League of Women Voters of Winchester

Minutes of Annual Meeting -- Thursday, June 12, 2014

Sanborn House, 15 High Street, Winchester

Moderator: Marilyn Mullane First Reader: Gloria Legvold

Recorder: Vicky Coccoluto Second Reader: Judie Muggia

The Annual Meeting began with a gathering for conversation, refreshments and opportunities to sign up for volunteer activities on a set of welcoming posters. In addition, a variety of program ideas on local, state and national issues were posted, inviting attendees to “vote” their preferences by sticking a “dot” on a line under the topics of greatest interest to them.

At 7:20 p.m. Moderator Marilyn Mullane opened the business meeting by welcoming approximately two dozen attendees; she announced Vicky Coccoluto as Recorder and Gloria Legvold as First Reader. Judie Muggia volunteered to serve as Second Reader for the minutes of the meeting.

Steering Committee Report

Marilyn highlighted the past year’s many events and accomplishments, which included the following:

* Voter registration at Winchester High School last fall and at the Chinese Cultural School this spring
* Candidate Forums – several this year, both for contested town elections and for the Primary and General Election for Katherine Clark’s State Senate seat
* Candidate interviews at WINCAM in the race for the 5th Congressional District Special Election, coordinated by Jo-Ann Michalak and her committee
* League By-Laws were revised and updated.
* A brand-new membership brochure created.
* Online option for payment of dues established.
* A fall LWVMA workshop explored ways to expand membership, and our Winchester League participated in its year-long Membership Leadership Development Program.
* The Winchester League garnered 525 signatures in support of the Massachusetts Bottle Bill, exceeding its own goal by 25.
* Attended League Election Reform Lobby Day on the Hill, LWVMA 2014 Council, and “How Women Become Political” event
* A successful second Jimmy Tingle program generated net proceeds of $3,225 for the Winchester League.
* State League Phonathon – Marilyn, Gloria, and Jean Herbert participated, generating funds for local Leagues, including the Winchester League
* At the annual League Moveable Feast luncheon in appreciation for Town employees in December, a League-designed flier “Your Tax Dollars at Work” was very popular!
* League table at Town Day on June 7 attracted several new member registrations.
* First-ever participation by the League, with its team named “Susan Bee Anthony”-- in the Winchester WFEE Trivia Bee
* An educational public forum on the topic of Town retiree health care benefits publicized an important local issue.
* League Day at Fenway in August, 2013, celebrated the passage of the 19th Amendment.
* A dress rehearsal of “Gypsy” at the Next Door Theatre was enjoyed as a League social event.
* Book read for the year was Lean In, by Sheryl Sandberg and Nell Scovell; discussion was led by Rosemary Pye.

Marilyn thanked the Steering Committee, particularly retiring members Gloria Legvold, Susan Verdicchio, Tamara Leaf, Ann Bailey Berman, and Margery Jackson. She expressed gratitude for the the work of the Communications Committee, and to Maryann Haraldson for her expert photography, management of the League website, and creative products for the tech-savvy younger generation.

Notwithstanding the long list of accomplishments, Marilyn alluded to a number of additional activities that could have been taken on with more resources and additional members; hence, the importance of continued efforts to build membership in the coming year.

Membership Report

Leslie Kennedy, serving her second year as membership chair, reported that last year’s tally was 53 members, and that the goal for this year was to add 10 members. She was happy to add that the total now stands at 66, with several having joined at Town Day. She noted that a generous donor had funded five memberships, including one for the High School Social Studies director. The membership report was accepted. The Winchester League has set a goal of 88 members for the new year.

Membership Exercise – Each Member Just One

Nancy Schrock and Marilyn led a brainstorming session with questions to stimulate group discussion, such as “What is it about the League that makes you willing to renew your membership each year?” The questions elicited a variety of responses from the audience that will be useful in program planning and membership initiatives in the coming year. (See attached discussion summary.) All members were provided a new membership brochure and challenged to bring in one new member.

Agenda items for Vote

1. The Minutes of the 2013 Annual Meeting were approved.
2. The 2014 Budget prepared and presented by Juanita Zerda was approved. The recommendations in the audit report from Elizabeth Ghoniem were noted. (See budget and audit letter attachments.)
3. The 2014 slate of Steering Committee members was approved as submitted: Vicky Coccoluto, Jean Herbert, Leslie Kennedy, Marilyn Mullane, Rosemary Pye, Nancy Schrock, Susan Woodward, Juanita Zerda. Leslie and Juanita will be completing the second year of their second term next year, and Jean and Marilyn just completed the second year of their first term. There were no additional nominations from the floor.
4. The Treasurer term is for two years, and no vote is required this year.
5. Marilyn reviewed the summary of the By-Law changes (See attached summary) which were approved unanimously. (By-Laws require 2/3 of members present vote to pass.)
6. Gloria moved the following with regard to programs for the coming year:

…”that the Winchester League of Women Voters approve our annual set activities and authorize the Steering Committee to develop further programming on tonight’s expressed interest of the membership, the continuing relevance of a topic, and the capacity—resources of volunteers and funding—we have to produce an excellent event.” The motion passed unanimously.

Civic Leadership Award to Sarah Swiger

Susan Verdicchio introduced Sarah Swiger, this year’s recipient of the Civic Leadership Award, as a person whose steady dedication for many terms on the Winchester School Committee represented “continuity, sanity, and keeping things in proportion.” Susan noted the League honors those whose work represents the best of participatory democracy and that Sarah’s contribution to Winchester’s civic life has been outstanding.

Sarah accepted the award with gratitude, accompanied by generous acknowledgement of the leadership of others, and encouraged those present to consider running for local office. By this time, the attendance had swelled to 50-60 people, many of whom had served in Town government, and joined in with their appreciation of Sarah Swiger’s contributions. Jennifer Wilson, present Chair of the Winchester Board of Selectmen, said Sarah “was very astute about the other boards in town. She is a great communicator and mentor, and has smart views about women in government.”

Susan Lewis presented a citation from the Massachusetts Senate sponsored by Senators Jason Lewis and Patricia Jehlen thanking Sarah Swiger for her years of dedication to civic service.

The meeting was adjourned for dessert at 8:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Vicky M. Coccoluto