

LWV Duluth Board Meeting Minutes (corrected 12/11/23)
November 6, 2023; 5– 7 pm, Building for Women Phyllis France Room

Members Present: Jane Hovland, Anita Gille, Nancy Aldridge, Jeri Quest, Ellen Wiss, Sue DeNio, Pam Kramer, Lori Dando, Theresa O’Gara, Candy Winkler, Kay Allen, & Sue Henke
Not able to be present: Katherine Rasley, Sandy Grandmaison, Gwen Thorson

1. **Welcome** Sue Henke, Observer Corps chair and newly appointed board member was welcomed by the Board.
2. **American Indian Heritage Month:** a brief discussion of this in relation to our DEI focus occurred.
3. **Consent agenda (Materials were circulated prior to the meeting. The agenda was approved unanimously after 1st by Sue DeNio, 2nd by Pam Kramer) and include:**
 - a. Minutes of September meeting
 - b. Treasurer’s report
 - c. Membership
 - d. DEI
 - e. Communications
 - f. EAC
 - g. Voter Services, (Sue DeNio notes forums were viewed 935 times for the general election and 815 times for the primary)
 - h. Observer Corps: Sue Henke noted that communicating needs resulted in 5 new observers: Ruth McCutcheon, Barb Possin, Margaret West, Sally Larson, and Mary Faulkner.
 - i. Joyce Benson Scholarship
 - j. Special Events: Holiday Social, December 5, postcards mailed.
4. **Discussion items with possible actions**
 - a. New dues structure & Denver LWV request of LWV US to improve donation collection for local leagues. The group discussed the issues raised in a letter by the Denver LWV Treasurer about the negative impact the proposed realignment of dues collection will have on its bottom line. LWV Duluth and many other leagues will have to revise how they collect donations, because excess funds given at the time of renewal will be collected by US and apportioned according to the dues formula. This means that local leagues will not get the full value of donations made to them. The board approved writing a letter of support to Denver by our president. (See attached email)
 - b. Is it time for dues increase? After discussion, the consensus was that it is not the time for a dues increase. It might be too confusing to members, and we will wait until the dues collection process is implemented by LWV US.
 - c. Leadership meeting date with Michelle Witte & Laura Helmer: Jane will send out a doodle poll. Ellen mentioned that she would like it to be for all members of our league, however, that does not appear to be the focus.

- d. Equal-i-Tea: the Board voted to suspend the tea for this year, based on low fundraising potential and constraints of the activity itself. It was noted that concerns over continuing the Tea have been raised for a number of years as it seems to fit an older demographic and does not attract new members.
- e. Plant & Book Sale: the Board agreed that this should be an all-Board activity, relying on plant experts to assist. Sally Munger created a “How to” manual which is currently held by Mary Faulkner. That manual will be requested so we can start planning and promoting. Theresa, Pam, Anita, and Jane volunteered to coordinate this event.
- f. Financial Concerns & Donations – Nancy Aldridge presented the Board with a mockup of a donation envelope that can be mailed to members and/or passed out at our events. It included several ways of donating: check, credit card, PayPal. Anita Gille stated that recurring contributions are not feasible at this time. LWV Duluth would need to invest in software to automate and track the process. The number of people writing checks has also decreased making creating and mailing envelopes cost prohibitive. Presently we use PAYPAL as the primary mechanism for accepting renewals and donations. The need for a Fundraising Team for 2024 was noted. The discussion was tabled for now.
- g. Updated bylaws (no vote required) LWV MN has distributed guidance regarding changes in bylaws that incorporate electronic meetings and voting. These do not need to be voted on by our membership and may be added to our bylaws. Those changes are attached to these minutes. Gwen Thorson has agreed to help work on revisions to bylaws.
- h. Do we want to change terms of office for Officers? The group working on improving leadership transitions has sent out a survey to past presidents and officers regarding experiences assuming new roles. That survey may help us look at terms of office, especially for officers. A brief discussion of the issue revealed that realigning terms in office may result in unexpected problems. The board agreed to wait for the survey and recommendations from the Transition Committee.

5. Information/Announcements

- a. Statewide housing initiative, possible LWV Partnership (Pam Kramer); Pam reported that she was asked if LWV Duluth would be interested in supporting an effort to create a constitutional amendment that would allow a Housing Checkoff, similar to the Environmental Checkoff on MN State income tax filings. She is in contact with Sam Streukens who is the legislative coordinator for LWV MN.
- b. New Hampshire’s Green SnowPro program, with Izaak Walton League; January 17th This is a joint presentation on impact on chloride on fresh water, featuring Aubrey Voelker, Coordinator of the *Salt Reduction Program and Green SnowPro Watershed Assistance Section*, NH Department of Environmental Services. More information soon.

6. Presentation: Duluth's need for a low salt diet – Barb Huberty, EAC member and MPCA staff presented a brief presentation on the problem of winter chloride use and its impact on Duluth Streams. Kingsbury, Keene, and Miller Creeks are already listed as impaired; four other creeks (Merritt, Coffee, Chester, and Tischer) are at high risk for impairment due to rising chloride levels. Chloride only leaves a system through being washed out, and then, very slowly. The ecological impacts are significant, and we should do all we can to reduce chloride use. MNDOT, St. Louis County, and the City of Duluth have already reduced salting by using temperature, moisture, and snow data. Home-owners and business owners are not obligated to do this, nor are private snow removal contractors. The proposal is to make tackling this issue a Program of Action for our League. It was noted that we have not had a Program for many years, and this may help activate members. A motion was made and seconded that we approve this as a proposed Program of Action and bring it to our membership at our annual meeting in May for official action. The motion was approved unanimously. Meanwhile, the "Salt Subcommittee" (Barb Huberty, Barb Akre, and Jane Hovland), which has worked on this since May, will continue to outline facets of action.

A request was made that future meetings in the winter occur via Zoom. This wasn't discussed by the full board, but we will meet by Zoom if the weather is threatening for now until we can make a formal decision.

The meeting adjourned at 645 pm.

Jane Hovland, for the ailing Gwen Thorson