



LWV of Marquette County
BOARD of DIRECTORS
MEETING MINUTES
January 17, 2024, 10:00 a.m.-12:07 p.m.
Community Meeting Room at Baraga Place
129 W. Baraga, Marquette

In attendance: David Allen, Sandy Breitenbach, Pri Burnham, Jo Foley, Susan Holliday, Madalyn Koval, Joanna Mitchell, Barb Owdziej, Laura Sabo, Johanna Worley
Guest: Susanne Smith

The meeting was called to order at 10:00 a.m.

1. **Review and Approval of Agenda:** Motion made by Barb Owdziej and seconded by Madalyn Koval to approve the agenda. Motion carried.
2. **Review and Approval of Minutes:** Motion made by Johanna Worley and seconded by Pri Burnham to approve the December 20, 2023 Board meeting minutes. Motion carried.
3. **Treasurer’s Report—Madalyn:** The unrestricted balance available at the end of December is \$14,205.32. Restricted funds consist of \$6,991.85 in dues held for annual per-member payments to the state and national LWV. Reports will be held on file for review with thanks to Madalyn. A mid-year budget comparison is due to be presented at the Feb. 7 general membership meeting.
4. **Ad hoc Budget Committee—Joanna Mitchell:** Members are asked to provide estimates of any unusual costs expected in the next fiscal year to help make realistic projections. The committee meets in February.
5. **Ad hoc Bylaws Committee—Jo Foley:** In the [May League Links](#), LWVMI recommended that local league bylaws committees propose adoption of this amendment at their next annual meeting:
Add this language to Article VI, Section 1: “In executing the duties of their office, board members are expected to carry out applicable laws and regulations as well as League bylaws, mission, policies, principles, positions, standards and procedures. Board Members who do not shall be counseled. If violations persist, they may be removed from office by a two thirds vote of the Board of Directors.”
The LWVMC Bylaws were updated recently (4/5/2023), so this will likely be the only amendment.
Pri and Sue Holliday offered to serve as the Ad hoc Bylaws Committee and will reread the bylaws to see if, one year after implementation of the new organizational structure, the bylaws work as intended and if any change is needed. Laura Sabo offered to review the league’s forms.
6. **Ad hoc Committee to Draft 2024/25 Priorities—Jo:** The Committee will consist of Pri, Jo and possibly a representative from the Environmental Committee.
7. **AV Vendor—Laura Sabo:** Laura and Jo met with Side Car Productions and NMU Audio Visual Services. Laura presented a comparison of their services and prices. While LWVMC can manage smaller meetings, a professional AV service is preferred for larger public events, especially candidate forums. Both vendors require as much lead time as possible, at least 2-4 weeks, to secure a date. Although LWVMI offered to reimburse election expenses in 2023 due to the recent increase in donations, that support is not guaranteed this year and not likely in leaner years. Motion by Pri and seconded by Sue to authorize the Communications Network to secure pricing and a relationship with two local vendors to provide live streaming and recording services for high visibility events and to propose and secure the Board’s approval of the budget and terms for any specific event in advance. Motion carried.

8. Committee Reports:

- a. **Nominating Committee—Barb:** Ruth Ziel agreed to be nominated as League Liaison. The Secretary position is still open. The Committee is requesting thoughtful referrals.
- b. **Voter Services Committee:** Pri presented a preliminary project proposal for “Getting the Message Out” to distribute flyers countywide and tabletop tents on ways to vote.
 - i. **Vote411—Sandy:** Vote411 is live. There are no local positions, only the national primary. Although Republican candidates have not yet responded, Vote411 provides links to their social media & websites. Democrat Dean Phillips did not meet criteria for voter guide inclusion. Democrats Joe Biden and Marianne Williams responded.
 - ii. **Candidate Forum--Jo:** June 25th is the target date for a Candidate Forum for the 109th Michigan House District August 6th Primary Election. Six candidates have declared: Karl Bohnak, Margaret Brumm, Randy Girard, Jenn Hill, Burt Mason, and Melody Wagner. Motion by Barb and seconded by Madalyn to authorize Jo to reserve three venues (the Marquette Township Hall, PWPL Community Room and Kaufman Auditorium) and to authorize Laura to secure the date with Side Car Productions. Motion carried. The venue can be decided when we know venue availability, extent of candidate participation and public interest.
 - iii. **Northern Center for Lifelong Learning—Sue:** NCLL has requested a one-hour presentation on voting changes in July, August or September. LWVMC can choose the venue. NCLL charges \$5 for members and \$10 for nonmembers. The fees are given to the presenter. The Voter Services Committee can decide whether to agree and plan this.
 - iv. **NMU Student Leadership Fellowship Program:** Sue presented a draft of a welcome and outline of voter services opportunities for a Community Service Internship with the LWVMC. The intern will be asked to begin and be introduced at the June 5th Annual Meeting. Sue offered to serve as the contact person for the SLFP.
- c. **Membership Committee—Barb:** Orientation for new members will be held at 6 p.m. prior to the general membership meeting on Feb. 7th. Barb distributed a list of topics to be covered: “Nuts and Bolts of Membership”. Barb asked the Board to review the Volunteer Opportunities Form and send any suggested changes to her by Sunday, Jan. 21.

Rather than using SurveyMonkey, the Committee proposes to mail the form to membership with a postpaid return envelope. Motion by Pri and seconded by Sue to authorize the Membership Committee to update the form and spend up to \$250 for printing and mailing the Volunteer Opportunities Form to all members. Motion carried.

The membership roster will be finalized on January 31 for the count upon with per-member payments will be based.
- d. **Education Committee—Sandy Breitenbach:** Partnering with the PWPL on the MediaSmart initiative, the League will moderate a Media Misinformation Panel of local media representatives discussing the prevalence of misinformation and its impact on their work: Walt Lindala (mediaBrew Communications News Director), Andrew LaCombe (TV6 News Director), Ann Troutman (Mining Journal Publisher), Nicole Walton (WNMU News Director), and Molly Birch (North Wind Editor). The panel is scheduled for Wed, Feb. 28, 6:30-8:30 p.m.
- e. **Mark Brewer’s Aug. 7 Presentation—David:** Pri, Jo and the Education Committee will organize Mark Brewer’s visit and support his presentation at the August general membership meeting. After the Feb. 28 panel, they will be ready for these discussions.
- f. **Newsletter Team—Laura:** The Voter is scheduled for release on March 8 and articles are due on Feb. 23. The newsletter will follow the same format. Mailchimp stats show that 70% of members open The Voter. Marge will help produce a printable version that can also be posted to the website. The team plans to issue new mini-newsletters or flyers via Mailchimp this year as events and volunteer needs unfold.
- g. **Website Review—Laura:** Current goals are to refresh the look; comply with ADA access to accommodate screen readers, captions and voice; enhance the calendar and connect all the social

media sites for updates. Professional web design costs are high. Side Car Productions would provide this service for \$150 per month. Motion by Madalyn and seconded by Sue to explore redesign with Nick Steffy with the opportunity for a member to learn from him. Motion carried.

- h. **Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee--Sandy:** DEI is looking into ASL signers for events and continuing work on the Land Acknowledgement.
 - i. **Observer Corps—David:** At the Feb. general membership meeting, David will speak for 5-10 minutes on news from the previous quarter. Quarterly presenters will rotate.
 - j. **Environmental Committee—Johanna:**
 - i. Jan. 18--The presentation on greenhouse gas reduction that was given at NMU's Climate at Noon will be presented to the LWVMI Environmental Interest Group.
 - ii. Jan. 26 noon-2:30 p.m.--The Marquette County Climate Adaptation Task Force (CATF) begins the Learning Circles Series on Climate Change and Community. Johanna and Karen Schmitt will work the registration table. CATF will hold a similar student round table on Jan. 31 noon-2:30.
 - iii. Feb. 1, 5:15-6:15--The Environmental Committee meets at the Crib.
 - iv. Feb. 7th general membership meeting, Josh Wales from the Marquette County Waste Management Authority will speak.
 - v. Feb. 23—The next battery sorting event at Chocolatey Township Hall.
 - k. **Fundraising Committee—Sue:** The first round of fundraising letters went to 200 community members and \$750 in donations have been received so far. Members are looking into grant opportunities and business support. The Committee recommends that at public events, the League be briefly described and donations solicited as Sandy Meyskens did so gracefully at MRHC. The committee is seeking new members.
9. **Draft Agenda for Feb. 7 General Membership Meeting:**
- a. Open and Welcome guests and new members
 - b. Land Acknowledgement
 - c. Approve agenda
 - d. Approve minutes of Dec 6, 2023 meeting
 - e. Treasurer report and presentation of biannual budget comparison
 - f. League Liaison report
 - g. Possible spotlight or memorial for Bob Niemi and Bobbie Henderson
 - h. Observer Corp report
 - i. Discuss process for member request for agenda item and member comment period
 - j. Presentation by Josh Wales, introduced by Environmental Committee
 - k. Adjourn
10. **LWVUS/LWVMI Report:** David offered to update members who could stay after adjournment on the current work of the MI Independent Citizens Redistricting Commission.

The meeting adjourned at 12:07 p.m.

***Next Board Meeting: Wednesday, February 21, 2024, 10:00 a.m. – Noon
Community Meeting Room at Baraga Place, 129 W. Baraga, Marquette***

***Next Membership Meeting: Wednesday, February 7, 2024, 6:45-8:15 p.m., 6:30 Social
Peter White Public Library, George Shiras III Room, 2nd floor, 217 N. Front St., Marquette***

Submitted by Joanna Mitchell, Secretary