League of Women Voters of Winchester

MINUTES of Steering Committee meeting – Tuesday, October 25, 2016

WinCAM conference room – Swanton Street (open meeting)

Facilitator, Jan Dolan; Secretary, Vicky Coccoluto; Host, Patty Shepard; Elinor Quill, Robin Wolf, Susan Woodward; guest, Jo-Ann Michalak. Not present: Judy Blaine, Lauren Costello, Mary McKenna, Nancy Schrock

Jan called the meeting to order at 7:10 when we reached a quorum.

Minutes of the September 27 meeting were approved as amended for minor typos. **Jan** will send the final Minutes to Nancy for posting on the website.

The Treasurer’s report was deferred to the next meeting on Tuesday, November 29.

Membership – Vicky distributed draft membership renewal letters to each of the attendees for review. The letter was generally approved, with a revision suggested by Jo-Ann to clarify that Supporting Membership ($100) provides a little extra “for our local League.” **Vicky** reported that she hopes to get all renewal letters out by the end of October, and prospect letters out by the November Election.

Communication – Susan reported on discussions with Nancy about Dropbox – a document- and photo-sharing application that should be more convenient for us than relying on hard copy or individual electronic documents for our committee records and photo history. It could also hold the Wild Apricot templates used for publicity “blasts” for future reference. The app has been in place, with limited use, but has auto-notification features that get triggered, and these need to be updated for changes in SC membership**.**  Susan said that **Nancy** will confer with Juanita Zerda to make sure there are no continuing financial charges for Dropbox, and if not, she and **Susan** will make it accessible to those SC members who are interested in using it.

**Voter Service**

Candidate Forum for MA State Senate, 5th Middlesex District was held the prior evening in Stoneham. Vicky reported that the program itself went very smoothly; the candidates, incumbent Jason Lewis and challenger Vince Dixon, were well prepared, as was moderator Patti Muldoon. Nancy gave the welcome, Susan and Lauren served as timers, and Elinor hosted the membership table. Melissa Russell, *Star* editor, attended; but public attendance was very small. We discussed whether a future event such as this would be better produced in the Stoneham TV studio rather than the Town Hall Auditorium, which has challenging acoustics, but public interest is difficult to predict ahead of time, and there was no fee for use of the space.

Jo-Ann commented that she was grateful to hand off the primary forum organizing responsibility to Nancy and Vicky after several years of handling it virtually solo and she was thanked for her willingness to be a resource on a continuing basis. **Robin** suggested that specific tasks at candidate forums (timer, greeter, etc.) could be included in the “interest” survey done at our annual meeting to pull in more volunteers from the membership, and not just from the Steering Committee. She also suggested that we actively publicize the re-play times of the forum to members and the public.

The Sheriff Koutoujian program held by the Arlington LWV, also on 10/24, and co-sponsored by our League, the Mystic Valley NAACP, and 5 other collaborative groups, had about 40 attendees, including Patty.  The Middlesex sheriff gave an overview of the jail system in our County and highlighted some of the progressive programs which he has initiated.  This included the MATADOR program (Medication Assisted Treatment and Directed Opioid Recovery,) which is now being considered as a nationwide model and producing some good outcome data too.  Vicky noted that members of the Arlington LWV were recently involved in a program which registered about 25 men, who were currently incarcerated at Billerica House of Corrections, to vote in the upcoming elections.

Susan said that the VOTE411.org link has been posted on our Facebook page, and this resource seems to be adequately sourced with voter information. It is designed to tell *you* which candidates will be on *your* ballot, plus voter guide info about them, after you input your name and address. It was recommended that **each SC member should check in to VOTE411.org** and review it for themselves!

Rides to polls on Election Day (November 8) – **Susan** will keep the list of those who request a ride; names will be referred to her from the Town Clerk’s office, and from Joan Grenzebach, who coordinates transportation for seniors at the Jenks Center. Past requests have been few, but if they are more than Susan can accommodate, she will appeal to the League membership for additional drivers.

Voter registration – Susan reported 12 League volunteers--a good turnout--helped register students at Winchester High School on October 5; since a large portion of the 18 year olds were already registered, much of the activity focused on pre-registering 16- and 17-year-olds. Vicky commented that Tufts Community Day on October 2nd didn’t result in many incremental registrations, but it was fun being at the same table as a rep for JumboVotes (student organization) and a Somerville election official, and we had good publicity with *Star* photos afterward.

**Upcoming Events**

Next Door Theater – Nancy had forwarded a summary of the program choices we have for a possible event at the theater, which was circulated to the Steering Committee. The theater has discontinued its fundraising one-day sales events in favor of 20% discounts to groups of 10 or more. It could serve as a fund-raiser if we sold full price tickets to members, but remitted the discounted price to the theater. Or, it could simply be a social event for us, and at a discounted price.

From the program offerings listed, the consensus of the SC seemed to favor *The Full Monty* as a likely draw! The dates for this program are January 13-February 4. The **SC reached no conclusions** as to either a specific program or a most desirable date; and the topic was deferred to next month with more SC members present.

A brief discussion followed on whether other “mini-fundraiser” options, such as a raffle, should be considered; Vicky mentioned that in the past we have simply sent out fund-raising letters to membership in alternate years to the “major-fundraiser.”

Moveable Feast – Thursday, December 1 – Jan reported that she has spoken with Chief Nash and we are scheduled for lunch at the First Station; they will provide the tables and chairs and set them up. She has conferred with Judie who is agreeable to accepting the Civic Leadership Award on this occasion. In addition to the traditional preparation for this event – invitation to Town employees, food/beverage order from D’Agostino’s, solicit cake donation from Stop & Shop, provide table covers, bring LWV signs—we will need to develop an expanded invitation list to include colleagues and friends of Judie. **Jan** agreed to collaborate with Judie on the invitees. If we have an RSVP system in place, we should be able to coordinate adequate food and set-up for an expanded Feast this year.

*[Executive Session (not in public Minutes)* *– Discussion of gift for Civic Leadership Award. Elinor suggested a photo book – others mentioned a 2017 calendar -- of Judie LWV photos, perhaps themed on the Moveable Feast, one of her favorite events****. Elinor and Susan****, who has access to archive photos, agreed to work on this idea.]*

**Jan** will recruit a subcommittee for the Moveable Feast planning and **Vicky** agreed to look up those who volunteered at Annual Meeting to help with this event. They are: Judy Blaine, Jan Dolan, Leslie Kennedy, Gloria Legvold, Joanne Morgan, Judie Muggia (of course!), Elinor Quill, Maggie Russell, Heidi Rutstein-DiLeo, Frances Shawcross; a non-member attendee, Stacy Colella, also volunteered.

Consensus Meeting – Charter Schools – January, 2017 – Patty is the lead on this study, in collaboration with Carolyn Parsons from the Arlington League; her first choice date is Sunday afternoon, January 8; second choice is Sunday, January 22, and preferred location is the Sanborn House, which will be available at a discounted (non-profit) rental**.**  Jan offered some materials about the consensus study that she had received at the recent Council Meeting and Patty agreed to review them.  Patty will be in touch with Arlington to finalize a date before our next meeting.  At the suggestion of Vicky, Patty also agreed to reach out to a couple of our members, who have years of experience with the charter school issues, for assistance with a possible introductory presentation before the consensus process begins.   Patty is happy to facilitate and will send a link to the consensus materials to all the board members soon.  **Robin** volunteered to be Recorder at the consensus meeting; **Jan and Elinor** volunteered for set-up and clean-up.

The **Steering Committee** agreed to review the consensus material that was sent out by LWVMA in a recent email.

**Miscellaneous Business** – Vicky mentioned a message which LWV Boston forwarded from Meaghan Culkeen, who works at Girls Inc. of Lynn and is running a middle school program called “She Votes.” She requested a League member to speak to the girls on why becoming and informed and active citizen when old to enough to vote is important. **Elinor** said that she had responded to that inquiry by phoning Meaghan and had not received a return call as yet, but will follow up. Suggested sources of youth-oriented content for a talk such as this: the “Importance of Voting” video contest which can be accessed on the LWVMA website.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:38 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Vicky Coccoluto, Secretary

.