League of Women Voters-Prince William Area

Executive Board Meeting December 15, 2020, via Zoom

President Carol Proven called the meeting to order at 7:07 p.m.

Calling in: Barbara Amster, Connie Gilman, Lorraine Schooner, Judy Hingle, Carol Noggle, Janet Gorn, Barbara Greiling, Grace White, Ruthann Litchford and Shirley Brown. Those in attendance introduced themselves to new member Shirley Brown.

Minutes: Minutes of the November board meeting were approved.

Treasurer’s report: Lorraine Schooner reported the General Fund balance is $12,895.26. The Education Fund balance is $1,568.46. Through Jessie Barringer’s efforts, more dues were collected. The League also received a VCET grant of $508.44.

Constitutional Amendment 1: Grace White reported that as of Dec. 11, 88 people had applied to serve as citizen members of the Redistricting Commission. Applications are due Dec. 28 and must include three letters of recommendation. Because the panel is looking for partisan balance, the application should include party affiliation.

State League events: Several members attended the virtual pre-session event on Dec. 2 to get overview of the upcoming General Assembly session. A recording of the event will be available online. Members also participated in the Dec. 10 online celebration of the League of Women Voters of Virginia’s 100th anniversary. A speaker from the Virginia Library outlined the history of the League, including the barriers that African-American women faced in joining the League. Representatives of local Leagues also reported on their activities. Carol Proven spoke on behalf of our League.

Board of County Supervisors: Carol Noggle reported the Prince William Board of County Supervisors has approved a Racial and Social Justice Commission. The 12-member commission includes eight citizens plus the police chief, the county executive, the Human Rights Commission chair and a representative from the schools. Each supervisor appointed a citizen member. The board also voted to study the establishment of a citizen review board to oversee policing in Prince William County. Carol pointed out that the board will have to take action to comply with several new laws dealing with criminal justice passed by the General Assembly during the special session. The new laws will take effect July 1.

Warrenton BLM vigil: Barbara Amster reported the Saturday morning vigils continue but are limited to 10 participants.

LWV-VA Programs: Janet Gorn reported the state League program committee is looking for topics for future studies. Local Leagues are reviewing the Election and Affordable Housing studies and reports will be issued in February.

List of Members: Barbara Amster proposed that a list of members’ names, addresses, phone numbers and email addresses be sent to all members. The list will not be public and members will be given the opportunity to opt out. The motion was seconded and approved.

New Member Involvement: At the Dec. 3 Sips and Civility meeting, members discussed what was needed for new members to feel included as well as to encourage existing members to retain their interest in the League. Carol Proven reported on suggestions, which included a physical packet for new members. Among suggestions for the packet were a list of positions and issues, state and local, if appropriate; the brag sheet; links to resources; handbook; by-laws; board of directors; references to the corresponding handbook or by-law pages for further reading and a better understanding of committees; legislative overview, with links to Facebook, state, national and local; a list of committees, with description and contacts; and a list of ongoing projects along with contacts and description. The discussion also included the idea of mentoring new members and ideas for classes on parliamentary procedure, effective communication with elected officials, rank choice voting, issues and social media outreach.

Judy Hingle will contact candidates to serve on a membership committee to put suggestions into action.

Carol Noggle has started the effort by distributing the LWV-VA “Positions for Action” for the 2021 General Assembly Session.

Update to By-Laws: As required by the National League, the board voted to include a diversity, equity and inclusion policy in the by-laws. It reads as follows:

 *LWV is an organization fully committed to diversity, equity, and inclusion in principle and in practice. Diversity, equity, and inclusion are central to the organization’s current and future success in engaging all individuals, households, communities, and policy makers in creating a more perfect democracy.*

Election Study: A report on Part 2 of the Election Law Position Update is available on the state LWV website. Part 2 focuses on Section E -Ranked Choice Voting Effectiveness and Impact and Section F- Voter Suppression. Our League will hold an online discussion of proposed updates to Virginia LWV positions on election laws on Jan. 7 from 7 to 9 p.m. Register on SignUpGenius.

Membership Survey: Judy Hingle presented a survey of member interests, which will be sent to all members via Survey Monkey.

Fauquier Election Board: The Fauquier Election Board is in need of a larger space. A representative contacted Carol Proven to request the Fauquier members write their supervisors about the issue.

Rep. Connelly’s Office: A member of Congressman Connelly’s staff who lives in Prince William County contacted Carol Proven to introduce herself and to offer to act as a liaison with our League.

Calendar Event Updates: Connie Gilman reported that Tracey Lenox, the chief public defender for Prince William County, will speak at the general meeting Jan. 17 from 2 to 4 p.m. to be held via Zoom.

A book discussion of "When Everything Changed" by Gail Collins will be Jan. 26 via Zoom from 7 to 8:30 p.m. Titles for 2021 will be selected at this meeting. Send suggestions to Connie Gilman conniewg51@gmail.com.

The February general meeting will be held Feb. 21 from 2 to 4 p.m. The program will be about educator Jennie Dean, a former slave who founded the Manassas Industrial School for Colored Youth, which served African-American students for decades.

The next board meeting will be Jan. 19 at 7 p.m. via Zoom.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:18 p.m.

Submitted by Barbara Greiling