

**MINUTES OF THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS/LOS ALAMOS BOARD MEETING  
TUESDAY DECEMBER 3, 2019  
MESA PUBLIC LIBRARY, LOS ALAMOS, NEW MEXICO**

**Call to Order**

Barbara Calef called the meeting to order at 12:02 p.m.

**Board Members Present**

Barbara Calef, Co-President  
Leslie Wallstrom, Second Vice-President  
Rebecca Chaiken, Secretary  
Akkana Peck, Director at Large  
Jody Benson, Publicity  
Amy Birnbaum, Reservations  
Lynn Jones, Voter Services  
Julie Williams-Hill, Webmaster and BPU Observer Corps

**Guests:** JoAnn Lysne, Newsletter  
Addie Jacobson, Special Projects

**Minutes**

The October minutes were accepted as presented.

**Treasurer's Report**

Kathy was absent but provided the treasurer's report. For October 2019, she reported having a checking account beginning book balance of \$4,274.27 and an ending balance of \$3,168.85, which includes total receipts of \$185; disbursements of \$1,290.45; and \$.03 interest. Receipts included dues. Disbursements included advertisements, fees, copies, and State PMP. The savings account ending book balance was \$20,782.28, which includes \$.88 interest.

Following a meeting by the 100th anniversary committee, it was agreed that \$500 should be included in the budget for anniversary activities. Amy moved to add \$500 to the budget for 100th anniversary activities. This was seconded by Lynn and all voted in favor.

Barbara communicated with Jeffrey Howell, president of the Delle Foundation, who asked for our letter asking for grant funds of up to \$10,000 prior to their board meeting on December 19. Leslie wrote a draft grant application asking for \$10,000 to cover the cost of the Voter Guide for the next six years. Barbara will send this draft to the board for input.

## **Library Policy on Meeting Rooms**

Both Barbara and Amy have talked with library staff about their new policy, which was approved by the County Council, regarding scheduling meetings in the public meeting rooms. Based on some legal case, a change was made which makes it nearly impossible to schedule our monthly meetings in advance. Library staff told Barbara that they were planning on amending the policy to allow for meeting rooms to be reserved three or six months in advance. In the past, we and other groups were allowed to put in requests for meetings (including Lunch with a Leader) for the coming year. Amy said that it has been a constant battle to get a room reserved even a month in advance. The good news is that library staff is currently working on software which will allow users to reserve rooms online.

## **County Council meetings**

Barbara attempted to get the calendar of 2020 meetings for the County Council so our board members could sign up to cover and report on meetings. She only found one date, January 7. Julie said that the Council needs to approve all of the meeting dates so it is presumed the January 7 date will address this. Addie volunteered to cover the meetings in January. Volunteers will be solicited to cover the remaining 2020 meetings at our board meeting on January 28.

Akkana had no report for the meeting date she was scheduled to cover because no meeting was held. Lynn prepared a report on the meeting she covered, which focused on funds being appropriated for the BMX project and the termination of an employee. Addie's meeting covered topics including water/sewer rate increases, changes to library policies, and nuisance ordinances.

## **BPU Observer Corps/Webmaster**

Julie said she has been unable to work on the website to link with PayPal but hopes to do so soon. Currently the "donate" button just goes to a pdf. The website does include information on the essay contest, Lunch with a Leader events, and our newsletters. She is also sharing this information on Facebook. In order to expand our social media presence we will need Instagram.

During the BPU meeting on November 20, Julie reported that staff presented on the condition of natural gas infrastructure and assets. A special meeting for the BPU is scheduled for December 6 during which members will conduct their annual evaluation of performance over the past year. However, they also added an important question that must be addressed soon. They will consider adding \$52,000 in additional funding for the Carbon Free Power Project which would keep the project moving forward until March 31, 2020. The project has run into some obstacles due, in part, to delays in funding by Congress for DOE's Joint Use Module Plant (JUMP) Program. DOE has held off on completing the JUMP power sales

agreement until congress appropriates the funds. If we do not add \$52,000 in funding, we are out of the project with no reimbursement of substantial funds already spent. If we do add the funds, the project has life for another year. In response to a question from Barbara, Julie said that the Energy Transition Act may be amended by the legislature, allowing the San Juan Generating Station to remain open and exposing Los Alamos to further liability.

### **Lunch with a Leader**

Although Karyl Ann was absent, Barbara reported that the December 10 event will feature Christine Chandler who will review the upcoming legislative session. Ryn Herrmann is scheduled for January. Kelly Beierschmitt, LANL's deputy director of operations, has thus far not responded to Karyl Ann. Maire O'Neal has been invited for a future event. Barbara suggested we invite a representative from New Mexicans for Money out of Politics.

Leslie asked why we still had not scheduled someone to talk about gun control. Barbara suggested Leslie provide a name of someone who could be contacted to address the subject. Others thought a representative from Mom's Demand Action or someone from the Sportsman's Club would be appropriate. It was agreed that this question can be posed to Christine at the event on Tuesday. She can also provide a good summary of what gun control bills have passed in New Mexico. Leslie will contact Christine to let her know this question will be posed.

### **Voter Services**

According to information provided by the Clerk's Office, 33 percent of Los Alamos registered voters voted in the last election. They also reported that numerous people asked for a Voter Guide, which was not prepared for this "off year" election. Lynn said that she could not commit to preparing a Voter Guide every year but could provide us her protocol and we could solicit League members to participate. It was agreed that there would be budget implications if off year guides were printed, but not if they were made available only online. At Barbara's request, Amy moved that we put out a Voter Guide for every election (not necessarily a printed guide). Akkana seconded this motion and all voted in favor.

Also at Barbara's request, Akkana moved that we put out a Voter Guide for the 2020 primary election. Addie seconded this motion and all voted in favor. It was agreed that which categories of candidates to be included will be decided at a later date. Lynn will give some thought about what can be delegated to those who volunteer to help.

### **The Shake Up**

The League of Women Voters of New Mexico agreed to cover the \$300 cost of purchasing the rights to The Shake Up. Rebecca will contact the president, Hannah

Burling, and provide her with the information needed to contact the producer and purchase the rights. We hope to show the film at the library in late March or April.

### **100th Anniversary**

Posters detailing the essay contest will be distributed on Monday and an email blast publicizing the event will go out as well. It will also be advertised on the high school's Facebook page and the Facebook page for homeschool kids.

No decisions have been made about having a party, separate or in conjunction with the community day event on June 13. Fuller Lodge, the History Museum, or the Hans Bethe House, were suggested as possible locations if a party is held. This will be discussed at a future board meeting.

### **Zero Waste Update**

Jody said the 8th grade club only has one member and his goal is to purchase an electric lawn mower for the school. The 7th grade club has 20 members and they continue to be excited about reducing the use of plastics. They are currently working on a video and a garden habitat. The high school group produced an ad showing how to reduce the use of plastics and this is being shown at the Reel Deal Theater.

The Zero Waste Committee is presenting at the upcoming Chamber of Commerce breakfast. They want to share with those present how to limit Styrofoam and other plastics in an affordable way. Jody and Barbara met with County Councilor Katrina Martin, who is on the Council's ad hoc plastics committee, and Jody subsequently wrote a letter to the entire Council asking that they support Smith's plan to do away with plastic bags, encouraging the store to act now. It seems that the Council does not want to deal with the plastics issue, they prefer to focus on composting, and they are unfairly passing the issue onto the students.

Rebecca suggested that the 2020 Voter Guides ask each candidate for their position on the plastics bans.

### **Redistricting**

Hannah Burling, Dick Mason, and Barbara met with Brian Egolf about redistricting. He is opposed to having an independent redistricting commission but would support a task force. Such a task force would include citizens and would hold public meetings but Egolf wants elected officials to draw the maps in a transparent way. He said that New Mexico has not had problems with racial gerrymandering or breaking up communities of interest.

Dick Mason will be coming to Los Alamos on December 16 to discuss the League's legislative priorities, including redistricting, during our holiday party. Becky's home

was selected for this event and it will be held from 6:30 to 8:00. Several members expressed some consternation that we are not being included in communications from Kathleen Burke, who was hired to work with the League on redistricting. Leslie and Akkana specifically asked to be "plugged in" and included. Barbara described an article written on the history of redistricting in New Mexico by Gwyneth Doland of New Mexico In Depth. It is available on the League's redistricting website, fairdistrictsnm.org. Akkana will send a link to the "action list" to our board so those who are interested in more active participation in these important issues can join.

### **Other News**

Addie discussed the proposed 28th Amendment and the effort by communities around the country to ask Congress to reverse the Supreme Court's "Citizens United" decision. Pete Sheehey told her he would introduce something regarding money in politics.

Karyl Ann and Ellen have requested to attend the national convention in 2020 as the LWVLA delegates.

### **Important Dates**

The deadline for the next newsletter is January 4.

The Legislative Preview is scheduled for January 8.

The next board meeting will be January 28, 2020, from 12:00 to 2:00 p.m. at the Mesa Public Library.

League Days at the Capitol are scheduled for February 5 (reception) and February 6.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:20 p.m.

*Submitted by Rebecca Chaiken*