League of Women Voters of Thurston County

Minutes, Board meeting, November 7, 2018 1:30-3:30pm

Olympia Unitarian Universalist Church, 2315 Division St. NW, Olympia 98502

Present: Sandra Herndon, Mary Moore, Shelley Ferer, Julie Frick, Valerie Hammett, Zena Hartung, Sue Bredensteiner, Connie Christy, Paula Holroyde & Carol Goss

1. Call to order - President Sandra Herndon called the meeting to order at 1:35pm

Carol facilitated a review of the Covenant developed at the 7/16/18 Board Retreat:
> Humor (is important) > Listen to all opinions > Kindness (also important)
> Respect/Be on time > Please don’t interrupt > Agree to disagree agreeably
> (Give) time to reflect & consider > Build a community of inclusion
> System for making decisions (and follow-up) > Support one another

Forgiveness, acceptance... and gratitude

Elements added to the Covenant include:
- The league is a consensus building organization
- Everyone is welcome and has a voice
- Questions and ideas from observers or guests are welcome but need to wait until the end of the meeting

Words, Tone of Voice and Non-verbal cues matter and impact communication. Being self-reflective and mindful of how we deliver our messages enhances the intent of our messages. We can continue to add to the Covenant as needed.

2. Agenda review, announcements

a. Sandra proposed that our league co-sponsor the Women’s March, scheduled Jan. 19, 2019. This requires our endorsement and a $200 donation. Mary moved and Sue seconded Sandra’s proposal to co-sponsor the Women’s March. All approved.

b. Need for debit card? Sandra explained that previously the league had a credit card to easily pick up supplies or paying for services. Mary moved and Valerie seconded to table the debit card discussion until after the budget is revised. All approved.

3. Consent agenda for approval

a. Minutes for 10/3/18 Board Meeting - Minutes were approved

b. Financial report. In Cynthia’s absence, we reviewed the financial documents compiled by Cynthia and sent earlier. Sue raised some questions and after discussion and clarification, Paula moved and Sue seconded to accept the financial report as written. All approved.

Mary is creating a budget sub-committee of League members (Board members: Cynthia, add-hoc as current treasurer, and Annie), Cathy Turk (a new member and colleague of Mary’s – 360-791-9713), and Leslie Williamson (a new member and good friend of Julie’s; Leslie was accounting advisor and did the accounting work for the 2018 Ed Fund Luncheon – 360-878-2071). All have solid financial backgrounds and will revamp how the budget is presented/organized. The revision process will include budget goals.
for each program so that committee chairs have funds for supplies and discretion for making purchases throughout the year for the various programs. All agreed to this plan.

4. Committee reports
   
a. Voter services—update
   Connie Christy
   Connie asked about funds for clipboards during voter registration. Everyone approved Connie to purchase the necessary supplies for voter registration.

Connie reported that Voter Services volunteer and league member Pat Harrigan goes to the Olympia Community Court every Wednesday morning to register voters. This court is one of only a handful of its kind in the whole country, where defendants can perform community service instead of languishing in jail. Pat’s hope is that instead of incarceration and recidivism, these offenders will engage in community activities and transform their lives, including voting. An article about Olympia’s Community Court appeared in the October 31, 2018 US News & World Report – Cities section (https://www.usnews.com/news/cities/articles/2018-10-31/cities-turn-to-community-courts-to-address-nonviolent-offenders).

b. Communication—Voter, website
   Sue Bredensteiner
   Sue thanked everyone for content and articles for the October Voter. Sandra asked how many of us visit the league website. She reminded us that the website is our public face so please visit often and be familiar with its content.

More on digital communication & Communication Committee - In mid-June, Sandra received an email from Caroline Metzger saying that she needed to step out of her website volunteer support role by the end of the year (sooner if possible) but is still committed to helping with the Ed Fund Luncheon. Since no one on the board had/has the skills needed to support our digital communications, this change became a high priority for the LWV-TC and Sandra.

On October 21, Sandra called a meeting with R Peggy Smith (LWV-TC webmaster) and Sue Bredensteiner (VOTER editor and Roster Manager) to meet Ralph Cumberland (a former League member who had attended the first LWV-TC meeting in September and been able to get the projector and Judge Carol Murphy’s computer to “talk to one another” thereby making the presentation a success, and Katrina Keleher (who had helped Caroline set up LWV-TC’s new website in 12/2016 and was referred by Pat Dickason). Both have offered to give LWV-TC volunteer digital support going forward at least for this year.

The outcome is that Sue B will be the contact for Katrina and Ralph and will let them know bi-monthly what needs to be fixed/added/deleted from the website and Nation Builder which is the platform for the website and the local League membership list. While this is not a role Sue would have chosen, off-board volunteers are often reluctant to receive lots of emails each week that also might give conflicting direction.

LWV-TC Board also discussed the newly posted list of committees (http://www.lwvthurston.org/committees) and as yet to be posted new committee opportunities list (see Attachment A). The board is fine with the committee list, BUT does NOT want a volunteer opportunities list (see Attachment B) to include any more than the six main categories: Advocacy, Communications, Development/Fundraising, Membership, Public Events (or maybe this should be Events?), Voter Services. The specific opportunities will be the purview of the membership committee (member handout/new member welcomes) and individual committee chairpeople. Further, the board
wants to continue to route website member and prospective member inquiries about volunteer opportunities through the Volunteer Manager (currently Shelley Ferer) rather than receive constant updates from the website themselves.

**Facebook—posting guidelines**

In Annie’s absence, Sandra reported that there has been some discussion on Facebook regarding partisan and nonpartisan articles being published on behalf of the league. Sandra cautioned that sound judgement is required of our posted content to maintain the league’s nonpartisan position and safeguard our credibility.

Sue reported that leagues across the country are grappling with this issue because just posting a statement that LWV is nonpartisan and does not support candidates or political parties does not tell the whole League story. Using just the nonpartisan sentence also can alienate new or prospective members who are interested in advocacy rather than partisanship. And for 98 years the League of Women Voters has truly been about education and advocacy—so much more than that one sentence.

LWVUS redesigned its website ([http://LWV.org](http://LWV.org)) a year or so ago; the nonpartisan statement is not on the home page. This is what LWVUS leads with: **Empowering Voters. Defending Democracy**.

It isn’t until the fourth dropdown menu “About Us” that a visitor finds:

**We envision a democracy where every person has the desire, the right, the knowledge and the confidence to participate. We believe in the power of women to create a more perfect democracy.**

**The League is proud to be nonpartisan, neither supporting nor opposing candidates or political parties at any level of government, but always working on vital issues of concern to members and the public.**

And even then, the nonpartisan sentence does not stand alone but is modified by a statement of how the League works.

Sue continued: “Indeed, these distinctions are important enough to me that I am asking the board to use the following statement drawn from paragraphs 3 & 4 of the LWVUS history ([https://www.lwv.org/about-us/history](https://www.lwv.org/about-us/history)) when talking about/pointing to our nonpartisanship on our FB page, the website, and appropriate documents (the board agenda/VOTER/updates and blasts) so that folks who are interested in LWV-TC learn a broader and more accurate story about the League.

“Since 1920, the League of Women Voters has been an activist, grassroots organization whose leaders believed that citizens should play a critical role in advocacy. It was then, and is now, a nonpartisan organization—neither supporting nor opposing candidates or political parties at any level of government—but always working on vital issues of concern to members and the public.”

**Sentence about LWV and voting from LWVUS to be added for Zena (see below): “LWV works to increase voters’ access to the polls, including expanding early voting, automatic and online voter registration.”**

During the discussion that followed, Zena asked that we also include a sentence about voting. On Thursday, Sue forwarded the above statement along with a sentence about voting to all board members for comment. We will vote to adopt the statement at the December board meeting.
c. Ed Fund Luncheon/auction report

Julie reported that Ticket Sales totaled $6,760 (102 x $65.00) + $2,290 donations and $1,692 from the Silent Auction = $10,742.00 minus $3,572 in expenses Total $5,478 goes into the education fund and funds from the Silent Auction $1,692 goes into the operating fund.

Final numbers will be posted soon on the website.

Next steps for fund-development

A discussion ensued about whether to continue the league’s fundraising treasure sale. This sale historically occurred every 2 years. Considering the cost of time and labor with the low rate of return, Mary moved and Connie seconded to skip the 2019. Bob and Bonnie Jacobs have been wonderful hosts and supporters to have hosted this event for years.

d. Membership—update on new member orientation

Valerie Hammett

Valerie reported that there are 152 current members. Six new members came to Valerie’s home for the new member orientation. Attendees received two new handouts: one is a checklist of LWV-TC volunteer opportunities and the other a description of “What the League Does.”

The committee is designing new membership packets that will include a LWV-TC Directory, the TRY brochure, the two handouts, and a copy of the civics text: The State We’re In: Washington.

The committee’s next step is finalizing plans for an engagement workshop in the spring. This will be an educational event facilitated by Judy Diero and Sarah Phillips (long-time League members from King County) who use a curriculum helping new members understand more about the league (history, mission, national and local policy work, etc.). Before approving the event, a plan including the various costs needs to be clarified. Zena moved and Paula seconded bringing the proposal to the December board meeting. Valerie will prepare a proposal for December with full operational details.

Compiling a list of prospective members/friends/supporters – Sandra propose that we compile a list of prospective members, those who attend league events or community members sharing like values to invite into the league. Shelley volunteered to help compile such a list.

Roster

Sue Bredensteiner

Sue continues to reconcile the multiple lists that track LWV-TC’s 152 members and includes the Nation Builder list, the Mail Chimp list, and the LWVUS Roster. While these lists do not yet match, we do have an Excel list of our 152 members and it has been uploaded to Mail Chimp so paid members (along with a numbers of community friends) are getting the VOTER and VOTER Updates.

That Excel list is being used for member contact info in the 2018-2019 Directory, which also includes LWV-TC Bylaws and Positions.
AGENDA REORGANIZATION

Time grew short and priorities were narrowed to include the water study. Mary asked that her topic of long-range planning—goals, annual action steps be placed as first on the agenda for the next meeting. Zena seconded and all approved. Ideas to maximize meeting time were brainstormed including stating length of time needed for each topic to better manage time constraints.

The meeting was extended for an additional 30 minutes.

Topics MELD; Update on Coffee with the League and Plans for Jan-April 2019 were tabled until next month.

5. Events – Water study report

Paula and Zena

Paula presented a report reflecting the painstaking research conducted by a number of organizations and committees related to the environment and impacts of climate change. Thurston County Water Resource Inventory Areas (WRIAs) for Nisqually (11), Deschutes (13), Kennedy-Goldsborough (14), Lower Chehalis (22), and Upper Chehalis (23) are required to develop watershed plans. The WRIAs are made up of a broad spectrum of county constituents, and Paula is currently the League representative on each. Each WRIA also will submit requests for water projects and the studies must be finished by 2021.

Zena asked to be appointed to represent the League on WRIA 13. All approved.

Given the WRIA timelines, the LWV-TC Water Study Committee believes its timeline should be extended to mid-2021 in order to include the WRIA work and not be immediately obsolete. Sue moved that the timeline for the Water Study be changed with a wrap-up date of mid-2021 rather than 2020 as approved at the May 2018 Annual Meeting; Paula seconded. ALL approved.

In addition, the committee wants to present three events in early 2019 to educate members and interested community residents. Sue moved that LWV-TC present these three meetings in early 2019 and Paula seconded. All approved. Paula will present details for these meetings at the December board meeting.

Paula’s report also covered:
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Coffee with the league – In-depth discussions of issues on the mid-term ballot and a field trip to the ballot processing plant occurred on 11/5.
.
Thurston County Conservation District Meeting (7 hours including the work session).
.
Strengthening Sanctuary. Meeting dates and times

6. Adjourned at 4:00pm.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Carol Goss, Secretary
THE LWVUS, LWVWA, & LWV-TC WORK TO
Empower Voters and Defend Democracy

STRUCTURE: Since 1920 the League has been an activist, grassroots organization whose leaders believed that voters should play a critical role in democracy. Our members are passionate activists who support our work in all 50 states and in more than 700 communities.

LWVUS—the national umbrella that encompasses state and local Leagues—has two arms: LWVUS encourages informed and active participation in government (based on careful study of issues and a consensus process), works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy. The League of Women Voters Education Fund (LWVEF) works to register voters, provide voters with election information through voter guides as well as candidate forums and debates.

MISSION: The League envisions a democracy where every person has the desire, the right, the knowledge and the confidence to participate. We believe in the power of women to create a more perfect democracy.

NONPARTISAN: The League is proud to be nonpartisan, neither supporting nor opposing candidates or political parties at any level of government, but always working on vital issues of concern to members and the public.

WORK: At the local level, LWV-TC EDUCATES AND ADVOCATES on a variety of issues including:
NATURAL RESOURCES (Water, Housing, Conservation); SOCIAL POLICY (Criminal Justice, Poverty, Homelessness); GOVERNMENTAL ISSUES (Civic Education, Redistricting, Water, Global Warming, Energy).

LWV-TC INFORMS THE PUBLIC THROUGH public meetings on local issues, candidate forums moderated in both live and taped formats, monthly VOTER—a newsletter circulated to members and friends of the League, and the TRY—They Represent You, a free directory of elected officials (distributed at libraries and other community locations). LWV-TC also does VOTER REGISTRATION at community events and in schools.

LWV-TC undertakes IN-DEPTH STUDIES OF ISSUES and after a consensus process with its members adopts positions, which underpin its ability to speak to the community and government; LWVUS and LWVWA also have positions based on this same process. Currently LWV-TC is involved in a Water Resources Study, revisiting work done and adopted in 2008. LWV-TC POSITIONS include: Child Care, Indian Treaty Rights, Juvenile Justice, Land Use Planning, Local Government Options–Thurston County, Olympia City Government, Port Districts, Urban Growth Management, Water Resources.

LWV-TC MEMBERS USE CURRENT TALENTS AND SKILLS OR LEARN NEW ONES TO ENSURE OUTREACH TO MEMBERS AND THE THURSTON COUNTY COMMUNITY WITH EFFECTIVE EDUCATION AND ADVOCACY PROGRAMS

League of Women Voters of Thurston County, PO Box 2203, Olympia, WA 98507
http://www.lwvthurston.org/
https://www.facebook.com/League-of-Women-Voters-of-Thurston-County-94132070854/
VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES FOR MEMBERS

The LWV-TC is working hard to engage Thurston County residents of all ages not just as informed voters, but as energetic and effective volunteers. There are six major areas where we need volunteer help. Within each area there are a variety of volunteer opportunities available.

Check the area(s) that you want to work with the League. Someone already volunteering in that area will contact you to discuss how you best can use your talents to pursue your passions.

Lend your time and expertise to further our mission of educating Thurston County citizens to take action that makes a positive impact in our community.

VOTER SERVICES

☐ Register voters: preparation tasks or on the front lines at various locations
☐ Work with get out the vote (GOTV): call voters, work on GOTV voter survey, develop innovative ideas
☐ Assist with candidate forums: developing questions, serving as moderator/interviewer or time-keepers, bring refreshments, help with studio logistics

MEMBERSHIP

☐ Develop and implement new members recruitment plans
☐ Perform social and networking activities
☐ Design and produce member info card, Membership Handbook/Directory, and other handouts
☐ Do social media for members
☐ Manage Excel membership lists

ADVOCACY

☐ Help with Tuesday Coffee with the League
☐ Support LWVWA lobby team: attend legislative hearings and write letters to the editor on specific bills
☐ Follow and influence local government policies and practices: attend county, city, or port committees
☐ Organize or host events to support LWV endorsed positions or programs

FUNDRAISING

☐ Use Excel to track fundraising activities
☐ Create new fundraising ideas to enhance or replace current endeavors
☐ Chart best uses of PayPal or other payment programs to benefit from cellphones or other technologies

COMMUNICATIONS

☐ Write, produce and circulate Voter (newsletter) in WORD and MailChimp
☐ Monitor or update website in NationBuilder
☐ Update and provide Facebook and other social media for members and the community

PUBLIC EVENTS

☐ Plan, schedule and run a general meeting
☐ Design public relations activities for a public meeting/event: flyer or poster, event specific content for the website, suggest best places for advertising
☐ Provide technical assistance during or after an event: set up and monitor projection or video equipment, edit video content, take pictures and edit for use on the website

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