

Democracy Maine Boards of Directors Meetings

Saturday, March 25th, 2023 ♦ 9:00 am - 11:00 am

Via Zoom

Board Present: Jill Ward, Pamela Cox, Maya Eichorn, Susana Hancock, Ann Luther, Lilli Martin, Melissa Murphy, and Alison Smith

Absent: Ben Gaines, Laura Genese, Chris Hafford, and Jamie Kilbreth

Staff present: Anna Kellar, Executive Director and Nadya Mullen, Operations Director, John Brautigam, Legal and Policy Advisor

The LWVME Board was called to order at 9:09 am.

Administration (Jill Ward)

- Minutes approval - **VOTE:** Susana Hancock moved to approve the minutes of the January 21st 2023 board meeting. Pamela Cox seconded. **The motion passed without objection.**
- Ann Luther and Nadya Mullen presented the Compliance Checklist.

Treasurers Reports (Ann Luther)

- Ann Luther presented the combined organizations' statement of cash flow, cash forecast, and budget v. actual reports, as well as the restricted funds accounts.
- The Board discussed the balance held in restricted funds for the inactive Brunswick chapter and favored reviewing how to reasonably allocate those funds for active use.
- The Board received the financial reports from the Portland Area and Downeast chapters.
- All reports were received and filed for financial review.

Executive Director's Report (Anna Kellar)

- There are now several national League working groups working on the strategic transformation work. Ann Luther, Nadya Mullen, and Evan Murray are each on one of these working groups.
- Staffing update
 - We have an intern from Patagonia, Kate, who is working full time for 8 weeks on project work. She's paid directly by Patagonia, so this is in effect an in kind donation from Patagonia. Once her internship is done and she returns to full time work in the store, we'll be looking to continue this fruitful partnership on an ongoing basis.
 - John Brautigam has taken a new full time job. We are transitioning him to a more traditional advisory role with Democracy Maine with a focus on support with legal issues and documents and drafting legislation. Thank you to John for the fantastic staff-like role he's been playing these last several years.
- There will be a printed newsletter in April. We're building the list of articles and will be asking for input from some board members.
- Staff performance reviews are underway and due to be completed by mid April.

- Anna reviewed the budget process. First is the LWVME biennium budget (2023-2025) for approval by our membership at Convention and second is the detailed Democracy Maine budget for FY2024. The DM budget is in draft form and will be finalized based on the outcome of discussions with funders about support for specific budget lines. We will offer a budget workshop in May to new board members and any current board members who would like to join so that the board can be fully informed before voting on the final amended budget shortly after Convention.

Convention Planning (Anna Kellar)

- We can now confirm that Convention will be held at the Holocaust and Human Rights Center in Augusta on June 3rd. The facilities enable us to hold a fully hybrid meeting that will enable remote participants to vote as well as watch the keynotes and plenary sessions. We have two national leaders presenting and we're also aiming to have a workshop. Board committees have been working toward what to present to the membership for voting.
- Anna presented the proposed Program which includes both educational and advocacy work broken into six topic areas. **VOTE:** Ann Luther moved to approve the program document along with the statement made at the previous convention about endorsing active positions. Pamela Cox seconded. **The motion passed without objection.**
- Anna presented the FY24 - FY26 LWVME Budget to be approved at Convention and the Draft DM FY2024 budget. **VOTE:** Melissa Murphy moved to approve the LWVME Budget for FY23 - FY26 to be presented to the membership at Convention and the Draft DM FY2024 budget with the understanding that the DM FY24 budget is subject to adjustment based on discussions with funders. Pamela Cox seconded. **The motion passed without objection.**
- Pamela Cox, as co-chair of the Nominating Committee, presented the slate of board members for election at the Convention and people for appointment. **VOTE:** Ann Luther moved to advance the elected slate to be approved at Convention. Susana Hancock seconded. **The motion passed without objection.**
- Bylaws changes - on request of the MCCE Action board, the MCCE Action and LWVME bylaws will be amended to remove the requirement for a member of the nominating committee to be named by the MCCE Action board and for seats on the DM board to be designated as MCCE Action seats. This change is a measure of how the organization transition has worked.

Governance Committee Report (Susana Hancock)

- The Committee will take forward drafting the bylaws changes as above.

Development Committee Update (Pamela Cox and Anna Kellar)

- Anna reported that there are a number of grant proposals in process with varying degrees of 85-100% confidence of approval. These will bring our income much closer to the FY23 budget for grants.
- Two house parties are being scheduled (Ann Luther is hosting one in May and Pamela Cox is hosting one on April 26th) and an event at Orono Brewing Company is pending. The April 26th event is linked to the release of the State of Democracy Report. Board members are asked to share widely within their networks, especially in the Bath/midcoast area.

- Alison Smith suggested that we make the most of having out of state speakers at Convention to hold a fundraising reception. She offered to assist with this planning.
- We'll be doing Spring Appeals for LWVME and MCCE Action and we're taking a new approach by having the appeal coming from the volunteer perspective and in their voice. Starr Gilmartin has agreed to lend her name to the LWVME one.

Council of Local Leaders (Lilli Martin)

- The last meeting was in February and the Council is still primarily focused on building membership. Lane has been assisting with setting goals and providing tools and support. The CLL is also working to support local leagues in the voting age study. There will be another CLL retreat in mid-June.
- Board members are referred to the most recent minutes included in the board papers.

Program Committee Report (Ann Luther)

- Legislative Update. It's been an interesting time. While threats to democracy aren't getting much traction they are attracting a lot of attention. We are testifying on a lot of these bills. Our signature bills are just getting printed.
- The Program Committee meets every 3 weeks and incorporates presentations by staff on their respective programmatic areas.
- Anna presented the position on Tribal Sovereignty. They noted that the land acknowledgement in our Local Government guide which acknowledged painful realities received feedback. It was reworked to frame it with additional historical context. It is important now to have a LWVME position on Tribal Sovereignty to ground this work now and in the future. **VOTE:** Alison Smith moved to approve the position as presented. Susana Hancock seconded. **The motion passed without objection.**

Equity, Inclusion and Membership Committee Report (Ann Luther)

- The Membership Report was reviewed with note that ongoing work is focused on decreasing the lapsation rate. New efforts to support local chapters in this work includes a volunteer from the EIM Committee writing notes to lapsing members in Bangor.
- The Volunteer Dashboard was reviewed. In the last period, the volunteer criteria was adjusted to remove attendance at an event which resulted in an initial dip. We now have a new, more correct baseline from which we operate. Attendance at events is still a very important aspect of engagement with our community and we anticipate developing a new report to track this separately from volunteerism.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 11:18 am.

MCCE

The meeting was called to order at 11:18 am.

Treasurers Reports (Ann Luther)

- C3 reports were presented.

- All reports were received and filed for financial review.

Administration (Jill Ward)

- **VOTE:** Susana Hancock moved to approve the budgets, Tribal Sovereignty position and the minutes of the January 21st 2023 board meeting en bloc. Ann Luther seconded. **The motion passed without objection.**

There being no further business the meeting adjourned at 11:21 am.

LWVME Education Fund

The meeting was called to order at 11:21 am.

- Minutes approval - **VOTE:** Melissa Murphy moved to approve the budgets, Tribal Sovereignty position and the minutes of the January 21st 2023 board meeting en bloc. Ann Luther seconded. **The motion passed without objection.**
- Melissa, Ann

There being no further business the meeting adjourned at 11:22 am.

MCCE Action

Alison Smith called the meeting to order at 11:22 am.

- Minutes approval - **VOTE:** Ann Luther moved to approve the budgets, Tribal Sovereignty position and the minutes of the January 21st 2023 board meeting en bloc. **The motion passed without objection.**
- Bylaws changes - the Board noted their request that the Governance Committee propose revisions to the MCCE Action and LWVME bylaws removing the requirement for a member of the nominating committee to be named by the MCCE Action board and for there to be designated MCCE Action seats on the DB board.

There being no further business the meeting adjourned at 11:23 am.

Respectfully submitted,
Nadya Mullen, Operations Director