTS) and minor party voters would select the ballot of the major party they would prefer.

Kathy submitted a written report; these are the highlights: 1) Making Democracy Work Award and luncheon in honor of Raúl Burciaga - many thanks to Hannah Burling and Dick Mason for their work in organizing the event. She hopes future events of this sort will have a larger share of LWV members among the attendees. 2) MDW Grant 2024-2025: thanks to the local Leagues for providing detailed data for reporting to LWVUS on our Making Democracy Work grant. 3) 2024 Election: Dianna Wynn, LWV President, and Celina Stewart, LWV CEO, informed there was a clear consensus to courageously respond to threats to democracy.

Also, at the LWVUS state leaders’ meeting issues raised included concerns about civic education, including adult civic education; concerns about the immigrant community; how to keep people engaged; and the need for more public forums with conversation. Kathy asked the board whether a meeting for NM Leagues and League members to discuss these issues would be beneficial. Please let her know.

Additionally, Kathy noted that since the Electoral College vote was consistent with the popular vote this time, it seems a very good time to talk to people about the history and undemocratic nature of the Electoral College. One reinforcing factor was the emphasis in the election on swing states to the exclusion of the vast majority (in terms of population and number of states) of the country. It is a good time to talk about “one person, one vote.”

**TREASURER’S REPORT**

Kim reviewed the treasurer’s report detailing LWVNM's income and expenses. She noted that the majority of the revenue came from the Making Democracy Work (MDW) grants, with a significant increase in social media expenses due to a mistake in categorization (should have been under social media rather than website design). Our social media expense this year is much bigger than budgeted. The $613 originally listed as a website expense was for four months of social media posts relating to the legislative session.

The NAVG expenses were also higher than budgeted. The NAVG, which came out of the Making Democracy Work Grant ‘-24-‘25, was $6,434. The printing costs for 15,000 copies was $1665 plus support to local leagues in the amount of $2,000 (i.e., $500 to each local leagues) and a credit card bill of $2,769 for printing guides for 8 of the 12 counties covered, for a total of $6434. We had budgeted $2000 for the NAVGs. Thornburg has agreed we could use $5000 out of that grant for the NAVGs.

We were initially awarded $12,000 from the MDW grant and were promised an additional award of at least $6,000. The amount actually received to date is $16,450. Hannah will confirm. Total income for the year is $19,770 – very close to the budgeted total for the year of $20,125.

The total League fund balance is $19,477 of which $11,015 is unrestricted.

Additionally, $5300 is being held in a fiduciary fund for lobbying for the alcohol tax. Meredith offered to send the draft AHA bill that has already been presented at the last legislative session to board members.

Kim also reported that per-member-payment (PMP) letters were sent to the local Leagues, and required filing of forms to the IRS and the Secretary of State were completed and sent.

Kim also noted that she was resigning from her position as treasurer. Hannah and the board thanked her for her service to the League.

Jo asked for clarification on the amount by which the NAVG was overbudget and the number of copies printed. The budgeted amount was $2,000 and the expenses to date are $6,434; the total number of copies was about 15,000. Hannah noted that the cost of printing was much lower this year than in the recent past.

**RATIFICATION OF LWVNM EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE ACTIONS**

Key Executive Committee actions:

* Posting of Redistricting Survey Results: Hannah sought approval to post the survey results on the LWVNM website. Additionally, filing of the redistricting joint resolution will be delayed until 2027 and we will focus on educational efforts in the meantime, while also exploring legal strategies around gerrymandering with national groups.
* Local League support from MDW Grant (2024-2025): the Executive Committee approved the equal distribution of $2000 (that was previously approved from the 2024-2025 MDW Grant) to local Leagues.
* Legislative Reception Funds: the Executive Committee approved a motion that MDW 2024-2025 funds of up to $3500 will be used to pay for the reception at La Fonda. This amount is in addition to the $1350 allocated for advocacy. Kim, Hannah, and Kathy will plan a Zoom meeting to discuss what is left in the MDW grant that will be used for the reception, advocacy, and reimbursement for NAVGs.
* Purchase Of Certificate of Deposit: the Executive Committee approved a motion to forego the purchase of a CD.

A motion to ratify the actions of the Executive Committee was made by Barbara and seconded by Dick. The motion carried unanimously.

**FUNDING OF NAVG PRINTED BY SFC AND CNM**

Hannah noted our total MDW Grant was $18,250. Kathy and Hannah will speak to LWVUS about the additional $1,800 due to LWVNM. Hannah noted that LWVCNM and LWVSFC will be reimbursed for the over-printing of their voter guides that were provided to the tribes.

A motion was made by Dick to decrease the amount allocated for the legislative reception by $587 and fulfill the commitment to LWVCNM and LWVSFC to pay for their NAVGs expenses; it was seconded by Barbara. The motion carried unanimously.

**ACTION COMMITTEE**

Akkana reported on the proposed Action Committee calendar:

1) a planned Action Committee meeting scheduled for December 6 will have to be rescheduled;

2) the advocacy workshop is scheduled for Saturday, January 4th from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. via Zoom;

3) the Legislative preview will be held on January 16;

4) the Legislative reception will be on February 5th; and,

5) League Day, the next day, February 6th.

Please see the Action Calendar Akkana mailed to the Action Committee.

Dick noted that the Action Committee will need to have their proposed legislative priorities done the first week by January 9th followed by emergency polling of the LWVNM board. The approved priorities will be presented to League members and legislative members who may attend the Legislative preview – which the board agreed to move to January 16, 2025.

Barbara reported that as poll watcher she became concerned when she read a text directing poll workers to ask voters for identification after signing the signature roster. She notified the presiding judge, who directed her to the elections manager whopulled up the statute indicating it went into effect in May, 2021. Barbara spoke to the Speaker of the House and Paula Tackett, the former Director of the Legislative Council Service at the Burciaga reception. They noted the law was wrong and Tackett said she would take it up with the SOS. Barbara plans to follow-up with Tackett for the result of that meeting. Dick asked Barbara to send a summary to him and he will forward it to Lindsey Bachman and Mandy Vigil.

**REDISTRICTING**

Dick reported that as a result of discussion with Senator Natalie Figueroa, the LWVNM no longer plans to file a joint resolution on congressional redistricting this legislative session, but will focus on doing educational events in communities across NM and building support among legislatorsfor the 2025-2026 session instead. Redistricting will be taken up again for the 2027 session with plans to have it on the ballot for the 2028 general election. The joint resolution will require enabling legislation to be passed in the 2029-2030 legislative sessions in time for the next redistricting.

Dick also reported that a couple of national groups are interested in how broadly the

Equal Protection Clause of the NM Constitution is interpreted and how it could be applied to various types of gerrymandering, given that our Supreme Court used it to rule on partisan gerrymandering. We may be pursuing it from a legal standpoint with those national groups.

Heather noted that four different legislators had asked whether we're still running the redistricting bill; she needs to touch base with them again about our messaging plans. Hannah responded that the final decision on messaging will be made by the Fair Districts Coalition and the bill sponsor on Wednesday and this is not for public dissemination until then.

Later in the meeting Heather mentioned that Rep. Cates reached out to her regarding *county*-based redistricting legislation. Heather thought we have an opportunity to discuss with her regarding what we'd like to see for county-based redistricting rather than the state-wide efforts.

**IMMIGRATION**

Meredith reported that the bill, Dignity Not Detention, that we supported last year will be filed again. She noted also a bill that prohibits cooperation with ICE and limits the use of State resources for Federal immigration was filed in the past but has not yet been approved for the next session. The LWVUS Immigration Discussion Group has put together a list of resources via a newsletter that local Leagues can provide to their members to assist immigrants and immigrant groups as they deal with the possibility of mass deportation and possible rescinding of temporary protected status, and the resulting myriad issues. She noted that LWV is recommending that we advocate for fair treatment of immigrants. She noted at this time she does not know of any proposed immigration bill nor sponsor of such bills. Hannah asked Meredith to inform the Action Committee of any such bills, or to inform the co-presidents of possible actions (based on a position) to be taken on an issue separate from the Action Committee.

**PROGRAM**

Judy mentioned a LWVSFC study of community health services in the county - how the services relate to social determinants of health, how that helps the county set their priorities, and what is needed in the community. The study will help LWVSFC update their indigent care position, which is no longer in relevant because hospitals aren’t funded at the county level anymore.She asked whether other local Leagues are doing such a study. She notes it would be

interesting and useful for the State League to know this information. Dick noted that Hannah has put out an inquiry to other state Leagues asking if they have a position on health care workforce that we could look at and consider concurrence. Only Connecticut has responded, but they have no position on the issue.

**COMMUNICATION**

Janet reported that $7,000 was paid to Elliott Marketing for social media advertising and outreach. She shared the analytics she has received so far, which showed 285,463 Facebook impressions and 2,700 clicks with efforts focused on the under and over 40-year age groups. She also discussed the need to reestablish LWV’s position as *the* nonpartisan voter guide provider amidst the rise of other online guides.

Heather noted that the Election Reformers Network (ERN) did national press briefings where VOTE411 was pitched as a tool. She also shared that the National League had signed on to one of two letters drafted by (ERN) that promoted responsible election night projections.

**LWVNM EDUCATION FUND**

Hannah reported the Ed Fund met in August and October and is meeting again every two months. The major focus is developing a budget which can be approved by the board, since it is needed to get funding from foundations. And, the Ed Fund is planning a fundraiser for Giving Tuesday. She also reported that two board members have resigned, Rebecca Chaiken and Kim Sorensen, so, they will be looking for a director-at-large and a treasurer.

Hannah also noted the LWVNM Ed Fund bylaws say that they must submit a slate to the State Board of the LWVNM for election at the first meeting following convention, and that any vacancy may be filled by the LWVNM board. However, the Ed Fund board may elect its own officers. She believes they can elect an officer and appoint another director before the end of this coming fiscal year, before submitting a slate to the State Board.

Hannah reported that the Ed Fund has applied and been approved for the Thornburg grant of $60,000 (Thornburg 6) and received the check. The Ed Fund also submitted the final report for the last Thornburg grant. Thornburg 6 is focused primarily on redistricting, and the Ed Fund Board will have to make decisions about how to approach it. They may be moving to a larger education program (e.g., arts, efforts, civics, education, etc.). Bring ideas to the board.

Hannah related a recent trip to an arts (quilting) exhibit that focused on redistricting, called Packing and Cracking. The curator is looking into ways that he might be able to bring the show to NM. Hannah noted we could also solicit New Mexico quilters. This is one of many ways that the League could educate the public.

**VOTERSERVICES**

Edwina presented the Voter Services report, highlighting incorrect GIS files that appear to be limited to county commission districts and water & sanitation districts, but there could be more. The consensus was to meet with the Secretary of State (SOS) as soon as possible with Kathy, Hannah, Akkana, Mark, and Edwina attending.

Dick recommended filing a lawsuit if the law is not being enforced. Subsequently, there was much discussion around the wording of SB304, Voting District Geographic Data.

The group agreed to further investigate the discrepancies in GIS files and further research prior to meeting with the SOS. Edwina will gather the districts with missing/erroneous GIS files. Additionally, the group decided it would be best to learn the GIS process in the counties where we have connections with county clerks, that we talk to them about what this process is, whether and when the GIS files get sent to the NM RGIS or SOS, where the process goes astray, and their insights as to why some district files are inaccurate. Hannah noted seven counties - Santa Fe, Los Alamos, the four CNM counties, and Doña Ana where discussions could be held with the respective county clerks. Kathy and Edwina will meet with the Doña Ana County clerk; Debbie and Judy will get someone from LWVSFC to meet with the Santa Fe County clerk &/or Research and Polling; and Starlyn will check with Lani (who would coordinate outreach to the four central NM county clerks).

The group also discussed the need to amend the law if the SOS's office is not responsible for collecting all the information. Meredith noted that the SOS does not believe collection of GIS files are her purview. Akkana noted that SOS staff seem to be under the impression that they were only responsible for the statewide races, but the bill is pretty clear – “each voting district in the State.” Akkana further noted that some districts are not created at the SOS level, so the SOS should be coordinating with all entities for the GIS files. They know all of the districts and do end up getting some sort of GIS-like data to determine a voter’s ballot on the SOS website. She noted that a League member did a lot of online research for files and by contacting county clerks, but had to manipulate files to fit maps. VOTE411 needs official files, she said.

Edwina recommended continuing the practice of sending letters to party chairs requesting they encourage their candidates to participate in VOTE411, but she was unsure how to determine if the parties followed through with the request. Dick noted that the Democratic leadership did follow through but we don’t know whether the Republicans did.

Edwina reported that the NAVG was produced for twelve counties - eight counties produced by Mark and additional guides for Santa Fe, Bernalillo, Valencia, and Sandoval counties (with the LWVNM paying the local Leagues for extra copies of their voter guides). A thousand extra copies were printed for LWVSFC and 1800 for LWVCNM (the latter at 73 cents/copy equals $1,314 that they requested reimbursement for). Jo requested a table showing the total number printed for each county with the cost for the NAVGs. Edwina noted that Mark Coomes, our contractor, charged only $1,665 for his work setting up the guides for the 8 counties.

Edwina also discussed the analytics received from the LWVUS, which showed that 58,521 people in NM looked at VOTE411, including 51,123 new users. She thought the latter number may reflect the increase in social media advertising and outreach this year.  The analytics are broken down by city for the state. LWVUS also mentioned that the request for the 2025 VOTE411 is now available. The price will go up in February 2025, so it would be advantageous to us to make that request for the 2025 voter guide prior to February; we need to make that decision very soon.

Edwina noted that LWVUS is requesting input from VOTE411 administrators by December 20th on a survey. LWVUS will use the information from the surveys to prioritize their work and enhancements to VOTE411 that they undertake in the upcoming year.

**UPDATE ON SAN JUAN COUNTY MEMBERSHIP**

Hannah reported that she will be contacting Joan in San Juan County to see if she has eight members to begin to move forward with the new unit there. We will have some questions for national on how units are defined and how they operate. She asked if any local league has a member who would like to be a mentor to the possible San Juan County unit; let her know.

**PREPARATIONS FOR LWVNM CONVENTION, APRIL 26-27, 2025**

Debbie reported that she found a meeting place, The Lodge. Registration will cost approximately $45-$50 per person depending on attendance. The Lodge charges $149/night per room, but there are other places on Cerrillos Road that are cheaper. There is no food service in the meeting rooms, but they do allow outside food service. With the food service, the cost would increase to about $70/person. They are also looking into a venue for the banquet. A motion was made by Barbara to put a deposit down to reserve. The Lodge for the convention; it was seconded by Dick. The motion carried unanimously. A reception will be held on Friday and the banquet on Saturday with the meeting all day Saturday and a half-day on Sunday.

**BYLAWS COMMITTEE REPORT**

Barbara noted that one of the things that is required at convention is to look at the bylaws and make any proposed changes. She explained that the changes to the bylaws are divided into two categories: those required by national (regarding the membership fee transformation) and those aimed at simplifying the language. Changes to the bylaws must be approved by the board before presenting them at convention.

Judy requested removing “honorary” from the life members category and asked about an age limit for students, and about associate members, while Kathy suggested additional changes and requested time to review the proposed changes. Meredith suggested defining "currently enrolled" for students, and Jo questioned the verification of accredited institutions. Starlyn mentioned that the bylaws indicate a member will be removed, but what they actually are doing is just deactivating them. Hannah and Barbara clarified that some of the language was from the national bylaws and could not be changed. Suggested changes should be sent to Akkana and Barbara. The team agreed to further discuss the proposed changes at the January meeting.

**NOMINATING COMMITTEE UPDATE**

Becky reported that she and Dick, Felicia, and Karen Wentworth agreed to send a letter to the membership regarding nominations, but it was sent during the meeting instead by Constant Contact.

**BUDGET COMMITTEE**

Hannah noted that we need to appoint a Budget committee at least four months prior to the Convention, which means by December 26th or 27th, with the treasurer serving as a member, but not the chair.  The Budget Committee was formed with Kathy as the chair, and members Dick, Starlyn, and Judy. They plan to have at least three meetings to prepare a realistic budget, considering factors like the accounting system used. Hannah noted that a treasurer is needed in an advisory capacity but, since Kim is resigning, she suggests sending a request to the membership next week for a temporary treasurer for the next four months.

**LOCAL LEAGUE REPORTS**

See the written reports from the local league presidents submitted prior to the meeting. Jo will re-send her report to Hannah. Hannah thanked the local Leagues for working very hard on the election by getting poll workers out, getting people registered, getting information out, working on VOTE411, etc.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS, INITIATIVES, AND OTHER BUSINESS**

It was suggested that the bylaws need to be changed re the 30-day notice requirement for electronic meetings.

The Action Committee will send the list of proposed League legislative priorities to the board on January 10th. The board will meet on Monday, January13th at 6:00 p.m. to approve the priorities.

Barbara asked that materials for the fall La Palabra be submitted to her by December 15th. Local League representatives should let her know whether to use the reports to this board meeting or whether they want to make modifications.

**NEXT BOARD MEETING, SATURDAY, JANUARY 18TH**

The next in-person/hybrid board meeting is scheduled for January 18, from 11:00 am to 3:00pm in Albuquerque.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Hannah adjourned the meeting at 2:33 p.m.

*minutes submitted by Edwina Jaramillo and Kathy Brook*

*Edited by Barbara Calef 12/3/24*