

Minutes of LWVME Board- February 11, 2010
University of Maine Augusta Student Center

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

The meeting was called to order at 10:00 a.m. and the Minutes of the December meeting were unanimously approved.

Ann reviewed the Treasurer's reports with us; as of 1/31/10, LWVME had \$5,898.72 in its checking account. We're about \$1,000 ahead of budget in income; Jill will compute and report her in-kind contributions to Ann (postage for membership letters). The Treasurer's reports were approved and filed for audit.

There were no email votes.

Barbara read Melissa Murphy's letter, resigning as Ed Fund Trustee. We thanked her for her service and expressed hope that she'd be able to re-join the Board in the future. Barbara will send her a letter. Motion made, seconded, and passed that we would not add a new Trustee to replace Melissa.

Ann Luther and Anne Schink will revise Conflict of Interest policy and policy on Making Decisions between Meetings and present for an e-vote before next meeting.

Keys to Capitol: The Board determined which programs and speakers would present in the morning and afternoon sessions. Ann Luther will invite speakers/panelists, and agreed to moderate the morning's panel discussion. Michelle offered to do the flyer/postcard and Sarah agreed to distribute the postcard with the legislators. Jill will ask ME Women's Lobby group to circulate info about the event among its members and will send out a Media Advisory; Jill also asked all Board members to invite friends on Facebook. Ann will ask MPA for its press list. Sarah will get flowers and Anne Schink will be in charge of printing materials to be used at the event and will email final agenda. Colleen will ask Rep. Mary Nelson to have a sentiment read on the House floor re: LWV's 90th birthday, on March 25th, if possible. Barbara will send proclamation language to Colleen and will hand write invites to past LWVME Presidents (Ann will send list to Barbara).

LWVUS Convention Delegates and Advocacy Priorities for 2010. Ann moved to increase budget for delegates to \$2,000. Ann and Barbara will definitely be attending. Colleen also expressed interest if no one else was interested or available to attend. The Board voted not to support RI's proposed amendment. Barbara will propose Media Consolidation and the demise of Investigative Journalism as advocacy priorities for LWVUS.

Quad States May 22-23 in Wells: Barbara will ask Jim Melcher, UME Farmington and Rod Schmidt from USM to speak on "uncivil discourse", a topic suggested by Barbara. Ann proposed offering \$45 stipend to 3 people to attend Quad States, so MOVED and Approved.

The Board determined to postpone LWVME's consideration of concurrence on IRV until the Fall 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 : nothing to report

Membership

Barbara knows of someone in Bangor who wants to start a local League. Michelle reported that we have 184 total members, which is exactly the same as this time last year; we lost 10 members in Brunswick. Membership breaks down as follows: 78 Downeast & MAL; 63 Portland; and 43 Brunswick.

Michelle would like us to send her names of potential members to recruit. Ann will send Michelle list of prospects and recently lapsed members. Michelle will draft a letter and Ann will do envelopes. Jill reported on new/renewing members and Facebook posts, alerts, action letters, etc. We have 143 fans on Facebook. Ann made arrangements to facilitate donating and dues paying to LWVME with PayPal. The Board agreed to put a Donation/Join link on all LWVME e-mailings/news alerts.

Coalitions

Anne Schink will replace Colleen as participant in the monthly WLAC meetings

Ann reported on MCCE. Ben Grant will be MCCE's attorney in the NOM lawsuit; MCCE is seeking amicus status. MCCE recently received \$30K from the Piper Fund and \$50K from Donald Sussman. The lawsuit will most likely be argued in May.

MFOIC Michelle has attended two meetings and was elected to the Board. It is following two pieces of legislation: one deals with whether or not documents recorded in the Registries of Deeds should be considered public documents; and the other deals with email communications to a quorum of a legislative body.

InForMe Anne Schink reported on recent developments.

During the lunch break, John Christie gave a fascinating overview of the development and work of the Maine branch of the New England Center for Investigative Reporting.

(www.pinetreewatchdog.org) This is a non-partisan 501©(3) organization dedicated to investigative journalism. Due to his history as a newspaper writer, publisher, and editor, his work will get published in the Lewiston Sun Journal, Bangor Daily News, Ellsworth, Mt. Desert and other newspapers. The Board unanimously agreed to have someone from LWVME be on the Board of ME Center for Public Interest Reporting, and Ann Luther agreed to be so designated.

The Board reviewed and completed the State League Vitality and Training Needs Assessment Tool and determined the LWVME looked pretty good, with lowest scores appearing in some aspects of membership, fundraising and voter service.

Program

Ann reported on the PAC Study: Michelle is finishing up the “Future of Reform” report, and Ann has completed the “Follow the Money” report and is working on finalizing the paper based on the results of the interviews.

Anne Schink reported on the Portland Charter Commission’s deliberations. We will continue to encourage local Portland Leaguers attendance and interest in this process.

Easy Voter Guide: Questions raised as to continued participation of Maine’s chapter of the Literacy Volunteers of America.

Forums in a Box: Thomas Sr. College wants to do candidates’ forums for state legislators in the fall of 2010; they have a location, need the program.

Michelle offered to ask Kit St. John to participate in a forum on tax reform.

The Board adjourned at 2:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Colleen P. Tucker
Secretary