

League of Women Voters of Duluth: Board of Directors Meeting
“Zoom” meeting
November 5, 2020
5:30 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.

SECRETARY MINUTES

Present: Candy Winkler, Sandy Grandmaison, Gwen Thorson, Theresa O’Gara, Barbara Johnson, Karin Haidos, Jane Hovland, Julie Seidelmann, Gail Nouska, Ellen Wiss

Absent: Nancy Aldridge, Sue DeNio, Mary Faulkner, Gay Trachsel

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 5:36 p.m. by Co-President Candy Winkler.

Diversity Statement: The LWV Duluth Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Statement was read by Co-President Sandy Grandmaison.

Consent Agenda—Approval of the Minutes and Financials:

A **motion** was made (J. Hovland) and **seconded** (S. Grandmaison) to approve the consent agenda. **Motion passed.** The reports from the October 1, 2020 board meeting will be filed.

Committee Reports:

- ***See attached reports from the Communication, Membership, Natural Resources, and Voter Services Committees for more information.***

Additional Committee Reports:

- ***Events*** (S. Grandmaison)

- The annual “Holiday Social” has been canceled due to COVID-19. date for the Annual Meeting.

- Meg Litts has agreed to be the speaker for our “Women of Influence” event, which will be scheduled for any Thursday in February 2021.

- We hope to have the “Equali-TEA” in August 2021, in conjunction with the anniversary of the passage of the 19th Amendment.

- We are considering a “virtual event” in March 2021 as a fundraiser. Details will follow.

- ***Membership*** (T. O’Gara)

- There are 82 members from 2019-20 who have not renewed their membership.

- A virtual “Meet & Greet” will be held on November 11, at 5:00. Board members should encourage their mentee to attend and consider contacting prospective new members to attend, also.

- ***Observer Corps***

- C. Winkler announced that Sue Hanke will coordinate the Observer Corps.

- ***Natural Resources*** (J. Hovland)

- J. Hovland summarized the Don Arnosti presentation on the Talon copper-nickel mining threat. She suggested that members consider donations to the Water Legacy project.

Discussion of the 2020 Election Season:

- There was frustration with forums held (related to scheduling, limited location and public participation, etc.—primarily because of the COVID-19 situation).

—E. Wiss felt the LWV Duluth outreach effort related to voter registration was quite successful, in spite of COVID-19. Michael Wall, from the Secretary of State's office, provided "virtual" Friday updates through the election season which kept us informed and up-to-date.

—E. Wiss will send a letter to the Secretary of State, complimenting his department about Minnesota's voting process.

Announcements:

—January 7: Short board meeting, followed by a retreat with Christina Woods.
—February 4: By-laws and policies, with proposed revisions, will be presented at the board meeting. Rosemary Guttormsson and Jane Gilley will attend and assist with training.

Adjournment:

A **motion** was made (S. Grandmaison) and **seconded** (J. Hovland) to adjourn.

Motion passed. The meeting adjourned at 6:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted: Gwen Thorson, Secretary

League of Women Voters of Duluth Committee Reports for October 2020

Communications Committee Report for November Board Meeting 11/5/20

LWV Duluth email account was checked regularly, and emails were forwarded to the appropriate people.

E-News emails were sent out in September:

Reminder: "Vote From Home: yard signs available/PSA video
Voter Service Committee: Duluth News Tribune article on voting
Talon Copper-Nickel Mining Threat: Zoom presentation reminder
November 2020 LWV Duluth Voter and Senate District 7 Forum online
Emergency Polling Location Change for Precinct 29
URGENT: Voter Information for the General Election, Nov. 3

New members were added to the mailing and email databases.

LWV Duluth website and calendar updated.

Zoom meetings were put on the website calendar.
Board meeting minutes were posted on the website.
Committee pages were updated.

Senate District 7 Forum video posted on the website.
Event page created re: Talon Copper-Nickel Mining Threat presentation by Don Arnosti. Video re: Talon Copper-Nickel Mining Threat presentation posted on the website.

Facebook and Twitter

Information about LWV Duluth was posted on Facebook and Twitter.

LWV Voter Newsletter

November newsletter was created and made available online and via US mail.

There will be no December newsletter. Deadline for the January newsletter is December 15.

Submitted by:

Gwen Thorson

Julie Seidelmann

Cross Cultural Committee

The Cross Cultural Committee met on Oct. 10 for the first part of a two part discussion of Resmaa Menakem's book, *My Grandmother's Hands: Racialized Trauma and the Pathway to Mending Our Hearts and Minds*. Beth Bartlett, retired Director of the UMD Women's Studies Program is leading the discussions. A discussion of the second half of the book will be held on Nov. 14.

At the December meeting, committee members will discuss what programs they would like to see in the coming year.

Submitted by Gail Schoenfelder

Membership Committee

Membership Committee Board Report
November 5, 2020

- Membership
 - Currently we have 140 members in good standing for the 2020-21 Program year
 - 82 members from 2019-20 have not renewed
 - Snail mail letters have been sent to all members who hadn't renewed

- A list of the 82 members will be sent to all board members. If you know someone on the list please ask them to renew... We ask they you reply all with the names you have contacted
- Later in November or early in December a final notice to renew will be sent via E-News
- A Virtual Meet and Greet has been scheduled for November 11, at 5:00 p.m.
 - A snail mail invitation for the meet and greet has been sent to all new members
 - We ask you to send your mentees an email encouraging them to attend the meet and greet. We also ask you to invite your friends that would be good LWV members to the meet and greet.
 - A packet including: the directory, the LWV MN publication, “Introduction to LWV for New Members”, Interest Surveys, the *Voter*, a handout listing LWV resources and direction for signing up for them, and a LWV pin will be delivered to each new member.
 - The Virtual Meet and Greet zoom link will be emailed to each new member. If you know of a prospective member, you can get the zoom link from Theresa O’Gara

Natural Resources Committee

LWV-Duluth, Natural Resources Committee Virtual Meeting
September 21, 2020, 5:00 to 6:34 pm

Minutes Members present Theresa O’Gara, Jane Hovland, Gay Trachsel, Sally Munger, Myrna Matheson, Linda Vukson, Polly Edmunds, Meg Kerns, Mary Gabrys, Susan & Brian Darley-Hill, Lisa Fitzpatrick , Julie O’Leary, Barb Huberty, Barb Akre
Chair Munger acknowledged the death of Ruth Bader Ginsberg and her importance to all women, and her influence on men. Chair Munger welcomed the group, including new members Mary Gabrys and Polly Edmunds. There was a brief member check-in. LWV Duluth Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Statement was read by Brian and Susan Darley Hill.

League of Women Voters Duluth realizes that creative and innovative policies and practices are forged out of diverse points of view. We believe diverse perspectives are necessary for responsible and representative decision making. Let us pause to acknowledge our commitment to welcome and facilitate diversity, equity and inclusion in all aspects of our work. We strive to include people from a mix of abilities and backgrounds in all of our activities.

REPORTS

St. Louis River restoration updates - Barb Huberty [LWV-Duluth Member St. Louis River Area of Concern (SLRAOC) Coordinator, Minnesota Pollution Control Agency Remediation Division]

1. EPA just announced the start of two remediation projects in the St. Louis River Area of Concern (SLRAOC):

- a. Azcon Slip (in MN) will address 55,000 cubic yards of contaminated sediment. About 700 cubic yards will be removed and disposed of, and the remainder will be capped in place to reduce exposure to aquatic organisms. This is a \$4.5M project: MN pays \$1.575 and the rest is federal Great Lakes Legacy Act funding (a subaccount of the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative).
 - b. Howard's Bay (in WI) will address 75,000 cubic yards of contaminated sediment. All of it will be removed. This is an \$18M project, of this Fraser Shipyards and the City of Superior are paying \$6.5M.
2. Three habitat restoration projects are underway:
 - a. The nesting area on Interstate Island is complete and the enlargement of the island is in progress and should be done by the end of this construction season.
 - b. At Kingsbury Bay, the cattails and bio-media have been removed, and the bio-media is being reused at the 40th Ave W and Grassy Point sites. There is still some sediment removal underway.
 - c. At Grassy Point, the wood waste has been removed and used to create an island feature. The construction of the island is underway. If the weather holds, both Kingsbury Bay and Grassy Point will finish this season; if not, it will carry over into 2021.
3. All other construction projects are at the pre-design and design stage. MPCA just did its semi-annual update and 51.2% of management actions completed. This is a 3.7% increase compared to 6 months ago.
4. MPCA is also in the process of updating the MN remediation site story maps, which should be published in October. The agency is also undergoing a complete (long overdue) revamp of the entire SLRAOC web site, which is hoped will be ready early in 2021.
5. The Clean Water Council will be recommending \$220M in projects, unless the November and February forecasts show that further reductions are needed. The SLRAOC request is \$1.5M for FY22/23 and is hopeful that it will stay at that amount. One fly in the ointment is the possibility that the legislature will ask that \$20M in funding for Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCD) comes from the Clean Water Fund. If that happens, reductions may be necessary.
6. MPCA asked the St. Louis River Alliance to administer and engagement survey for us this past spring. One outcome was requests for presentations by 34 organizations, including LWV-Duluth, so we are gathering information from them to develop a presentation plan. This committee is already informed, so the question for LWV-Duluth is whether it would like to have a presentation to the full group. These presentations could be online, or they can wait until after COVID subsides. Groups can be combined if desired (e.g., LWV and Izaak Walton League). **The Committee indicated a desire for a membership presentation.**
7. Outside the Areas of Concern (AOC) world, but related is the fact that the St. Louis River has been on the list to have a mercury Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) prepared for many years. The TMDL had been started and then ended for a variety of reasons, but it was recently restarted.

City of Duluth Natural Resources Commission - No Report

Minnesota Environmental Partnership (MEP) updates Gay Trachsel

1. Cleveland-Cliffs is proposing an expansion to the infamous Milepost 7 tailings basin. A new Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is not scheduled, although the last one for this site was done in 1976. MEP is asking that the Army Corps not approve new permits without an EIS.
2. Suits against the Poly Met Mining project are still ongoing. It is not known when the MN Supreme Court will hear oral arguments.
3. A suit against the Twin Metals project has been filed and will most likely be heard next year.
4. MEP has asked to meet with Commissioner Laura Bishop.
5. Legislative actions are being held up by the Senate over a dispute about the Governor's emergency powers. Right now, the fracas is occurring over refusal to approve gubernatorial appointments. Two Commissioners have not been approved: Commerce and the Department of Labor and Industry commissioners have been ousted.
6. MEP is concerned that the environmental wishes of Minnesotans are being ignored. MEP is currently setting its agenda.
7. October 28 Don Arnosti is scheduled to present re: Talon metals leases in Aitkin, Carlton Counties - copper nickel mining again. The committee asked that the information be offered to the entire LWV-Duluth membership.

Izaak Walton League update - Julie O'Leary indicated that the Izaak Walton League will also be invited to hear in the Don Arnosti presentation on copper sulfide mining. Shared forums between the LWV-Duluth and the "Ikes" are still pending.

Bagit Update/Plastics Forum - Sally Munger

1. The question about how to prepare for the implementation of Duluth's fee for plastic bag use on Jan 1, 2021 was discussed. Community education is a priority. Gay Trachsel will contact Jamie Harvey about next steps. It was noted that some stores are permitting use of reusable shopping bags. We probably need to bring the issue back up again.
2. After the meeting ended, Polly Edmunds contributed the following observations: "The Coop has allowed reusable bags since sometime in August for bulk and to pack your groceries. You can also bring containers for peanut butter, honey, laundry soap, shampoo etc. refills. I also noticed on my last visit there that they have their container out again to recycle all kinds of plastic. They take not only plastic grocery bags but also the heavier plastic that grapes and some nuts etc. come in and the lighter plastic like some cereal/crackers packaging. The Super One on Superior at 14th also allows reusable bags.

Arbor Day 2020 - Myrna Matheson nothing was done by the City to recognize Arbor Day in May of 2020. It is still uncertain whether a tree will be planted for Arbor day to date. Duluth is a Tree City and needs to be reminded that failure to plant trees in honor of Arbor Day might result in revoking the designation. Myrna will follow-up with the City on the issue.

Enbridge Line 3 - An observer is needed re Line 3 activities. Jane Hovland agreed to report monthly on Line 3 activities.

Duluth Climate Mobilization - Lisa Fitzpatrick

1. An Energy Planning commission has been started. The Commission will push buildings other than the city to include conservation of energy in building planning.
2. An activism campaign is starting to focus on individuals who care about climate change for various reasons. Contact Lisa if you are interested in participating..
3. Lisa has a Community Schools class on Climate Mobilizations. See Community Schools flier.
4. Honor the Earth is having an event in Ashland against line 5 - a Funeral for Enbridge is planned.

Voting Information/Dates to remember

1. From now through Election Day City Hall is open 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. Monday - Friday for early voting and dropping off ballots
2. Oct. 27 - 31 - City Hall will be open 8 - 4:30 p.m.
3. Ballots began being sent out on Sept. 18 and should be in voters hands by the end of this week.
4. Website for Information mnvotes.org. Or 1-877-600-vote

Next virtual meeting date - Tuesday, October 20 - 5 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Jane Hovland

Voter Services Committee

Candidate Forums

It was a challenge to conduct candidate forums this fall, but we did our best and learned much along the way. The Voter Service Committee followed guidance provided by the LWV MN and only held forums in collaboration with PACT TV and filmed in their studio. We were strongly discouraged from conducting any forums over zoom or other virtual platforms. We are grateful for the partnership with PACT TV. They were generous with their time and expertise, and they put measures in place to keep all

participants safe. And thank you to the LWV Duluth members who assisted us by writing and re-writing questions for the forums.

Thank you to Susan Nelson for moderating the general election forum for MN State Senate District 7 between candidates Bergstrom and McEwen.

In the coming weeks, the LWV MN intends to convene a task force of voter service chairs with the following goal: "to debrief and draft a set of best practices and guidelines based on our collective experiences." This period of reflection will be an important step. This pandemic was both an unprecedented and fluid situation, and there's more that we can learn from what worked and what did not.

Voter Registration

Voter Registration Committee members continued their efforts up to Election Day. There is not really much to report right now other than we not only provided direct service to voters along with our Community partners by helping citizens register, obtain absentee ballots, and vote; but also, that we became a conduit for disseminating updated information from a variety of official sources.

Going forward we plan to analyze precinct data and take the opportunity to share information about challenges and successes. Our outreach may never be the same but we hope to continue to make it more inclusive, effective, and viable.

More to come in January.