

**League of Women Voters of Thurston County
November 11, 2020: 1:30-3:30 pm, via Zoom
Board Meeting Minutes**

Present: President Karen Tvedt, Carol Goss, Laurie Craig, Leslie Williamson, Patricia Harrigan, Shari Silverman, Peggy Smith, Julie Frick. Fran Beard, Tony Wilson, Nathaniel Jones, Shelley Kneip

Absent: None

Guest: Gail Wrede, Voter Services Co-Chair

Call to Order and Check-in: Karen called the meeting to order at 1:30 pm. Check-in centered on the Where's the Water Form that was held via Zoom last evening. There were many comments about how amazing it was. Karen followed up by mentioning other amazing accomplishments realized so far this year. She encouraged us to take a deep breath and celebrate these accomplishments.

Review of Agenda: Karen noted that several items on the agenda that have been pending due to the press of other business: the need for policies and procedures in areas like communications, league sponsored projects and priorities and perhaps other areas. She proposed that we start with a discussion about the League's mission and roles as outlined in our handbook, and then discuss areas where policies and procedures are needed. Ultimately, this would likely lead to subgroups by topic, e.g., communications. She also mentioned the need to establish a calendar of events/programs for the remainder of 2020-2021, as well as the need to establish some type of "filing" system of work that has been done by committees that can be used in the future.

Consent Agenda: One item on the consent agenda was accepted

- Board Minutes (10/14/2020), from Secretary Peggy Smith

Two items were pulled for discussion.

- Financial Report (Oct 31, 2020), from Treasurer Leslie Williamson. Leslie noted that there had been spending related to membership and routine items. Also there have been some donations to the Education Fund. Leslie answered questions about the status of our fund balances.

Peggy m/s/p to accept the Financial Report.

- Social Media Counts, from Peggy Smith (see Appendix 1). There was a brief discussion about the utility and timing of such a report. It was agreed that an intermittent, maybe quarterly, report of this type would be of interest.

Committee/Activity Updates

Ad Hoc Finance Committee Vice-President Julie reported on the current fundraising campaign, asking for donations to the Education Fund. It is doing well, and it will run through the end of November. Julie also noted that the Nisqually Grant application is still in the works. It was mentioned during this item that there is a high school student who has contacted Cynthia Pratt and is hoping to serve in an intern role to earn community service hours. Julie agreed to follow up on this.

Voter Services: Co-Chair Gail Wrede, referring to the Be A Voter Campaign report (see Appendix 2) touched on various aspects of the extensive work that had been done by committee members. Some of what they did was tried and true, some was new and innovative, and much was adjusted considering COVID constraints.

Gail reported that the TRY will be updated right after the November 26 certification of the elections. They plan to print fewer copies than last year, while taking advantage of more efficient distribution methods.

Co-Chair Patricia Harrigan announced that she will be resigning from the board at the end of December. Gail has indicated that she is willing to serve on the board.

Peggy m/s/p that Gail Wrede be elected by the board to fill the position that will be vacant when Patricia Harrigan resigns.

Membership Committee Membership Chair, Carol Goss mentioned that we now have 177 members. A letter of invitation to join LWVTC will be going to non-members who registered for last evenings water forum.

Priority Setting Within the League

- Karen mentioned that this year's LWVWA Action Workshops will be held on Saturday Dec 5 and Sat Dec 12. Both will be held via Zoom, from 9:30 am – 1:00 pm. She encouraged people to attend to find out what will be the focus of our legislative action and to learn more about League.
- Karen also noted that LWVWA will soon be sending guidance related to Program (sometimes referred to as Program of Work) Planning. This is our local League's opportunity to suggest issues for statewide action or study, as well as consider what we might want to focus on in the next two years – 2021-2022.

Proposed Committee on Policies and Procedures

Tony m/s – later withdrawn – to form a Policies and Procedures Committee.

There was an extensive discussion about the need for such a committee, the relationship of the work of such a committee and bylaw revisions, and generally what this committee would be doing. At the end of the discussion seemed there needed to be more clarity on these matters, and Tony and the Second withdrew the motion. Karen indicated that she would bring a more detailed proposal to our December board meeting.

Peggy m/s/p to establish a committee to consider communications issues.

Planning for December-June 2021 Meetings and Activities

- Board meeting dates – everyone was fine with our continuing to meet on the second Wednesday of the month, from 1:30 – 3:30 pm.
- Virtual holiday party and Membership Meeting – it was agreed to hold a membership meeting, with a festive flare in preparation for December holidays, on Thursday, December 3, 2020, from 6:30 – 8:00 pm.
- The Immigration Forum planning will now be starting in earnest, and a forum will be scheduled for some time after the first of the year.
- The VOTER December issue is well lined up, and the January issue will tentatively focus on legislative issues and actions, as well as local government policy making.

Talking about Race

- DEI & Justice Committee is continuing with their formation steps. They have agreed upon a Purpose Statement. They could still use more members. As they have done outreach to other community organizations, it has become clear that others are in similar circumstances – wanting to enhance DEI efforts but not completely sure about or set on how that can be done.

Good of the Order

Tony talked about the December 10, 2020 scheduled execution in a Federal Prison of a woman named Lisa Montgomery. Considering the League's Position against the death penalty, he said that someone should be speaking out against this. Karen suggested this might best be done at the national level and she would check on this.

Adjournment The meeting was adjourned at 3:30 pm.

Submitted by Peggy Smith, Secretary

Approved December 9, 2020

Appendix 1

LWV THURSTON COMMUNICATION METRICS With Summary Notes by Peggy Smith, 11/9/2020

The Facebook counts are provided by Facebook, and they represent the number in the recorded time frame and the percent change during the previous 28 days.

FACEBOOK COUNTS							
as of 9/24 -- 646 Followers and 568 Likes				as of 11/5 -- 661 Followers and 583 Likes			
TIME	#POSTS	Reached	%change	Engagement	% change	Page Likes	New Page Likes
"7/26-8/22	49	498	+1	938	+84	561	3
8/12 - 9/8		337	-44	650	-6		9
8/24- 9/20		310	-38	325	-65		7
9/3-9/29		285	-33	359	-46		5
9/16-10/13		934	274	476	131		14
9/19 - 10/16		950	208	450	50		14
9/25 - 10/22		1,010	261	420	35		13
10/7 - 11/3		918	40	396	-3		10

NOTE: After decreasing posting toward the end of September, traffic increased after the Be A Voter campaign postings began.

CANDIDATE FORUM VIEWS									
	22 Pos 1	22 Pos 2	22 Sen	CC #1	CC #2	Court #8	Sec of State	Com Pub Lands	Treasurer
PRIMARY	233	241	105	211	179	622			
GENERAL	80	122	104	105	105	132	1,014	355	3,105

NOTE: Local Primary races appeared to be a bigger draw than the General races.

TWITTER ANALYTICS 28 day summary with change over previous period, provided by Twitter -- Our number of followers went from 4 to 26.

Tweets	Tweet impressions	Profile visits	Mentions	Followers
25 8.7%	2,265 17.2%	24 35.1%	18 14.3%	26 3

Of the numerous Twitter metrics to track, Twitter impressions should be high on your list. When combined with other metrics, tracking impressions gives you an idea of how far your Tweets have gone. NOTE: Initial data suggests that Twitter is a means to reach more people.

Appendix 2

LWV THURSTON “BE A VOTER” CAMPAIGN

Introduction:

The Thurston County League of Women Voters went through a major redesign of its activities and committee structure in 2020 to respond to both the COVID-19 pandemic, the post office revisions, and increased national anxiety about elections in the U.S. The Voter Services team expanded from 5 people to 12, diversified its membership to include a wide range of ages, ethnicities, backgrounds and skills, and changed the focus of its work from in-person voter registration to a print and social media voter education and voter access campaign.

A major focus of the Voter Services team’s work focused on the development of a “Be A Voter” campaign. One sub-committee led by Pat Dickason focused on creating a video and creating messages for the presidential primary. Another sub-committee led by Shelley Kneip and Shari Silverstein focused on candidate forums. The “Be A Voter” campaign, developed by Susan Fiksdal, was based on national studies of voter behavior and motivation strategies. The campaign was financed in part with a grant from the Washington State LWV Education Fund, written by Gail Wrede. Voter Services team members contributed over 500 hours of volunteer service for “Be A Voter” activities from May to October 2020; in addition, other League members contributed uncounted hours of service to get out the vote.

Strategies and activities:

- Three graphics for the “Be A Voter” campaign was developed by college intern Gracie Anderson, designed to be used for social media, our website, and outreach to community groups. Five messages were developed for local radio stations for the Presidential Primary. Only KXXO, Mix96.1 broadcast them.
- A poster for the “Be A Voter” campaign was designed by Jo Sahlin and printed in campaign-sign size. Fifty of the posters were mounted on posts to be used for yard signs and for waving in public places. In addition, 50 signs were placed in store windows and public places in downtown Olympia and Lacey.
- Twenty-one members of the Thurston County LWV waved “Be A Voter” posters at many Suffrage commemorative events throughout the County in July and August.

- Voter Services members submitted “Be A Voter” campaign materials to over 40 community groups including churches, civic organizations, colleges, and many others.
- A “Be A Voter video” was developed by Pat Dickason and Susan Fiksdal in collaboration with Jenna Mason Productions. It was distributed via our website, YouTube, Facebook, Twitter, and sent electronically to schools and community groups. It was also posted on the Timberland Library website serving five counties.
- 1000 Be A Voter Postcards were distributed at churches, colleges, and businesses.
- 2000 “Be A Voter” postcards were mailed to registered voters who had not voted in the primary election. The focus was ages 18-21½. This postcard was designed to be a reminder to vote and to encourage voting with this statement on the back of the card: “You are part of a study to determine whether receiving a reminder helps people to vote.”
- 1000 “Be A Voter” flyers were distributed to the Rainier school and the Timberland library system. These flyers included a QR code to access vote11.org and were designed by Amy Peloff and modified for printing by Jo Sahlin.
- “Be A Voter” messages were posted regularly on the LWVTC website, Twitter, and Facebook pages July through November. All three graphics were used on our website, one in August, one in September, and the postcard graphic in October-November. The planned social media paid/sponsored posts did not occur, as Facebook no longer allows advertising related to politics of any kind—including messages around voting.
- Voter Services members and Board members submitted 4 letters to the editor and 2 editorials to the Olympian, as well as a “Be A Voter” article to *Thurston Talk*, *Nisqually Valley News*, *Senior News* and *Works in Progress*.
- Voter registration occurred during the month of October at New Life Baptist Church. Jamie Poree provided “Be A Voter” materials to hand out.
- LWV TC members waved “Be A Voter” signs throughout the county, in six locations throughout the county in October. Over 25 members took 1 ½ hour shifts. Feedback from passers-by was generally positive.
- An ad was placed in the Olympian regarding the available viewing dates for candidate forums. In addition, a link to the forums on YouTube was sent to over 40 community groups.

- Assessment of our work in November and December will include comparing young voters targeted with postcards with another randomized group. In addition, community groups will be asked if they used our “Be A Voter” campaign materials for the primary and general elections. We will also have a final count of views of our two videos, “How to Vote” and “Be A Voter.”

Campaign sharing:

- On June 10, 2020, Gail Wrede and Susan Fiksdal presented our Be A Voter Campaign to the State League’s Marketplace of Ideas Zoom Meeting. Our Voter Services Unite! Meeting included 4 other Leagues.
- The New Member Orientation Part 1 presented to LWVTC members on July 16 included a presentation by Gail Wrede about the Voter Services team.
- “Be A Voter” campaign information was sent to Voter Services chairpersons in all the local LWV leagues in Washington and to the State League.
- The “Be A Voter” campaign was presented to the LWV Skagit Valley league annual meeting via zoom by Gail Wrede.
- “Be A Voter” masks with a pattern design featuring the word “VOTE” were provided to team members who have received many favorable comments from others while wearing the masks. These masks were designed by Amy Peloff and advertised on our website.

National Voter Registration Day:

- In person voter registration efforts were conducted on the St. Martin University campus. Hundreds of flyers and voter registration materials were passed out to students. Eleven new registrations were submitted to the Auditor’s Office.
- Voter registration forms were distributed to 7 homeless shelters, 2 veteran’s organizations, 2 city halls, Olympia Probation office and 3 medical clinics.
- The Thurston League registered as a participant with the National Voter Registration Day campaign and submitted a report of our activities.
- A National Voter Registration Day op ed was submitted to *The Olympian* [not published], *Thurston Talk* [published], and *Nisqually Valley News* [not published].

Candidate Forums

- Led by our president, Karen Tvedt, the TC league sponsored the Primary Election Candidate Forums on June 13 for the 22nd Legislative Senate, Representative Positions 1 and 2, the Thurston County Commissioner Districts 1 and 2, and the Thurston County Superior Court Position 8 candidates.
- The Thurston County league, led by Karen Tvedt and Shelley Kneip, partnered with Mason and Pierce counties to co-sponsor forums on June 20 for the District 2 Legislative Senate and Representative Position 2 candidates, and the District 35 Legislative Representative Position 2 candidates.
- Karen solicited questions for the forums from all members. Shelley Kneip and Susan Fiksdal revised the list and formalized questions for the primary and general elections. One new type of question was included in the general election: candidates asked a question of their opponent. This was well received.
- League members publicized the candidate forum videos presented on the LWVTC website and on other media as described above.
- As a follow-up to the forums, members requested that forum candidates provide answers to questions on VOTE411.
- In addition to these forums, committee members assisted other leagues with planning of forums for statewide races.
- The General Election Candidate Forums were held on September 12 for the same six local races as listed above. The South Sound Asian Pacific Islanders Association provided questions for some of the forums.
- The League paid for advertising in the Olympian to feature the viewing times of the candidate forums.
- In response to a request by Kelsey Monaco for a presentation of candidate forums to St. Martin's students, Susan Fiksdal sent times in each candidate forum in which candidates addressed issues of social justice and climate change.

Best Practices for the Future

- Our "Be A Voter" campaign should be continued. Its focus on identity rather than an action ("Vote!") is effective and we want to encourage people to always be voters.

- We should have a place on the website (for members only) to post the messages and images we used in this Be A Voter campaign. These can be used again in the future.
- Questions for candidates in the candidate forums need to be saved on the website as well as the plans used to organize moderators, timekeepers, and alternates.
- This report should also be posted to the website so that members can see the range of activities we engaged in. In addition, we should provide a way for members to comment or make suggestions for the future.
- We should continue to closely coordinate our efforts in Voter Services with those managing our website and social media sites.
- We need a YouTube channel for the next election cycle to make videos and candidate forums more accessible to searches.
- We need to consolidate and maintain our connections to community groups, the Timberland Library, secondary schools, faith groups, and local colleges.
- We should improve our use of social media and ensure that all our media and social media materials have consistent images and messages.

Summary:

In July 2020, there were over 197,000 registered voters. In November 2020, there were 201,692 registered voters. While the Thurston League cannot take full credit for the increase, we believe our efforts helped make a difference. The County Auditor's Office is reporting a voter participation rate of 82.7%. (Add data about post card campaign). (More summary info and lessons learned to be added).

This campaign was a large learning curve for the Voter Services team. We were building capacity and infrastructure, while implementing the campaign. Thanks to the Washington State LWV Education Fund grant, we were able to try out several approaches. At times, it felt like we were doing a "scatter-shot" approach rather than a targeted approach, mostly due to the adaptations we continually made to address the COVID-19 pandemic guidelines. One of the most successful strategies was sign-waving in the rural areas of the county (we know this from reactions of drivers and comments from pedestrians). This surprised us but left us with the knowledge that any further campaigns must be diverse in strategies, consistent in messaging, and targeted to diverse populations in the county.

