LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS® OF HAMILTON-WENHAM

Steering Committee Minutes

Tuesday, December 10, 2024, 6:00pm
Wenham Senior Center, 10 School St.
Approved 1/14/2024

Jane Kusel, Chair
Dacia Rubel, Recording Secretary

SC Members Present: Jane Kusel (Chair), Dacia Rubel (Recording Secretary), MJ Brown, Steph MacLeod, Christina Holz, Lindsay Schnabel, Bethany Swanson

Absent: Max King

Other Members Present: Lorraine Miller

Call to Order and Minutes

- The meeting was called to order at 6:07 p.m.
- November 12, 2024 minutes approved (unanimously, with Christina abstaining)

SubCommittee Area Report

Governance - Dacia

- Steering Committee status
    - Leadership Retreat - Our Retreat will be on Monday, January 6th at 4:00 p.m. at Dacia's house. SC Members are encouraged to use Sign-up Genius Form to sign up for Potluck ASAP. Jane will circulate retreat materials - "Impact on Issues" and "Where we Stand" documents for SC members to read prior to the Retreat. Steph will share our current mission and vision statements as well. Jane did reach out to Elizabeth Warren – to see if she would be willing to have a call with the local League(s) - It is unlikely that she can join us. She has been very busy with end of term work. Lorraine will also participate in the Retreat and is considering SC service.
- ChapterSpot Training and Steps to do before January 2025: https://www.lwv.org/league-management/membership/chapterspot-resources
    - **Attend Trainings:** Done - SC members have been attending training sessions - together we have covered all of the trainings
    - **Sign up for Stripe**: Steph
    - **League Info Form**: Steph
    - **Update Roster**: MJ

- **Optional Fill out Membership Questions Form**: We decided to hold off on this as there were a lot of questions about how useful this will ultimately be.
- **Complete Annual League Survey**: We will complete at our Retreat by Committee (Dacia will put on Agenda)
- **Add Links to Chapterspot to your League's current website:** Steph (Note Steph mentioned that the Website Tool that comes with Chapterspot, although free, is very basic and that she thinks that we are better off with sticking with MyLO.)
- **Update your League's Bylaws**: Jane will check - we think that we are OK here. If changes need to be made we can do that at our Annual Meeting. Christina recommended that we post our DEI statement prominently on our website. We also discussed last year's bylaw amendment that changed our fiscal year to run from July 1 through June 30th to align with the Mass League. We noticed that we inadvertently neglected to adjust this years' budget to reflect that bylaw change. To resolve this issue we all agreed to extend this year's budget to run through June 30th. Steph will make this adjustment.

Finance and Data Management - Steph

- Review financials – general Discussion on status of financials. We passed around expense spreadsheet and the general consensus is that we are doing well at this point
- LWVMA Data Inputs – all up to date - we are not on the naughty list!!! Thx Steph!
- LCC Grant updates MJ reported that we were awarded:
  - Civics Bee $1000
  - Water Resources & Conservation - $700 (since we did not receive the full amount that we requested we will not do a town mailing) We discussed other possible ways to advertise - maybe an Ad in the new HW News.
- Scharfman Grant- Dacia reported that for some reason our grant application was not received by LWVMA. However, Dacia will resubmit our application in January for $400 to cover costs for / new vote sign / materials – cards, table frames, boxes – misc. supplies – voter engagement materials.

Membership - MJ

- Roster & Dues Updates – no changes to the roster – 10 people outstanding for dues. SC members volunteered to call individuals as follows:
  - Beth Babcock - ??

- Anne Brady, Lisa Craig - CH
- Jen Daniels, Diane Dixon, Evelyn Shuman - DR
- Martha Farrell, Carrie Jelsma, Nancy Peterson - MJ
- Kristen Kassner - Jane

Communications, Calendar & Website - Steph/MJ/Jane

- Update on Facebook. Nothing new posted. We discussed at a minimum regularly importing posts from the Mass and US Leagues. MJ will find our informal guidelines about postings and share with the SC.
- Update on Website - thank yous to the Town Clerks for the work that they did during the Election have been emailed, posted on FB and on our website. The SC unanimously authorized Steph to pay $265 to renew our 5 year license for our domain name. Christina suggested featuring our DEI policy more prominently on our website. There seemed to be agreement that this would be a good idea.
- Instagram - We have an account. We agreed to maybe use this tool to generate interest leading up to the Civics Bee. Bethany suggested that maybe we let a student control our account during the Bee for live action coverage. All agreed that this is an interesting idea.
- Legislative Corner – Jane to work on pulling together information for January when the legislative session begins.
- Calendar – Jane to lead review during the Retreat for any changes/updates.

Civics Engagement - MJ/Dacia

- Volunteer Fair: MJ will submit expenses to the LCC for reimbursement. MJ to work with Steph to gather receipts for the final report.
- Speaker Series - Water Resources & Conservation follow-up event - Lindsay reported that the event will be on Feb. 4, 2025 from 6:30-8:30 at the Community House.
    - Community House Fee of $90 has been paid. The SC suggested that 40 or so chairs should be set up for the event. It was noted that the CH has a water filler station.
    - Project lead/liaison with IRWA - Erin Bonney Casey - Erin's team will put together some advertising materials - Reference to LWVHW should be included along with appropriate funding credit to the LCC.
    - Speakers - Erin, Bruce Tarr, Kristin Kassner, and DPW Director of Hamilton - Tom Olsen (to discuss water quality).
    - Lorraine agreed to contact Eric Mansfield, Wenham's Water Superintendent to ensure that Wenham is represented.
    - Lindsay will get in touch with HW CAM to record the event.

- Upcoming CE Events
    - Civic Engagement Subcommittee Planning Meeting, Thursday, November 21 - This was the best meeting eva!
    - Focus was on the Civics Bee. The subcommittee worked to reorganize tasks with a goal to get as much done in advance as possible to decrease the stress leading up to the Bee. MJ agreed to document the suggested organizational changes and distribute them to the subcommittee for comment.
    - MJ will send Dacia the prize list etc. and Dacia will contact Tess and Ivana to see if they could start collecting prizes ASAP.
    - Jane to line up video questions and judges.
    - Civics Bee 2025 will be on March 13, 2025.
    - Info Session on 3A? - Nancy Stehfest (Hamilton) and Stacy Donelly (Wenham), chairs of the Democratic Town Committees, inquired about the possibility of the League hosting an informational forum on 3A. At present, we will keep the information sheet on our website updated and continue to monitor legal developments. There was consensus among SC members that at the moment we do not want to commit to hosting this event. We may consider hosting something in the future as things evolve, and if we have the resources to devote to such an event.

Elections and Voter Services -

- Running for Office Booklet – Jane reported that after digging around she was able to update the booklet and has sent the draft to Carin and Dianne for comments. Jane has already received Dianne's comments and expects to receive Carin's comments by the end of the week. The new "interim" Booklet will be available on-line to start and will not include testimonials. We may consider printing copies in the future. We also discussed developing a social media campaign around the release of the updated booklet while highlighting open offices.
- Candidates Night -
    - Efforts to recruit coordinator to take ownership continue - nothing new to report. We will revisit in January.

Advocacy and Legislative - Jane

- Nothing new to report.

MA and US League

- MA - Webinar - Unfiltered Voices: A Conversation on DEI in a Changing World - Bethany to attend
- LWVUS - Effort underway to make ERA happen.

New Business

- **HW Local Newspaper:** Christina, who is on the HW News Board, reported that the first issue of this newspaper will be delivered this week. On behalf of LWVHW, Dacia wrote a letter to the editor welcoming the newspaper to our community and emphasizing the importance of local news. Christina will send around information about how to donate to the paper.

Meeting adjourned at 8:10 p.m.

Next Meeting – January 14, 2025 at 6 p.m. at the Wenham Senior Center