



THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS  
OF WESTPORT

# THE CALL TO THE ANNUAL MEETING

Wednesday, June 8, 2011  
8:00 - 10:15 AM

Saugatuck Congregational Church  
245 Post Road East

## AGENDA

- 8:30 Call to Order- Presidents Welcome
- 8:35 Recap of Year and Introduction of Vice Presidents
  - Community Services
  - Member Services
  - Program Advocacy
  - Voter Services
- 8:55 Treasurer's Report
- 9:00 Approval of 2011-2012 Budget
- 9:10 Presentation of 2011-2012 Program
- 9:20 Scholarship Presentation and Remarks
- 9:30 Election of Officers
- 9:35 Premiere of film highlighting the impact of the Westport LWV on our town and about the amazing women involved during our first 60 years.
- 10:15 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.

## CONTENTS

Agenda	1
Annual Meeting Rules	1
Committee Reports	2
Community Services	2
Member Services	2
Voter Services	2
Program/Advocacy	3
Comments on Proposed Budget	3
Nonpartisan Policy	4
Nominations for Board	4
Proposed Budget	inserted

***BRING THIS CALL WITH YOU JUNE 8***

---

## COMMUNITY SERVICES

Community Services organizes educational and other activities in Westport that promote the League's mission and policies. This past October, we offered our middle school civics program to all 7th grade classes at Coleytown Middle and Bedford. Our high school civics program-- "The Power of One"-- was presented at Staples, both in November and April.

Thanks to the creative efforts of Eileen Flug, Pippa Bell Ader and other members, and with input from elementary school science teachers, the League has developed a new interactive 2nd grade presentation on "The Water Cycle in Westport." This replaces the League's long-time 1st grade recycling program. The Water Cycle was piloted to Saugatuck Elementary classes this spring, and will be offered to all 2nd graders next year.

**Know Your Town**, our biennial directory of governmental departments and officials and community services, has been updated and is hot off the press. It is available on our website [www.lwvwestportct.org](http://www.lwvwestportct.org). Instead of mailing Know Your Town to residents, the League plans to distribute it and replenish copies periodically, at public sites where it is most likely to be noticed and picked up by Westport residents.

In cooperation with the Staples Tuition Grants Committee, the League continues to offer a scholarship to a female Staples High School senior or graduate who has shown civic responsibility or plans to major in political science, social studies or history in college. And, as always, the League was a visible presence in the annual Westport Memorial Day Parade.

*Jill Greenberg and Lois Green, Community Services Vice Presidents*

## MEMBER SERVICES

Because the job of Co-Vice President of Member Services remained unfilled this year, a committee formed in July to ensure that basic responsibilities in the area were met.

A main focus of Member Services is to increase and retain members. We aim to help all members find their place in our League 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 in this dual job of member recruitment and retention.

Today we have 212 members. Our 2010-2011 events began with the Annual Fall Brunch, held at the home of James and Pamela Weil and chaired by Marilyn Smith, Hope Hageman and Lisa Shufro. Guests had the opportunity to speak informally with candidates for local and national office. Our Post-Election Coffee featured the chairs of the town political committees, Jim Ezzes and Bob Zappi. It was held at the home of Pam Davis and co-chaired by Hope Hageman and Lisa Shufro. The Holiday Luncheon fund-raiser was hosted by Ann Sheffer and Bill Scheffler and co-chaired by Maggie Feczko and Jane Eyes. Karen Curtis is chairing the committee organizing the Annual Tag Sale (a major fund-raiser). The year ends with the Annual Meeting.

Our membership committee is responsible for record keeping, the Voter and updating the membership handbook. In 2010-2011, Jackie Gordon and Yvonne Senturia maintained the data base of member interests and skills, Jackie Gordon and Luisa Francoer administered the membership mailing list and e-mails and Lisa Shufro published the handbook. Carol Stein edited the monthly Voter and our web mistress Marilyn Bakker designed and managed our website, providing user-friendly information for members and the public. The State and National Leagues require regular updates on membership and dues. Joyce Netherton has graciously taken over this task as Membership Administrator interfacing with the State and National Leagues. Thank you one and all.

*Lisa Shufro and Yvonne Senturia for the Member Services Committee*

## VOTER SERVICES

In 2010-2011, Voter Services not only encouraged but also educated Westport residents on participation in the electoral process. One of its projects was the *2010 Voters' Guide* which was published in the Westport *Minuteman* newspaper and made available at various locations in town as well as on the local LWV web site. The LWV banner was displayed on Main Street prior to the November local elections to encourage people to vote.

Voter Services sponsored two candidate debates in October. The first debate included candidates for State Representative, districts 133 and 136. The second debate allowed the two candidates for State Senate to present their positions. The evening's debates were co-sponsored by the Y's Women. The debates were carried live on the public access channel as well as streaming live on the Town's website. This was the first year that the League accepted questions over the internet.

Voter Services' end-of-year activity was its annual voter registration drive in May at Staples High School and Greens Farms Academy in cooperation with the Westport Registrars of Voters.

Voter Services worked closely with our publicity chairperson to maximize all of these projects. Thanks go to her and all League volunteers who helped with Voter Services events and played a vital role in their success.

*Becky Ruthven, Voter Services Vice President*

## **PROGRAM/ADVOCACY**

National Program: At the biennial League of Women Voters convention, June 11-15, 2010, the Westport League was represented by Co-President Doris Skutch, Vice President for Program/Advocacy, Liz-Ann Koos, and Ann Lakhdir, member of the LWVUS Arms Control Task Force. The 90<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Convention, "Making Democracy Work: A History of Change, A Future of Hope," approved studies on the privatization of federal agencies and institutions and on the role of the federal government in education.

State Program: There were no LWVCT studies this year. The thrust of the LWVCT Fall Conference was on healthcare in Connecticut now that federal healthcare legislation has been enacted. For state program planning, our recommendation is that the top priorities for advocacy should be election laws and transportation.

Local Program: Based on a recommendation at the national convention that an important role of the League is to educate the community on timely issues, two Topic Talks were open to the public. Both were on issues where the League has positions and can therefore take an advocacy role---affordable senior housing and the abolishment of the death penalty in Connecticut. With regard to the latter, member Ellen McBride is LWVCT's Death Penalty Specialist and is involved in the Connecticut Network to Abolish the Death Penalty (CNADP) of which LWVCT is a member.

During the 2010 summer season, members assisted Harbor Watch/ River Watch staff with water quality monitoring in the Aspetuck River. The League has signed on as a partner in the Westport Home Energy Challenge. This new town program has the goal of getting 1,000+ homeowners to make energy efficiency improvements that will decrease their energy consumption by 20%. The League is co-sponsoring workshops that address the energy-savings potential in one's home, and how to achieve this without breaking the bank.

Observer Corps/Action Committee: To be more effective and interesting, the two groups now meet together under the combined leadership of Rose Anne Preston, Ann Gill and Lisa Shufro. The Observer Corps continues to attend Town, commission, board and committee meetings and then meet with the Action Committee to discuss possible advocacy action. Members also follow meetings broadcast on the local cable access station. Examples of recent action include the League's submitting two statements to Planning and Zoning in support of the concept of a senior housing facility on town owned land (Baron's South). Co-President Yvonne Senturia and the VP for Program and Advocacy Liz-Ann Koos are representing the League on an ad hoc group of town organizations and individuals following the development of the proposal.

Legislative Meeting (Pie & Politics): State Senator Toni Boucher and State Representatives Kim Fawcett and Jonathan Steinberg met one evening to discuss with members their legislative priorities and to answer questions developed by the State and local Leagues.

*Liz-Ann Koos, Program/Advocacy Vice President*

## **LOCAL PROGRAM 2011-2012**

At our February 14th Local Program Planning meeting, two priority areas of interest for the next year were identified: (1) a review and update of our Local Position on Housing, last revised in 1992, with an emphasis on affordable housing; (2) a review of how the LWVCT Position on Ethics, which includes a provision promoting the establishment of municipal ethics commissions and codes, should be applied to Westport.

## **COMMENTS ON THE PROPOSED BUDGET**

The proposed budget for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2012 presents a balanced budget with expenses equaling income plus the National Convention reserve. A small decline in membership this year results in a realistic forecast for the coming year. An accounting change this year lists all donations at the Holiday Lunch to that line item rather than split with the Ed Fund.

The more definitive category name of League Support replaces Assessments & Fees in this budget, and under several expense categories, line items have been combined: Communications replaces Public Relations, Media and Web Site; School Programs for Civic Education and Grade 2 Water Quality Ed; and for clarity under Program Advocacy, like projects have been combined into three line items.

We continue to budget so that our individual member dues may remain at \$50 and to count on our members to participate whenever possible to ensure that we meet our budget.

*Joyce Netherton, Treasurer*

## 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 2011— 2012

<b>President</b>	Yvonne Senturia
<b>Past President</b>	Doris Skutch
<b>Treasurer</b>	Joyce Netherton
<b>Secretary</b>	Joyce Orkand
<b>Vice Presidents</b>	
<b>Community Services</b>	Lois Green and Celestine LaCroix
<b>Member Services Admin</b>	Nancy Bloom and Elaine Weinstein
<b>Member Services Events</b>	Sarah Menchaca and Becky Ruthven
<b>Program/Advocacy</b>	Nita Cohen and Barbara Licker
<b>Voter Services</b>	Marilyn Smith and Andrea Turner
<b>Directors</b>	Jane Fraser Jackie Gordon Phyllis Groner Carol Stein, Voter Editor
<b>Nominating Committee</b>	Athena Bradley Carol Burgess Jane Eyes

