

**MINUTES OF THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS/LOS ALAMOS BOARD MEETING
TUESDAY FEBRUARY 25, 2020
MESA PUBLIC LIBRARY, LOS ALAMOS, NEW MEXICO**

Call to Order

Barbara Calef called the meeting to order at 12:00 p.m.

Board Members Present

Barbara Calef, Co-President
Becky Shankland, Co-President
Ellen Mills, First Vice-President
Leslie Wallstrom, Second Vice-President
Kathy Taylor, Treasurer
Rebecca Chaiken, Secretary
Karyl Ann Armbruster, Lunch with a Leader
Akkana Peck, Director at Large
Jody Benson, Publicity
Amy Birnbaum, Reservations
Lynn Jones, Voter Services
Rosmarie Frederickson, Fundraising
Julie Williams-Hill, Webmaster and BPU Observer Corps

Guests: JoAnn Lysne, Newsletter
Addie Jacobson, Special Projects

Minutes

The January minutes were accepted as presented.

Treasurer's Report

For January 2020, Kathy reported having a checking account beginning book balance of \$3,207.45 and an ending balance of \$3,422.48, which includes total receipts of \$405; disbursements of \$190; and \$.03 interest. Receipts included dues and a donation. Disbursements included payment to Karyl Ann for 2019 Lunch with a Leader. The savings account ending book balance was \$35,785.20, which includes the \$15,000 donation from the Delle Foundation and \$1.19 interest.

Barbara reported that there is \$249 left in the centennial fund. In addition, because we only awarded prize money for one essay, those remaining funds (\$200) can be used towards funding a third person to go to the national convention.

Lunch with a Leader

Karyl Ann reported that Maire O'Neill will be our speaker in March and Harry Burgess will be our speaker in April. She said that it is difficult to line up speakers three months in advance so no May speaker has been selected. Rebecca suggested Robert Martinez, the State Historian.

Following our discussion of questions for the voter guide (see below) it was suggested we have a speaker to talk about what the different courts do and/or on bail reform.

Voter Services

Gloria Maestas told Lynn that the Clerk's Office regularly puts out information on how to register to vote and how to check voter registration. We can ask them to specify that one must be registered with a major-political party in order to vote in our primary. Mid-April would be a good time to do this.

We will also put an ad in the paper suggesting that voters check their registration. We can also write an article directing voters to NMVote.org (which is recommended by the Clerk's Office).

Akkana said the work she is doing on Vote411 requires boundaries for all the districts involved in this election. Some have been identified but thus far GIS files have not been found for the judicial or PEC districts. Akkana was told by the Secretary of State's office that they do not have the information. However, someone must have the information or they would not be able to print the correct ballots for each voter.

JoAnn, Akkana, Barbara, and Lynn are working on Vote411.

The Los Alamos Daily Post provided a quote of \$2,566 to print the voter guide for the primary, which will apply to the fiscal year 2021 budget. This is the same amount we paid two years ago. Becky moved that we approve this expenditure and it was seconded by Akkana. All voted in favor. The voter guide will be inserted in the paper and we will ask that the front page include a note identifying its placement inside. Another 300 copies will be printed for distribution and the voter guide will be posted on our website. Maggie Toulouse Oliver confirmed with Barbara that it is appropriate to place the voter guide in a polling place. Previously Naomi had removed it following a complaint that it was partisan.

Questions for Voter Guide

Prior to this meeting, Barbara sent out multiple emails with possible questions for the voter guide. Board members voted on their preferred questions for each race (U.S. Senate and House of Representatives; Supreme Court and Court of Appeals;

PRC; PEC; Family Court Judge; Civil Court Judge; District Attorney; New Mexico Senate and House; Los Alamos County Council; and Los Alamos County Clerk). Based on the votes received electronically, Barbara compiled a list of the most popular questions. A lengthy discussion followed regarding specific wording of certain questions. Specifically, some board members questioned the terminology of "Medicaid or Medicare buy-in" instead of "Medicare for All." Some board members also questioned the use of the word "support" in the question regarding the role of the national laboratories. Following a discussion on these issues, the board voted to approve the questions and language as revised for the questions on page 1 (U.S. Senate and House of Representatives; Supreme Court and Court of Appeals; PRC; PEC). Barbara noted that for those questions that are not included in the voter guide, candidates can be asked directly during the candidate forums. She also noted that the questions for statewide races will go to the LWVNM board, which may make additional changes.

The board then discussed the questions and wording for the races contained on page 2 (Family Court Judge; Civil Court Judge; District Attorney; New Mexico Senate and House; Los Alamos County Council; and Los Alamos County Clerk). The question regarding redistricting was changed to the language proposed by Dick Mason. The questions for the Los Alamos County Council races were discussed at length until all agreed upon the revisions. The board then voted to approve the questions and language as revised for the questions on page 2. Lynn said she will make sure that the terms "Family Court" and "Civil Court" will be included for ease of identification.

Essay Contest

The winner of our essay contest was Philippa Fung. She will be presented with her check on either March 5 or 6 after school. Leslie will call her mother to schedule. Jody interviewed Philippa as well and this interview will be included in the next newsletter. We will offer her honorary membership in LWVLA.

The low participation in the essay contest could be poor timing, and/or too much work for students, many of whom are overwhelmed. It was agreed that if the essay contest is continued, it would be better to add it into the scholarship package for juniors and seniors.

Program Planning Follow Up

Barbara reviewed the successful program-planning event held February 11. Nationally, the LWV wants to know if we continue to support the campaign for Making Democracy Work. The LWV of Lee County Florida identified Climate Emergency as our major LWVUS priority in Making Democracy Work. Lee County is a leader along with other Florida Leagues in calling for aggressive action to stop climate change. The LWVMA suggested adding Climate Emergency as either a separate program item or as a bullet point in the Making Democracy Work

recommended program. Our board agreed that Climate Emergency should be a separate priority, not merely a bullet point. Becky moved that we accept this campaign and it was seconded by Akkana. All voted in favor.

Proposed Local Studies

JoAnn proposed that we study how our county government and related third parties are interacting with us digitally. She and others mentioned Constant Contact, garbage and recycling apps, County Line, smart meters, and Open Forum. Words used to describe some of these digital forums included "data scraping" and "leaky." JoAnn mentioned an ongoing state level study in Oregon, which she will forward to the group. Amy moved that we recommend this study. Leslie seconded this motion and all voted in favor.

Dave North also proposed a local study on alternatives to landfills. The landfill currently used by Los Alamos County will be full soon and incineration is a possible alternative. Rebecca moved that we recommend this study. Akkana seconded this motion and all voted in favor.

The proposed studies will be presented to the membership for their approval at the Annual Meeting in April. Assuming they are approved, members will be invited to volunteer to join one or both of the study committees.

A third possible local study on pit production was also discussed. Both our senators support the proposed pit production at LANL. Thom Mason has described the proposal as a replacement of dead or dying pits, not an expansion. Kathy noted that this has been discussed for many years, ever since Rocky Flats closed, and she believes it would be a waste of time. New pit production has not been funded by the Republicans and it likely won't be by the Democrats. Most members agreed we should at least educate ourselves on the issue since the county is ramping up to prepare for pit production. Dave North offered to obtain the official party line from the lab while letting them know we are contemplating a study. Everyone agreed with this plan.

Nominations

Ellen will send an email to everyone on the board asking if they would like to continue in their position for another year. The nominations committee currently includes Ellen and JoAnn and Leslie asked to join as well. Leslie wants to study the bylaws before providing input.

BPU Observer Corps

Julie reported that the Board of Public Utilities met on February 19 during which there was a presentation on the replacement wastewater treatment plant in White Rock. The estimated cost will be \$14 million for construction and \$16 million for

the whole project. It will produce class 1A effluent and process compost. The existing facilities will be repurposed and facility design will be optimized for functionality and operation and maintenance costs. DPU will begin design work and bid the project in fall of 2020. Construction will begin late winter 2021 and be completed and brought online spring 2022.

The preliminary budget was presented and discussed with estimates of \$65 million in fiscal year 2021 and \$62 million in fiscal year 2022. Some of the proposed changes include bringing on a conservation officer; remodeling the customer care center; limited-term employees for the engineering to process all the building permits for new housing developments in town; and the replacement of the wastewater treatment plant.

Other News

Julie had questions and board members had answers for the draft budget, which is due on Friday.

The Fund Drive party is scheduled for March 9 from 7:00 to 8:30 p.m. at Rosmarie's house located at 1372 47th Street.

Barbara asked if we want to mail the Call to Annual Meeting to all League members. Akkana moved that we do; Becky seconded this motion; and all voted in favor.

The Shake Up will be shown to board members at Leslie's house on Monday, March 2 between 7:00 and 8:30 p.m.

The report of League Day activities, the Legislative Summary, and County Council reports will be published in the next newsletter.

Important Dates

The deadline for the next newsletter is February 28.

The next board meeting will be March 24, 2020, from 12:00 to 2:00 p.m. at the Mesa Public Library.

A Chautauqua featuring Deborah Blanche impersonating Nina Otero-Warren is scheduled as part of LA Historical Society's Community Day, June 13 at 11:00. There will be food available outside of Fuller Lodge.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:26 p.m.

Submitted by Rebecca Chaiken