

## MINUTES

### January 5, 2022 Board Meeting (LWVSMC Lead)

via Zoom

*ATTENDING (10): Carole Beyer, Elizabeth Bond, Barbara Chaudhery, Peggy Dellinger, Marianne Kligman, Evelyn Murphy, Susan Sferas, Sharon Steinhorn, Anne Torre, Louise Usechak.*

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#### Standing business

- MINUTES OF THE SEPT. MEETING: Approved with an edit to clarify the Natural Resources report, to be submitted by Louise to Peggy.
  - TREASURER'S REPORT: Received reimbursement from LWVNJ (\$312.14) for Zoom upgrade made for Candidate forums. \$5,423.046 available funds. Report filed for audit and available in the ILO Room on the Members Only page of lwvsmc.org.
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#### Announcements

- Sherri West has joined the LWVNJ Immigration Committee (recently reactivated). She encourages members from other two Monmouth County LWVs to consider joining and/or attending meeting scheduled for Friday, Jan. 7. The committee will be reviewing HR536 (proposes, among other things, changes to immigration enforcement, including ending mandatory detention in certain cases). If interested, contact Sherri.
  - Susan Sferas announced that she will step down as ILO Treasurer as of June 2022. She has accepted a leadership position with another organization that will limit her available time.
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#### Old Business

- Merger Discussion Update (led by Anne Torre, chair of Merger Investigation Team)
    - The Merger Exploration Team is meeting again on Monday, 1/10. Jesse Burns, LWVNJ Executive Director, has set up a meeting next week with Anne, Evelyn, and Sharon (from the Merger Exploration Team) and Jennifer Howard (LWVNJ board chair), Debbie McComber (responsible for local League issues), and Iveth Mosquera (LWVNJ board for programming) from the state to discuss the merger question.
    - Anne reported that LWVGRBA and LWVWMM met with their boards and membership for a preliminary exploration of the idea. She invited the two presidents to report the results:
      - Barbara explained GRBA membership feedback. 12 members participated. Positive: Merging would put us in a better position to fulfill our mission. Challenges: 1) Different ways of working and cultures would need to be accommodated. 2) The impact on ability to take local action needs to be understood and managed. Overall, the reaction was more positive than negative.
      - Sharon reported on LWVWMM membership discussion. 18 members attended, plus Evelyn and Barbara. Negative: Members don't want to drive at night, an issue for in-person meetings that would cover the entire county. Positive: Merging would make us more cohesive, give us more power in numbers, and provide a practical solution to some challenges (bank accounts, website, social media). Overall, "many more positives than negatives."
    - The ILO Board discussed the merger question.
      - We will need to solve the issue of dues—currently different for each of the three Leagues. As we understand, merger has no impact on Per Member Payments (PMPs).
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- We agreed that impact of possible merger on banking issues (a problem for LWVSMC and LWVWM since 2008) is not a motivation for merging. It will have a beneficial impact, but it is not a consideration in the decision.
  - Anne noted Louise's assertion that the original motivation for forming ILO was to have impact on County government and planning; local Leagues did more Voter Service; County did advocacy. Want to make sure we don't lose the advocacy role (constructive input) at County level.
- Natural Resources (Louise Usechak)
  - Three things are going on.
    - 1) The Wind, on hold.
    - 2) Ft. Hancock development plans: the County Advisory Committee is meeting to decide how to develop the land (Gated Community is a possibility. There is an open question. of public access. Louise raised the question of the elevation of access road question (in light of rising ocean levels) but has received no answer.
    - 3) Colts Necks Planning Board approved the application for Colts Neck Manor and the application is now before the County Planning Board. Comments can be made to County Planning Board and to the DEP (who will approve the proposed on-site sewer treatment plant). NOTE: The LWV position on the application was published in local newspapers and follow-up letters to the editor from the local League presidents in November.

MOTION PASSED: To submit a letter to the DEP from the 3 LWV presidents on the Colts Neck Manor application maintaining that it is a new application and not an extension of the earlier submission. (Louise, Barbara, and Roberta ? to draft.)

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## Calendar

- The Board to initial steps to develop the 2022 ILO Calendar. Brainstormed what we intend to do and when in the areas of *Hot Topics*, *County Interactions*, *Vote 411*, *Voter Education and Registration*, *Candidate Forums*, *Public Relations*, *Annual Meeting*, *Governance*, *Natural Resources*, *Training*. The draft calendar is posted on [lwvsmc.org](http://lwvsmc.org), "Members Only," ILO Room.
  - Calendar planning generated discussion and decisions, including:
    - Hot Topics: Suggested topics for July (New Redistricting Maps) and November (NJ's Affordable Housing policies and laws, including their relationship to environmental interests and regulations)
    - County Interactions: Identified the Planning Board (including the Development Review Committee), Board of Elections and Clerk's Office, and Board of County Commissioners as the focus of our 2022 interactions/observations. We agreed on the value of having observers at the meetings of these bodies and began discussion of strategies to recruit and train volunteers.
    - VOTE411: Agreed on the value of recruiting and training members who could handle the back-office VOTE411 software interface to enter and publish races, provide technical support to candidates, and collect and report statistics. Currently Anne Torres and Ted Dellinger handle these responsibilities. Emphasized the importance of marketing and publicizing VOTE411.
    - Public Relations: Realized the value of convening the County-wide PR team to develop a plan for the year, including a Press Conference in the third quarter to lay out the League's work to engage, register, and educate voters (VOTE411, forums, election webinar, Get-Out-The-VOTE, etc.). Marianne will call the team together.
    - Candidate Forums:
      - Deferred to the March Board meeting the discussion/decision on the question of virtual v. in-person forums, fees, etc.
      - Set a date (4/30) to offer Moderator Training. Sharon will confirm availability of Marie Curtis and Susan Sferas and check date with LWVNJ office.
      - Briefly discussed our policy/strategy for selecting what forums to hold. We initiate and sponsor the County Candidates Forum. For the most part, we respond to inquiries and requests.
      - Set the date for the County Candidates Forum: 9/28.
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- Governance: Confirmed that we will continue with every-other-month ILO Board Meetings at 1 p.m. the first Wednesday of the month (3/2, 5/4, 7/6, 11/2). The three presidents will meet the intervening months.
  - Membership participation: Brainstormed ideas for engaging/recruiting/training members to “staff” the programs/initiatives identified in the calendar:
    - Hold another Observer Corps event (Workshop? Seminar?)
    - Develop a grassroots strategy for building an Observer Corps to target specific government agencies/bodies, recruit members likely to have an interest in that agency (residents of a given municipality, for example), and hold a seminar educating potential volunteers on how that body operates, etc. along with tips on observing.
    - Conduct a member poll of interests. Lisa Iannucci of LWVSMC is working on a poll that could be adapted and expanded Countywide. Sharon, Barb, and Louise offered to take this on and Evelyn will send them Lisa’s work. Barb suggested asking members to list their top three interests in LWV and inviting them to join the work in two of the three areas.
    - Conduct phone interviews with members.
  - Calendar planning for the Annual Meeting was not covered and will be deferred to the March Board Meeting.

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**Close-**

- Adjourned at 3:00
  - Next Meeting 1 p.m., Wednesday, March 2 (LWGRBA lead)
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