

Minutes of LWVME Board- July 18, 2011
Searsport

Present: Barbara McDade; Ann Luther; Jill Ward; Sarah Walton; Colleen Tucker and Cathie Whittenburg (by phone until 12:30), Polly Ferguson, Anne Schink, Martha Dickinson; Michelle Small (by phone until 2:00)

The meeting was called to order at 10:30.m. and the Minutes of the June 3, 2011 meeting were approved as amended to indicate that MANP and the United Way were not committed to funding the Easy Reader Voter Guide (ERVG), but had indicated a willingness to distribute them or otherwise be involved in some capacity.

Treasurer's Report: Ann L. reported that the LWVME was broke; we are about \$1,000 over budget. The reports were filed for audit.

The Board officially confirmed an email vote to have LWVME join the coalition working on the people's veto of the law prohibiting election-day registration (EDR).

Fundraising : Cathie W. suggested sending out focused letter to women's studies teachers seeking membership and funding and discussed the value of segmenting our audience to send targeted appeals for members. Martha brought up need to make it clear whether those sending funds are donating or becoming members.

Colleen brought up the possibility of getting a lightening grant from Maine Initiatives Foundation and to tap the Emily Farley Fund for the Portland mayoral race / IRV supplement to the ERVG. Someone mentioned soliciting donations from the Oak Foundation. The Board discussed getting the communications/Membership teams together to send emails to folks coming to us as a result of EDR. Jill will do a follow up email for the Fundraising group this coming week.

Membership

Jill reported that 69 of the 180 letters sent out to lapsed members resulted in renewal of membership and that we obtained only 5 new members as a result of our 800 letter membership appeal. Postcards will be sent out after Labor Day to follow up with non-renewing members.

LWVUS Council 2011: Anne S. reported on the results of the State Planning Workshop; Jill reported on the Washington DC Climate Change event and developments with her Bangor friend (Elizabeth) who has offered to have a houseparty to kickstart formation of the Bangor League.

Local League Revitalization: Anne S. and Sarah Robinson have come up with 20 names of potential new Portland area Leaguers and discussed having the mayoral candidate forum and an IRV public education campaign as a membership draw. Jill offered to post Portland League area events on the LWVME website and Facebook and offered to have a houseparty at her house in August for potential Portland area League members.

Advocacy

Lobby Corps: Ann Luther reported on the changed atmosphere in Augusta under Governor LePage, and how the League lobby corp members have been helpful in crossing bridges between Dems and Reps. The Lobby Corps is on a break until the legislature re-convenes in January.

Peoples Veto: Jill has agreed to be the Treasurer of the Protect Maine Votes PAC relating to the citizens veto of the law prohibiting EDR; Shenna Bellows, Ben Dudley and other Steering Committee leaders of the Coalition are very organized and active. The Maine People's Alliance is leading the charge on the ground. The LWVME Board VOTED to recommend to the Ed Fund to contribute \$1,000 to the Protect Maine Votes PAC. Jill and Ann get all the emails relating to that effort.

Re-districting Michelle reported that there are two pending lawsuits for force ME to re-district before the 2012 elections. The ME court held an emergency hearing and granted the motion to compel re-districting this fall. The ME Legislature will hold a re-apportionment Committee meeting on Wednesday and Michelle will be there and blog about it; Martha will set up a blog.

Program

PAC Study: Ann L. will finish the interview synopsis and convene a meeting of the PAC study committee (Ann L., Martha, Michelle and Polly(?))

People's Veto and Citizen's Initiative Study The Board agreed to postpone further discussion about that effort until after the People's Veto campaign is over.

Voter Service & Education

Forums in a Box: Ann L. thinks this is grant fundable and recommends that the Voter Service Committee (Anne S., Michelle, Barbara and Martha, with Polly as Chair) convene to review non-League sponsored "Forum in a Box" materials to assure it includes all necessary resources.

Easy Reader Voters' Guide: Anne S. led the Board in a discussion around the contents of the Portland Voter's Guide and the intent to tap the Emily Farley Fund for financial support. Martha agreed to be the Board contact person for Sarah Robinson. The LWVME Board VOTED to accept Sarah C. Robinson's contract to develop the ERVG for \$3,000 and VOTED to distribute the Portland Supplement to the ERVG only to the Greater Portland area and that the Supplement should only include information as to the IRV voting process and the mayoral candidates.

Technology: TABLED until next meeting

Board Operations and Governance

The Board discussed the Non-Partisanship policy, with Sarah emphasizing that the Board members need to be/appear completely nonpartisan; a discussion of which officers (President and Chair of Voter Service) can't work on political campaigns, have lawn signs or otherwise publicly affiliate with a particular party or candidate and the Board VOTED to re-adopt the nonpartisanship policy as amended to remove an extraneous hyphen.

Calendar: the Board determined that meetings for the upcoming year would be held on September 1, October 16 (in conjunction with Quad States); 12/8; 2/9/2012; and 4/12.
Sarah W. will try to secure us meeting space at Women, Working & Community building on the UMA campus.

Voter: the next Voter will be in September after the results of the People's Veto are in.

Committee Membership/Chairs:

Fundraising: Sarah, Barbara, Colleen, with Jill as Chair

Advocacy: Michelle, Polly, Cathie W. with Ann L. as Chair

Membership: Anne S, Colleen T, Sarah W. with Michelle as Chair

Communications: Martha D., Jill W, Cathie W. and Ann L.; the group will as Cathie to Chair

Voter Service: Anne S., Michelle S., Barbara and Martha with Polly as Chair

Martha offered to update the LWVME website to reflect these Committee memberships/Chair positions

Strengths/Weaknesses/ O/ T exercise:

The Board recognizes the need for increased and revitalized membership as its biggest challenge, focusing on new retirees and younger people; fundraising is also a weakness. We believe we have a strong, effective Board and accomplish a lot with the few committed members we have. We need to fundraise for the archives project, the video project (Polly offered to interview Charlotte Wilbur). A discussion on potential Board members ensued.

Misc.: Colleen will write up the Convention Minutes for Board approval at the next meeting.

Respectfully submitted,
Colleen Tucker, Secretary