



THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS
OF WESTPORT

THE CALL TO THE ANNUAL MEETING

Wednesday, June 11, 2008
8:00 - 10:00 AM

The Three Bears Restaurant
333 Wilton Road

AGENDA

- 8:30 Call to Order- Presidents' Welcome
- 8:35 Recap of Year and Introduction of Vice-Presidents
 - Voter Services
 - Community Services
 - Program Advocacy
 - Member Services
- 9:00 Treasurer's Report
- 9:15 Approval of 2008-2009 Budget
- 9:30 2008-2009 Program
- 9:45 Scholarship Presentation
- 9:50 Election of Officers
- 10:00 Adjournment of Meeting

ANNUAL MEETING RULES

- 1) Members will vote on the rules governing the Annual Meeting (special rules not otherwise provided in the Bylaws). Adoption requires a majority vote. Amendments will be made by a majority vote.
- 2) Debate — only members have the privilege of the floor. No person may speak twice until all who wish to speak have had an opportunity. Debate shall be limited to two minutes each speaker.
- 3) To make a motion—any member, upon recognition by the chair, shall rise and state his/her name before speaking.
- 4) Adoption of item — the recommended and non-recommended items shall be voted upon in the same order in which they are presented to the Annual Meeting.

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BRING THIS CALL WITH YOU JUNE 11

COMMENTS ON THE PROPOSED BUDGET

The proposed Budget for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2009 forecasts a modest increase in income, based on an anticipated growth in membership of 10 new members. This year we have changed the presentation of the budget to show our LWVUS Education Fund grants as part of total income, to give a more complete picture of our total income and expenses. Expenses for the coming year will be substantially reduced due to the absence of approximately \$6,600 of expenses for National Convention and *Know Your Town*, which are biennial events. As in prior years, we have reserved for one-half of these amounts in this '08-'09 budget.

We expect National per member payment ("PMP") rates to increase once again in the coming year, by 4.5% (\$1.20) to \$28.00 per individual member, if this increase is approved at National Convention. The State PMP, \$16.50 per individual member, is not increasing, and we are not proposing an increase in our local dues. Once again, we will be appealing to our members to make additional contributions to the LWVUS Education Fund or to the Westport League to help fund our endeavors so that we can keep our dues at \$50 per individual member.

The Budget presentation has been somewhat simplified this year. The Year to Date column has been eliminated. It was not considered particularly meaningful as so much income is received in May and June from Dues, Contributions and the Tag Sale. Also, the Reserve and Transfer entries below the Total Income less Total Expense line have been simplified in an effort to make the Budget easier to understand. We have also added beginning balances to the Balance Sheet.

Jim Graves, Treasurer



COMMUNITY SERVICES

Community Services continued its work on all the League's activities that extend to the greater Westport community. In the fall we presented the seventh grade civics program to seventh graders at Coleytown and Bedford Middle Schools, and the high school civics program, "The Power of One," to American Government fall semester classes at Staples High School. We presented "The Power of One" to spring semester classes just before Super Tuesday. At the time of this writing we are in the midst of presenting the First Grade Recycling Program (now in its fifteenth year) to all first graders in Westport.

This year we are producing and printing our biennial publication *Know Your Town*, a directory of town departments and officials, which will be mailed to every household in Westport. This publication helps further our mission of educating voters and encouraging them to be effective advocates in the community.

Our other activities include administering the League's contribution to the Staples Tuition Grants Committee, providing ongoing publicity for the League and organizing our participation in the Memorial Day Parade.

Jill Greenberg and Yvonne Senturia, Community Services Vice Presidents



VOTER SERVICES

Voter Services reached out to the community in several ways to promote citizen education and participation in the electoral process. The *2007 Voters Guide* was published in the *Westport Minuteman* newspaper, and it was also made available at various locations in town.

Voter Services held two local candidate forums in October 2007. The first was for the Zoning Board of Appeals and the Planning and Zoning Commission with an introduction of the uncontested candidate for the Board of Assessment Appeals. The second was for the Board of Finance and the Board of Education. The forums were held at Westport Town Hall, broadcast live on public access television and rebroadcast subsequently. In addition, they were available on the town's website. The PTA Council, the Y's Men, and the Y's Women co-sponsored these forums.

After participating in a training program "Stop, Look and Listen" developed by LWVCT, Voter Services helped Westport Registrars arrange training for interested voters on the new electronic voting machines.

This year a Get-Out-the-Vote campaign was again conducted with many establishments in town participating by having employees wear "Did You Vote Today?" stickers. As in past years, "I Voted, Did You?" stickers were distributed to voters exiting polling stations on Election Day. Once again the LWV banner was displayed on Main Street prior to both the November local election and the national primary on Super Tuesday 2008 to remind and encourage people to vote.

To cap off the year, the League's annual high school voter registration drive took place in May at Staples High School and Greens Farms Academy, in conjunction with the Registrars of Voters. Voter Services worked closely with our director of public relations to utilize press releases and letters to the editors in order to maximize the turnout at the polls. Thanks go to all League volunteers who helped with Voter Services events and played a vital role in their success.

Jackie Gordon and Liz-Ann Koos, Voter Services Vice Presidents

MEMBER SERVICES

The primary focus of Member Services is to increase and retain members. We work to help all members find their place in our organization by assigning a board mentor to each new member. This mentor encourages newcomers to participate in League activities with personal invitations and reminders. As a regular practice, we encourage every member, new or long-term, to assist us in this dual job of membership recruitment and retention.

At this writing our membership is 257. Our events have been filled with good conversation and characterized by gracious hosts and excellent League food. This year began with the annual Fall Brunch Fundraiser held in Claudia and Michael Saunders' home and garden, chaired by Cathy Walsh and Sally Galan. We held our Post Election Coffee at the home of Rene and Joseph Corcoran. It was chaired by Carol Burgess and Rene Corcoran. Our Holiday Luncheon, co-chaired by Karen Curtis and Katy Goldschmidt, was held at the home of Nitzy Cohen. The Winter Warm-up Dinner was generously given by Connie and Stewart Greenfield in their lovely home. Still to come as of this writing are the Annual Tag Sale, to be held at the home of Winnie Balboni and chaired by Jackie Gordon and Valerie Fischel, and finally, our Annual General Meeting in June.

The committee is continually engaged in record keeping for the mailing of the *Voter* and updating the Membership Handbook and data base of member interests and skills, maintained by Kitty Graves. Kitty also oversees the "email tree" for notifying the membership of timely news as well as a telephone tree, activated when needed. Lisa Shufro publishes the monthly *Voter* and our webmistress Marilyn Bakker designed and manages our website, providing user friendly information to LWV members and the public at large. Last but not least, the committee is grateful for the unflagging care and attention of Kitty Graves who produced this year's Member Handbook and Joyce Netherton, our Membership Administrator, who works behind-the-scenes maintaining our records with the League.

*Athena Ploumis Bradley and Helene Crawford, Member Services Vice Presidents
(Assisted by Board member Claudia Saunders)*



PROGRAM/ADVOCACY

PROGRAM:

National Immigration Study: The League participated in a LWVUS Study of Immigration, including six months' of research, a public forum co-sponsored with the Westport Library in December, and culminating in two well-attended consensus meetings in January. The results of the consensus process were reported to National for the development of a National Position, which has now been adopted and is available on the LWVUS website.

State Program: The Connecticut League conducted a study on Emerging Media Issues and developed concurrence statements for members and local leagues on (1) preserving Internet ("net") neutrality; (2) universal high-speed Internet access for Connecticut residents; and (3) protecting community access television. We presented the findings of the State study at a concurrence meeting on March 26, with members present voting to support the concurrence statements.

Local Program: Our Local Program Planning meeting was held on March 26 after the Emerging Media Issues presentation. Local Program interests for 2008-2009 will include following the 2007 Town Plan of Conservation and Development Implementation Committees as well as the plans of the Westport Housing Authority for housing upgrades and expansion. Several members agreed to research the possibility of advocating for legislative changes to allow "no excuse" absentee voting.

ADVOCACY:

Observer Corps: The Observer Corps continues to attend Town commission, board and committee meetings. Members also follow meetings broadcast on the cable access station to supplement attendance. Observance of the Westport Housing Authority meetings led to a meeting with the WHA Executive Director, Carol Martin, who spoke to the Observer/Action Committee in March on the Authority's new initiatives. Additional Observer Corps members are needed to follow Westport's boards and commissions.

Action Committee: The Action Committee continues to follow up on issues of interest as part of Local Program or arising from Observer Corps meetings. The Action Committee commented on the final draft of the 2007 Town Plan of Conservation and Development and spoke at public meetings in support of the Town's new Zoning Enforcement Ordinance.

Environment Committee: This committee has been active throughout the year, working to focus attention and develop a public outreach display on wastewater management (septic system maintenance); assisting River Watch/Harbor Watch staff in water quality monitoring during the warm weather months; and beginning collaborative work on the development of educational materials on preservation of the Saugatuck River Watershed.

Legislative Meeting (Breakfast & Politics): Senators Judith Freedman and John McKinney, and Representatives Joe Mioli and Kim Fawcett attended this morning version of Pie & Politics, which saw a lively discussion of topics from transportation to health care and solutions to Connecticut homelessness.

Alison Rivard and Jane Eyes, Program/Advocacy Vice Presidents

Nonpartisan Policy

The bylaws of the League of Women Voters of Westport state that the League “shall not support or oppose any political opponent or candidate.” This policy is essential to the strength, credibility and effectiveness of the League in the community, the state and the nation. Actions and affiliations of prominent League members affect the League’s public image of nonpartisanship. In order to uphold and protect our nonpartisanship, the League of Women Voters of Westport expects its members to adhere to the following guidelines:

1. Any League member who speaks for or represents the League before the public (co-presidents, public relations or action chairs, for example) may not run for partisan public office or work actively for the election of a particular candidate.
2. A League Board member may not serve on a town board or commission on the basis of party affiliation or on a committee of a particular political party. Appointments of League Board members to town boards and commissions must be approved by the League Board
3. The Westport League views participation in local caucuses, donations of political contributions and signing of petitions as an extension of the right to vote. Thus, Board members are permitted to engage in these activities but should do so with discretion.
4. There shall be consultation with the Board if there is any question of conflict. A majority vote of the Board shall resolve the question.
5. The political activities of a family member of a Board member are considered separate and distinct from the activities of a Board member.
6. A Board member should resign as soon as the Board has reached a decision that a conflict with our nonpartisan policy makes it unsuitable for the Board member to serve. This resignation will be made public by the League along with an explanation of our nonpartisan policy.
7. Members of the Representative Town Meeting (RTM) may serve on the League Board because of the nonpartisan nature of the RTM.
8. All League members should be sensitive to our nonpartisan policy while at League meetings and should refrain from partisan political discussion or displays at League events.

NOMINATIONS FOR BOARD 2008 — 2009

Co-Presidents	Pippa Bell Ader and Alison Rivard
Past President	Eileen Flug
Treasurer	Jim Graves
Secretary	Joyce Orkand
Vice-presidents	
Community Services	Jill Greenberg and Katy Goldschmidt
Member Services	Pat Porio
Program/Advocacy	Jane Eyes and Claudia Saunders
Voter Services	Liz-Ann Koos and Nancy Bloom
Directors	Kate Comstock Davis Dalma Heyn Doris Skutch Carol Stein
Nominating Committee	Athena Bradley Sally Galan Hope Hageman

