

Edited by Joan Racki and Judy Dirks – Presented to Board at May 14 Meeting

2014 League of Women Voters Metro Des Moines

Annual Meeting Minutes – May 3

The meeting was held at the Oak Dining Room of the Wesley Building, 3520 Grand Avenue, Des Moines.

Luncheon and meeting times 11:30 – 1:30.

Present: President, Deborah Turner; Vice President, Molly Shanks; Secretary, Judy Dirks; Treasurer, Gary Kaufman; LWVIA Lobbyist, Amy Campbell; Members- Jean Basinger, Teresa Bomhoff, Karla Brizzi, Phyllis Frankllin-Devine and guest, Carol Hibbs, Jessie Hill, Max Knauer, J.P. Knauer, Dorothy McGinnis, Charlotte Nelson, Karen Person, Joan Racki, Lena Robison, Marilyn Staples, Sherrie Taha, Jennifer Terry, Margaret Weiner.

Guest Speaker, League of Women Voters of Iowa Lobbyist Amy Campbell, addressed the group first with the annual business meeting following.

Amy Campbell's Remarks

Final Few Days of Session –The atmosphere was complicated with new bills being presented late and final agreements being made. Major last minute bills concerned anti-bullying (didn't pass), broadband agreements (didn't pass) , and HIV modernization (passed). Praise was given to League member, Senator Matt McCoy, for his work on the HIV modernization bill.

Justice Reforms - Note, League member Karen Person worked on a coalition addressing many of the reforms. The Toledo Home issue has not been solved with many factors yet to be considered. A Human Trafficking bill included the decision to consider convicted juveniles as Child in Need of Assistance status.

Voting Rights – Lawmakers did not act on many voting rights issues this year. Voter ID and felony voting right restoration had little discussion. Two issues that will be focused on include allowing citizens to register to vote electronically. Twenty-three states already provide for this. Another issue was the problem County Auditors have noticed regarding absentee ballots arriving in envelopes with no postmark date because of use of prepaid mail. Voting issues will be part of the League's priorities in the 2015 session.

State Health Exchange – had no major action. The Iowa State Insurance Commissioner may work further. A few other states have much better models.

Healthiest Child – passed. League member, Senator Janet Peterson, worked on this.

E-Cigarette bill – passed. Children should have no access to purchase of e-cigarettes. Many wanted it included in healthy air regulations (forbidding smoking of these in major public areas) this did not pass.

Cannabis Oil bill – This bill regarding the medical use passed in the last days. This concerns oils with less than 3% THC. A problem is that it is not available in Iowa at this time; it can be obtained elsewhere with a permit to use. This is a start in procedures for the state..

Water Quality – 25 million dollars were allocated to support REAP, the amount will be divided among 3 areas. The governor might be able to veto parts of this yet. Note- If interested in supporting this – contact governors and others. Other amounts were allocated for water, soil, watershed improvement, and soil and water conservation use.

Income energy-utility assistance – this did not pass.

Child Care - There was a change here regarding eligibility for part time students.

Mental Health – A compromise was made here. Praise was given to League member, Teresa Bomhoff, and her advocacy work in this area. The focus is to be on improvement of services and many counties are working on advance plans.

Closing Remarks – Amy’s goals are to have future League issues established early for advance study and focus. These will be addressed at the May LWVIA council and should be established by fall of 2014. Amy liked the League’s use of study committees and recommends further use of these. VOTING issues will definitely be a focus in upcoming legislative sessions.

PLEASE NOTE: An electronic copy of Amy’s newsletter, THE CAPITOL CONNECTION, was distributed on May 6, a few days after our annual meeting. This publication contains coverage of the entire legislative session with full explanations and details. (Contact Amy at www.ialobby.com)

Business Meeting

Called to order by President, Deborah Turner, at 12:45. A quorum of members was present and voted on several items.

Adoption of Rules were approved, Parliamentarian Max Knauer was appointed, and auditors for this meeting’s minutes were appointed – Joan Racki and Judy Dirks.

2013 Annual Meeting minutes were approved as submitted with the names of additional members in attendance added.

Treasurer’s Report – Gary Kaufman explained the budget report included in the meeting packet. The major change will be in more funds allocated for state meetings, especially considering future planning for the state convention (2015) to be hosted by Metro League. Gary noted that the state now covers our League’s insurance, so there is no allocation for that. Gary reported that the board previously voted to cover more of the PMP (per member payments) from the general fund than in past years. Phyllis moved to accept Gary’s report, including the proposed FY 2015 budget, Carol seconded it; the budget and treasurer’s report were accepted.

Adoption of Local Program – Marilyn Staples provided background on the difference between local program, as covered in the meeting’s packet of forms, and the planning of yearly event programs. It was suggested that we might want to make changes in the local program in another year. Karen moved to accept the current local program, Dorothy seconded, and adoption passed.

Adoption of By-Laws – A Board committee of Sherrie Taha, Deb Turner, and Gary Kaufman, proposed revisions to the current by-laws with suggestions for changes in language and provisions. Sherrie Taha led the explanation and discussion of these revised by-laws. Two major areas modified included calling for two Board vice-presidents to share extended duties and to allow for occasional electronic meetings for the Board in unique situations. Karen recommended that the members accept this modified by-laws document. Gary moved to accept the revisions to the by-laws as presented and modified during discussion, Lena seconded it, and the new by-laws were accepted. (Others voicing a second included Phyllis and Dorothy.)

In Memoriam – Phyllis Franklin-Devine spoke about members Denise King and Sheila Lumley who passed away within the past year. Phyllis also commented about her mother (recently deceased) who was a League member from Iowa City and an occasional guest at Metro League events.

Thank You to Deb - Phyllis Franklin-Devine also paid tribute to the work done by our League president, Deb Turner, and presented her with a bouquet of yellow roses (the League’s official flower.)

President’s Report – Deb Turner spoke of her impressions over the past year and hopes for next year. She mentioned our membership growth and listed key issues we are currently focusing on. Members were challenged to stay involved and continue their hard work. A request was made to fill out a pledge card for commitment to League next year – this card will be mailed back to members next year at this time for reflection.

Each program held last year provided for education and inspiration. Our goal is to be informed, engaged, and inspired by our various events.

We now have a membership count of 54. Membership numbers are a struggle nationally. The MLD coaches will continue to address ways to promote increased membership and leadership within leagues.

Last year’s goals included –

- Developing an educational program
- Planning programs in collaboration with other civic-minded groups in the community/state
- Increasing membership by 10%
- Increasing League awareness within the community/state
- Participating in a US League study
- Coordinating with other Iowa Leagues
- Establishing an observers’ corps
- Defining a program of Voter Ed

All goals were met by at least some of the events, with the exception of establishing an observers' corps.

President, Deb Turner's goals for next year will include continued interacting with other organizations, organizing and holding a strong STATE LEAGUE CONVENTION in June 2015, working on building membership and leadership, especially working to engage more members and younger members, tapping the abilities of current members, and meeting a challenge of making the Metro League a strong example in the state, considering our visibility within the state capital.

Other Business

New Members -Two new members attending this meeting were introduced. They were Jennifer Terry and Margaret Weiner.

Tribute – A thank you was given to long time board member, Carol Hibbs, and a plaque honoring her service was presented to her.

National Convention Delegates – This year's national convention will be held in Dallas, Texas, in June. Deb Turner will go as president plus member of the state board. Jessie Hill will also go, with Lena Robison and Karen Person offering to go as possible alternates. Our League and the State League will decide upon covering registration or partial registration for one representative and possibly two.

New Business

411 Handout - Deb shared a handout from LWVUS regarding their 411 online program which will provide for voters' guides to members participating in their services. When provided, this 411 data base will list state and local candidates. The cost for participation will be \$200. Membership approved payment to be part of the 411 coverage.

Jessie Hill Presentation – Board member, Jessie Hill, reported on her participation in an organization called the New Leaders Council. This is an organization which promotes and trains the next generation of progressive leaders. She will be graduating from a half year training session and has invited League members to attend a celebration for this event to be held Thursday, May 22, at the Polk Co. Heritage Gallery. This will be from 5:30-7:00. Cost is \$25 a ticket, with proceeds going toward funding future participants.

State Council – This will be held Saturday, May 17. Sherrie Taha will attend as a delegate and Karen Person has offered to serve as an alternate. Deb Turner will also attend as League president.

Next Board Meeting and Retreat – The next board meeting will be Wednesday, May 14, at 3662 Ingersoll. Time and place for the June planning retreat will be set at that time.

Door Prizes – Small bamboo plants in vases were given as door prizes.

Meeting adjourned at 1:45 p.m.

Minutes submitted by Judy Dirks, Secretary LWVMDM

