



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS®
OF NEW JERSEY

STATE BOARD REPORT

JULY, 2016

TABLE OF CONTENTS

- President's Letter
- Letter from the Nominating Committee
- State Board Contact List
- Board Meeting: Key Decisions
- Calendar
- Development Committee Report
- Required Bylaws Changes
- Voters Service Report
- Learning the League

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Dear Presidents and League Leaders,

The LWVNJ Nominating Committee has begun the process of soliciting nominations and interviewing candidates for the 2016-17 slate of officers and directors and for state committees. Within this SBR is a nominations letter that details the skill sets sought by the Committee. If you or someone you know is interested in serving and has the skills we're looking for, please submit a confidential nomination to Marlene Sincaglia, Nominating Committee chair. Help us usher in the League's 100th birthday by participating in leadership at the state level!

In the last SBR, we reported that the LWVUS Convention 2016 delegates voted to amend the bylaws to allow noncitizens and individuals who are at least 16 years of age to become voting members of the League. Since states and local League bylaws must be consistent with the first three articles of the LWVUS bylaws, we provide recommended language for modifications to your League's bylaws within this report. These changes can be made immediately, without waiting for the usual approval process, because they are already included in the LWVUS bylaws.

Otherwise, national major party conventions are underway and soon we will be called upon to do what we do best – organize and moderate candidates forums, register voters, educate people about how to choose a candidate and encourage them to actually get out and cast their votes. Our Voters Service VP, Dawn Clarke, has provided guidance for new (and seasoned) voters service chairs to assist with this effort. And speaking of election season, Brendan Keating, Board Director, has included a great idea for your local League to raise funds and gain visibility.

During election season, League Presidents and leaders will be asked about the historical significance of America's first female major party presidential candidate. As you were cautioned in the June SBR, we must be very careful to express our enthusiasm for the historic significance of this election while not appearing to support a particular candidate or party. To help us walk that fine line, LWVUS has published some very helpful talking points. You will find them on the following link:
<http://forum.lwv.org/member-resources/article/talking-points-first-woman-nominee-president-major-political-party>.

Finally, those of you who attended our Making Democracy Work Awards cocktail reception in May, participated in a well-orchestrated event that left all attendees feeling proud to be members or supporters of the League of Women Voters of New Jersey. Ann Saunders, Development VP prepared a brief report on the event, coupled with a list of committee opportunities to get involved with the 2017 Reception Committee, provided herein. Please join us as we prepare for an even bigger and better 2017 Making Democracy Work Awards reception. It's fun working toward a common goal and making new League friends. And as we all know, many hands make light work !

In League,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Nancy Hedinger". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Dear League Member,

I hope you are enjoying your summer before gearing up to Get Out The Vote for the November elections. The 2017 state convention will be upon us before you know it. At convention, we will be electing our officers and state board members for the 2017-2019 term. The nominating committee would like to ask you to suggest members who may be good candidates for state board and committee positions. Self nominations are welcome.

Our nominating committee has put together a list of skills that we are looking for in candidates that will enhance the composition and talents of the board and our state committees.

- * Expertise in finance and budgets
- * Expertise in marketing or public relations
- * Legal background
- * Knowledge of grant writing
- * Fundraising
- * Event Planning
- * Experience in facility management or historical preservation (LWVNJ owns a historical row house)
- * Experience in organizational development
- * Social media skills
- * Training techniques
- * Connections in business or banking circles
- * Advocacy and lobbying

Of course there are other qualities and talents in addition to those listed above that are also important.

The nomination process is confidential. Self nominations are encouraged.

Please complete the information below for each prospective candidate to be considered by the nominating committee.

Name of prospective candidate:

Candidate's Local League or MAL:

Candidate's leadership strengths and/or abilities. Please give examples –

Submitted by:

If you have any questions, please contact Marlene Sincaglia at 908-464-1988 or jcsmmm@verizon.net

The forms should be sent directly to Marlene Sincaglia no later than **September 8th.**

Marlene Sincaglia, chair-Nominating Committee

22 Robbins Avenue

Berkeley Heights, New Jersey 07922

jcsmmm@verizon.net

2015-2017 Expanded Board List

Nancy Hedinger, President hedingern@gmail.com	Stacey Faella, Director staceyfaella@gmail.com
Dawn Clarke, Vice President, Voters Service clarked@comcast.net	Nickole Forbes, Director nickoleforbes@hotmail.com
Ed Gracely, Vice President, Program edgracely@verizon.net	Brendan Keating, Director blkleague@gmail.com
Ann Saunders, Vice President, Development saunders12@verizon.net	Casey Olesko, Director casey.olesko@gmail.com
Susan Varga, Secretary scvarga@hotmail.com	Melissa Scott, Director mescott@comcast.net
Ellen Kemp, Treasurer ellenmkemp@gmail.com	Terry Thompson, Director ta-thompson@hotmail.com

Off-Board

Sandra Matsen, Chair
Nominating Committee
slmatsen@aol.com

Michelle Bobrow
Budget Committee
m.bobrow@verizon.net

Crystal Matsibekker
Nominating Committee
crystal.matsibekker@nyu.edu

Marlene Sincaglia, Chair
Nominating Committee
jcsmmm@verizon.net

LWVNJ/EF Board Meeting Key Decisions

Meeting held: Saturday, July 9, 2016

League of Women Voters of New Jersey Key Decisions

1. Strategic planning will be undertaken over the next few months. Board members to submit priorities to Governance committee for discussion at September meeting.
2. September Board meeting date changed to September 10
3. A conference call was scheduled for August to discuss and approve candidates' questions for Vote411 voters' guide.
4. Request board member recommendations from nominating committee for immediate appointment.
5. Investigate formation of an Advisory Committee to LWVNJ.

League of Women Voters of New Jersey Education Fund Key Decisions

1. Approved exploration of an additional part-time staff member. To be revisited during August conference call.

LWVNJ CALENDAR
Upcoming Events 2016

Please note that dates are subject to change. If you have any questions, please contact the LWVNJ office at contact@lwnj.org or 609-394-3303.

August 2016

- Aug. 13: Board Conference Call
- Aug. 26: Women's Equality Day
- Aug. 31: PBBs for September meeting due

September 2016

- Sept. 10: LWVNJ/EF Board Meeting
- Sept 24 – 25: Statewide Voter Registration Weekend

October 2016

- Oct 2 – 4: Rosh Hashanah
- Oct. 8: Fall Forum and Workshops
- Oct. 11 – 12: Yom Kippur

November 2016

- Nov. 1: Annual Member Appeal begins
- Nov. 8: General Election Day
- Nov 9: PBBs for November meeting due
- Nov. 19: LWVNJ/EF Board Meeting

December 2016

- Dec. 8: Annual Advocacy Meet & Greet
- Dec. 23 – Jan. 2: Office Closed for the Holidays

Making Democracy Work Cocktail Reception

The Board is very happy to report that the “Making Democracy Work” Cocktail Reception and awards ceremony that was held on Friday, May 6, at the Madison Hotel in Morris Township, was a very successful event. Not only did we meet our financial goal of \$16,201 dollars, but everyone had a great time. The League wishes to acknowledge the sponsors that made the evening so successful:

Sojourner Truth Sponsorship \$2,500

Nancy J. Northup & Jim Johnson

Florence Peshine Eagleton Sponsors \$1,000

Hedinger & Lawless, LLC

Lowenstein Sandler

McManimon, Scotland & Barmann

Saiber

John and Mayra Schmidt

Alice Paul Sponsors \$500

New Jersey Education Association

NJM Insurance Group

Ida B. Wells-Barnett Sponsors \$250

Brennan Center For Justice

Sara and Walter Clarke

Kivvit

New Jersey Policy Perspective

NJTV

Planned Parenthood Action Fund of New Jersey

Antoinette Brown Blackwell Sponsors \$100

Black Women’s Health Alliance

ECS Group

Susan Sferas

Local League Sponsors \$200

League of Women Voters of Berkeley Heights, New Providence and Summit
League of Women Voters of Maplewood-South Orange
League of Women Voters of Monmouth County ILO
League of Women Voters of Monroe Township
League of Women Voters of Morristown Area
League of Women Voters of Princeton Area
League of Women Voters of Somerset County MAL Unit
League of Women Voters of Township of Ocean

The awardees gave much praise to the League of Women Voters. It was inspiring to hear all the nice things that were being said about us and to know that the work we do does not go unnoticed. The Board wants to give a special thanks to the fundraising committee that worked so hard to make this event a success:

Ann Saunders – Committee Chair

Nancy Hedinger – State Board

Jesse Burns – Executive Director

Marlene Sincaglia – Silent Auction Chair, Berkley Heights New Providence Summit League

Susan Sferas – Budget Chair, Berkley Heights New Providence League

Pat Dolan – Silent Auction Committee, Berkley Heights New Providence Summit League

Brendan Keating – Chair of Ad and Program Journal, State Board

Casey Olesko – Ad and Program Journal Designer

As a kickoff event to the 2017 state convention, the State Board has voted to have the “Making Democracy Work” Cocktail Reception once again. We will begin holding meetings in September to develop the plan for next year’s event. The fundraising committee is encouraging League members to assist in this effort and volunteer for these positions:

Venue Chair – Assist in identifying a site for the cocktail reception once the State Convention site has been determined. Negotiate venue pricing and determine the menu and entertainment for that evening.

Sponsorship Chair - Assist State Board members in identifying and meeting with sponsors for next year’s event. We are looking for a co-chair and two members for this committee.

Public Relations Chair – This committee will have the responsibility of communicating this event thru various media channels including social media.

Ad Journal and Program Chair – Assist in tracking sponsorships and assembling the ad journal for the event. The fundraising committee is looking for a co-chair and 3 volunteers for this committee.

Awards Committee – This Committee will have the responsibility of identifying next's years awardees, contacting awardees and confirming acceptance through correspondence. The committee is looking for 2 volunteers.

Silent Auction Committee – This committee will be responsible for soliciting items to be auctioned at the event. This year's event had a wine pull that was successful fundraiser and we will be repeating the wine pull at next year's awards reception. Following the silent auction, we will keep track of and send thank you letters to those that participated.

The fundraising committee meets through conference calls, which has proven to be a very successful method of communicating the planning process. We start the official planning for the Cocktail Reception on September 19, 2016. Please let me know prior to that date if you are interested in participating as a committee member in this fun and successful event. Please contact Ann Saunders, VP of Development at saunders12@verizon.net.

Fundraising Opportunity for Local Leagues

As you all are well aware, the League is preparing for the general election this fall. Part of this preparation includes finding innovative ways to increase visibility of the League, increase excitement among members, and provide services that align with our mission of *Making Democracy Work*. With this in mind, the LWVNJ Board is encouraging local Leagues to consider hosting or partnering with other organizations to host Presidential Debate watching parties.

Not only is this an opportunity to host a fun civics related gathering, but it is also a great fundraising opportunity. Many times, a bar or club will allow a gathering like this one use a room with a TV and offer drink and/or food specials for a low cost, maybe even free because they will make money on sales for hosting the event. It will be important to research the venue, and see if they possibly have a separate room to use because the first debate on Monday, September 26th will be on the same night as NFL Monday Night Football. Another option is hosting the event at a member's house or at a local club (Elks, VFW etc).

Local Leagues are also encouraged to partner with other like-minded groups to promote the event. By co-hosting an event, you can expand your potential attendees. It will be an opportunity to expose new people to the League and hopefully a way to meet prospective members.

If this seems like something that your League would be interested in hosting, please contact Jesse Burns at jburns@lwvnj.org. We will follow-up with you to provide more information and I will spend some time working with you to ensure you have the tools needed for a successful event.

To: LWVNJ Board Members and Local League Leaders

From: Nancy Hedinger, LWVNJ President
Ed Gracely, LWVNJ Program VP

Re: Required Bylaws Changes

At the recent (June 2016) LWVUS Convention in Washington DC, the delegates approved important changes to the membership part of the bylaws. Since all state and local League bylaws must be consistent with the first three articles of the LWVUS bylaws (including membership), the opinion of the leadership at Convention was that we should all change our own bylaws immediately, without waiting for the usual approval process.

The changes, both in the definition of a **voting member**, were as follows:

1. Change the word "citizens" or the equivalent to "persons".
2. Change the minimum age to 16 (from 18).

Note that anyone who cannot be a voting member can be an associate member (no restrictions) -- this has not changed. But now 16 and 17 year olds, and noncitizens, can be **voting** members.

Here are two examples of how the recommended changes will read. First in the LWVNJ bylaws (Italicized words are added, words in strikeout are removed):

Section 3 - Types of Membership.

- (a) Voting members shall be those ~~citizens~~ *persons* at least ~~18~~ 16 years of age who are enrolled in recognized local Leagues, and state members-at-large, including honorary life members. Honorary life members are those residing in the state who have been members of the League for 50 years or more.
- (b) Associate members shall be all other members.

Second, here is the wording change Ed will recommend to the LWV of Camden County:

Sec.3. Types of Membership.

- (a) Voting members: ~~Citizens~~ *Persons* at least ~~18~~ 16 years of age who join the League of Women Voters of Camden County (LWVCC) shall be voting members of that League. Members of the LWVCC do not need to live in Camden County.

Those who have been members of the League of Women Voters for 50 years or more and who have joined the LWVCC shall be honorary life members excused from the payment of dues.

(b) Associate members: All others who join the LWVCC shall be associate members.

We recommend that this be formally announced to your League in publications and at a membership meeting.

You may be interested to know that the change from citizens to persons passed relatively easily. We don't ask people for proof of citizenship, and never have. There is great value in being able to involve all residents in our work. The age change was more controversial, especially because the initial proposal was to **eliminate** any minimum. There was a lot of sympathy for including older teens, starting at around 16, but great concern at including younger teens and children as voting members. So the motion was amended to drop the minimum age to 16, which attained 2/3 majority to pass.

We hope our Voters Service Chairs, both new and experienced, are planning positive political activities for the fall. Encourage your family, friends and neighbors to join you for voter registration drives, get out the vote calls and emails and candidates forums. Think of fun ways to get people involved, like the debate parties suggested earlier in this report. And please share your ideas with us so we can offer them to our members. Below, is an excellent example of an email sent to the E.Orange VA, offering to assist with voter registration. It is well written and can be adapted to fit similar requests of other organizations.

The League of Women Voters has a special initiative to register voters in time for the upcoming presidential election. We have held registration drives at colleges, public forums, farmers markets, and other venues with the objective of providing the opportunity to register in the community, and answering questions about the process of voting.

We have done this at the East Orange Veterans Administration Hospital in the past, and would like to offer to do so again this year. We can offer information about the process and hand out registration forms to those people who are interested, have not yet registered, have moved, etc.

As you know, the League of Women Voters is a non-partisan organization, with a mission of increasing voter education and participation. We believe that an educated electorate is needed for our democratic society.

We would like to do the voter registration before the Oct. 18 deadline, preferably Oct. 5-7 or 13-14.

Please let me know if we can help people who might not have this opportunity to register and to speak with knowledgeable people about the voting process.

**Michelle Bobrow
League of Women Voters of Maplewood-South Orange**

How League Decisions are Made **Ed Gracely, Program V.P.**

Did you know the LWV will now accept noncitizens and 16 or 17 year olds as full voting members? How did THAT happen?

Well, a number of bylaws proposals were submitted to the National League for consideration at convention. Both state and local Leagues may do so.

Two of the proposals had only the proposing League and one (or no) other League supporting them, and the LWVUS itself did not agree with either of them. In fact, neither of those two even came up for discussion. They certainly could have, but probably the proposers could see that support was unlikely to be there.

The other three amendment proposals had many state and local Leagues expressing support before convention, and the LWVUS itself supported all of them. The third is uninteresting -- it just changed a bit of wording in case the first two were adopted.

Typical of League discussion and debate, even having many strong supporters did not guarantee either of the substantive amendments an easy ride. The one to change "citizens" to "persons" was discussed, with some concerns expressed, but easily passed with a 2/3 majority vote.

The other proposal was to eliminate **any** lower age for membership in the League. This had people at the microphone expressing concerns about someone bringing their young children to gather supporters for some League decision. In general, while supporters passionately argued in favor of involving younger people in the League, there was not support for allowing people of a truly tender age to join!

Delegates tried to amend the proposal to make the lower age for membership be 16, but the president stated that bylaws proposals could not be altered. So, we had to vote up or down on the amendment as presented, and the elimination of the lower age failed on a card count (clearly less than 2/3). But the president admitted soon after that she had made a mistake in not allowing amendments that retained the spirit of the original. I believe this is standard practice for such a situation -- you can amend a bylaws proposal to clarify or modify, but not to reverse or do something totally different (like restrict membership only to women over 35). Someone who voted against the proposal asked for

reconsideration for that purpose, the delegates voted to allow it, and the amendment was proposed to strike 18 and add 16 years as a minimum age. Unfortunately, the amendment was not well thought out, because it inserted the 16 into the proposed amendment that struck out the minimum age altogether, which wouldn't have worked! The leadership went back and forth for several minutes struggling with the proper parliamentary method to fix it, but finally concluded that we all knew what the intent of the amendment was -- so they asked for unanimous consent to make the necessary changes. All agreed, then the vote was quite clearly in favor, so we now allow voting members as young as 16 who don't have to be citizens.

We all came away, I think, with a feeling that we had worked through a difficult process following Roberts' Rules, and achieved a good and popular outcome. But it was challenging along the way.

Of course, the League makes MANY kinds of decisions, some at convention, others by consensus of members between conventions. Advocacy, positions, consensus! Anyone in League for more than a short time knows these terms. We do advocacy based on positions we reach through consensus. So what does that process involve?

Usually the process starts at program planning meetings held by local Leagues during the winter. Leagues make suggestions for studies to LWVNJ or the LWVUS (in alternate years), then the board reviews them. The issue at this point is what the status of proposed studies should be at the upcoming convention. Delegates there must approve actually undertaking the study -- neither the national or state board can approve a study on its own. New Jersey does have special procedures to approve a study outside of convention, through a multi step process with local League input, but to the best of my knowledge it has never been used.

An idea that is proposed by *no* League does not appear in the topics for discussion at convention, and cannot be proposed as a study there. For example, you could not just propose, from the floor, that the League study voting rights for chimpanzees, if no local League had formally proposed it in the planning process.

An idea for a study that is proposed by only one or a few Leagues and doesn't seem to have much widespread support will be in the list at convention, but as a "not recommended" item. These must be approved for discussion first, then approved later by a majority vote (national) or two thirds majority (LWVNJ). They are hard to pass without strong support and several Leagues working together.

A study that has strong support in program planning or that seems natural and needed may be "recommended" by the state (or national) board. This guarantees it an up or down vote by simple majority and considerably increases the chances it will pass. Of course approving a study at consensus does not get us a position -- we still have to do the study. More on that below.

In some cases, rather than a study, convention delegates will be asked to approve a **concurrence**. Usually this means that one or several state or local Leagues have already studied this topic, and the League can acquire an instant position by "concurring" with the results of one of those studies. In 2016 at the national convention there were two recommended concurrences for discussion. One was an integration of numerous state positions on redistricting into a combined position. The other was a concurrence with Colorado's behavioral health position. The former engendered considerable discussion, but was finally passed. The latter passed easily. A few years ago the LWVNJ position on human trafficking was adopted as a national position by a concurrence as well. All of these required a 2/3 majority.

This year, no new studies were proposed. If one had been, and if it was finally approved (as were several a year ago at our state convention), a committee would be formed to plan the study, gather information, write questions, and so on. Eventually members around the country (or the state for an NJ study) would come together to discuss and reach conclusions about the questions asked. "Should the LWVUS support yak breeding as an alternative to camel herding? Agree, oppose, no consensus, no opinion". This is the **consensus** process.

These local decisions are conveyed to the state or national League, as appropriate, where a committee typically reviews them carefully -- what did members agree on consistently? What did they mostly agree on, but keep qualifying? What did they actively oppose? Etc. A position is crafted, the board reviews and approves it, and now we're ready for advocacy. Get those yak breeding letters ready!