

Minutes of LWVME Board- **September 10, 2009**
Women, Work & Community-Augusta

Present: Barbara McDade; Martha Dickinson; Ann Luther; Jill Ward; Anne Schink (by phone); Michelle Small; Sarah Walton; Colleen Tucker; Polly Ferguson and Cathie Whittenburg

The meeting was called to order at 10:10 a.m. and the Minutes of the June 6 meeting were unanimously approved, with the exception of Michelle, who was absent at the June 6 meeting and, accordingly, abstained.

Michelle reported that the auditor was in possession of all of the Treasurer's accounting, books, etc. Michelle will prepare fiscal year end reports after getting these materials back from the auditor.

The Board entered into the record an email vote recommending that the Ed. Fund co-sponsor the Breakfast of Champion events sponsored by the Maine Women's Policy Center. Martha and Barbara will attend the Bangor event and Polly, Cathie and Jill will attend the Portland event. Michelle volunteered to let the Maine Women's Policy Center who would be attending which events.

Grateful thanks to those Board members who volunteered to be Committee Chairs, as follows: Advocacy-Ann Luther; Voter Service-Polly; Communications-Cathie Whittenburg; Membership-Michelle Small; Fundraising- Anne Schink.

Ann and Barbara reported on efforts underway to archive LWVME materials, including a recent trip to Orono, and requested those who may have additional materials to submit them. Anne Schink says she has a box and Michelle says that Brunswick League has a box of materials for potential archival. Barbara proposed writing grants to hire an archivist, possibly Marty Harmon. The Maine Community Foundation, The Emily Farley Fund and the LWVME Ed Fund are potential sources of grant awards. Anne Schink also mentioned the Maine Memory Network. Ann offered to be a reader of the grant proposals.

Barbara requested assistance from a corresponding secretary in handling incoming calls and emails to LWVME; Jill agreed to monitor the email address and Polly agreed to monitor the phone calls.

Board Operations and Governance

Annual Calendar was reviewed. Martha discussed the next Maine Voter, solicited input and established a deadline for submission of articles; Michelle offered to write an article about the ballot questions; Jill offered to submit an article about the Modernization of Voter Registration effort; and Martha will ask Kay Wilkinson to write an article about the Marriage Equality effort and discussed a possible article on the "350 movement."

The Candidate Debate Policy was discussed; inasmuch as this November's statewide ballot will deal only with referendum and bond issues, it was thought that we should have a separate policy

describing how those sorts of debates should be handled. Ann Luther solicited input and offered to draft a policy for the Board's review.

Quad States was deemed a hit by all who attended, whereas the LWVUS Council meeting, held via videoconferencing was found to be a disappointment due, in part, to technology issues.

Colleen led a discussion about Keys to the Capitol, wherein the Board determined that it would attempt to book the Hall of Flags from 8-10; the Welcome Center from 10-12, with a press conference from 10-10:30 a.m.; a docent tour; and afternoon Tea with the Governor on Thursday, February 25, 2010. LWVME will use that opportunity to showcase the results of its PAC Study.

Julie Flynn Deputy Secretary of State, addressed the Board on the topic of Early and Absentee Voting. She directed us to the State's award-winning website for reports on the pilot project on Early Voting. Last November, Portland, Readfield and Bangor used the early voting process, with great success. They hope to have 24-30 towns and cities participating in a 2009 early voting pilot project; interested towns/cities applying to participate need to evidence the ability to comply with security requirements, in terms of personnel, set up, technology, etc. She noted that, because of the ease, convenience and immediacy of the early voting procedure, voters had more confidence in early voting, as compared to the absentee voting process. Ms. Flynn also mentioned an Ongoing Absentee Voters pilot project, in which Portland, Biddeford, Brunswick and Cumberland are participating. The SOS Office is also reviewing Random Auditing and will be reporting on that to the Legislature. Ms. Flynn solicited the League's assistance in reviewing and commenting on this reports, prior to submission to the Legislature. Next Steps: Barbara will review LWVUS positions and bring a proposal to the next meeting under which we might be able to endorse Early Voting on other grounds than increased voter turnout. Ms. Flynn also reported that the IRV pilot project failed to garner support from the Legislature and similar legislation will not be submitted in 2010.

Given that, the Board determined to postpone LWVME's consideration of concurrence on IRV until the Spring of 2010, after the PAC Study consensus is completed. In the meantime, those working on the IRV concurrence will begin gathering educational materials for the local Leagues' consideration. Cathie offered to review the Minnesota State League's IRV Study materials, which are available on the LWVME website in a section devoted to the IRV concurrence and develop an "Executive Summary" that we might use in educating our own members about IRV.

Fundraising

The fall letter should go out soon (before the end of October); Anne Schink will take the lead in formulating the LWVME and Ed Fund fundraising letter.

Membership

Michelle will send out renewal reminders. Jill will continue to send out welcome letters to new and renewing members. Martha will add Michelle, Jill and Cathie as administrators on Facebook and all Board members were asked to join Facebook.

Advocacy

The Lobby Corps is awaiting cloture of the new legislative session, at which point it will begin to review pending bills in our areas of interest.

MCCE, via Ann, reported that it is in fundraising mode, setting up community conversations in Rotary, etc., doing focus groups and focusing on lobbying Senator Snowe in the pending federal legislation. The Board VOTED unanimously to pay \$50.00 to renew membership in MCCE.

WLAC- Colleen reminded the Board of its decision not to be on the steering committee of WLAC, which is now known as the Women's Coalition. Colleen will contact Sarah Standiford to determine whether non-steering committee members can attend the monthly meetings. If so, she will attend or monitor meetings via teleconferencing.

There was no update on MFOIC's activities.

On behalf of the New England Coalition to Prevent Gun Violence, Cathie presented a statement of support for background checks on all gun purchases. The statement is geared toward coalition building and not specific to any pending legislation, so no request for advocacy was currently being made. The Board VOTED unanimously to endorse the statement of support, it being in line with an existing LWVUS position on gun control. This does not constitute joining the Coalition.

Program

Ann reported on the PAC Study: Michelle is finishing up the "Future of Reform" report, and Ann is finishing up the "Follow the Money" report. There is one paper left to draft based on the results of the interviews. The Board discussed having a press conference upon the release of the PAC Study results, hopefully in conjunction with our Keys to the Capitol event.

Regarding Health Care: _____ is meeting with US Rep. Mike Michaud
Chellie Pingree was also mentioned by someone as doing something. Michelle will set up an action alert and Jill will let us know about timing issues for calls and letters to the editors.

Pam Person is trying to arrange meetings for her and Barbara McDade with our U.S. Senators on Global Climate Change. She is also organizing a pair of forums in Ellsworth that are being cosponsored by LWV-Downeast.

Anne Schink reported on the Portland Area League's involvement in the Portland Charter Commission's deliberations; it is hoped that the local league might be able to moderate public forums and community meetings on that process.

The Board adjourned at 2:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Colleen P. Tucker
Secretary