



Board Meeting Via Zoom

Friday, June 23, 2023 @ 12:00 PM (Zoom)

MINUTES

Voting members in attendance: Charlene Bennett, Linda Donaldson, Karen Freedman, Jessie Gomez, Ben Graffam, Bobbie Boatwright Harris, Breezi Hicks, Terry Lauretta, and Eileen Swiler.

Non-Voting members in attendance: Katy Byrd, Larry Rankin, Trudy Rankin, and Jo Shim

A Quorum was confirmed.

Motion made to approve both March and April minutes; motion passed unanimously.

Treasurer's Report by Terry Lauretta

- We have \$23,211.95 which is higher than our average monthly balance, mostly because of many renewed memberships recently.
- The executive committee updated our check signing privileges at MidFlorida Credit Union on Wednesday, June 21.

President's Report by Linda Donaldson

- Three members, Linda Donaldson, Jessie Gomez, and Jo Shim attended the state conference. Jessie is now a member of the state board for LWV.

Standing Committee Reports

- Membership: Linda Donaldson reported that we gained two new members in the past month.
- Communication: Ashley Lauretta was away at the time of our meeting.
- Climate Action: Along with updating recent progress and plans for the Climate Action Committee, Karen Freedman ***moved*** that the LWVPC would allow the CA committee to form a collaborative network of community leaders & organizations to help promote Ready, Set, Solar among nonprofits. The motion was seconded by Charlene Bennett. This is a process geared mostly to educate citizens, and it follows similar action by the state LWV. At present, no funding is being sought by the committee. The motion passed unanimously.
- D.E.I.: Katy Byrd reported that there were 16 attendees at Bobbie Harris's seminar on Monday, which proved to be a great way to end a year of focused scholarship. D.E.I. will not meet in July and August, though they will share ideas about the next set of readings, which will be focused on memoirs.
- Education: Sarah Fortney was away at the time of our meeting.
- Gun Safety Action Group: 750 gun locks have been distributed so far, with 500 going to the sheriff's office. Flyers are being created to distribute to Day Care Centers in Polk County; gun locks will be distributed there as well. Trudy Rankin ***moved*** that the LWVPC permit the GSAG to use the League's logo on their mailings and flyers. Jessie Gomez seconded the motion. The

motion passed unanimously. Given that the distribution of flyers and gun locks for Day Care Centers will include all of Polk County, the GSAG is seeking volunteers to drive and deliver. Trudy will ask Ashley Lauretta to place that information in the LWV Newsletter.

- Speaker's Bureau: Trudy Rankin reported that Jo Shim and Ben Graffam had a successful speaking engagement at Cypress Hills for the Democrats of North Lakeland there on June 14. Their topic was "Separating Fact from Fiction." There may be other opportunities for that presentation in the fall. Sue Schultz will be speaking to the Lakeland Democrats on Education in September.
- Health Care: Paula Mims was away at the time of our meeting.
- Reproductive Health and Justice: Eileen Swiler and Jo Shim reported that tomorrow (Saturday, June 24) was the first anniversary of the removal of Roe v. Wade as law. A protest will occur in Munn Park from 10:00 AM to Noon. Volunteers continue to escort patients at the Lakeland's Women's Health Clinic, where they have also started a library for patients. If people have spare blankets that could be donated, patients there would be appreciative. The petition drive continues in full force, and statewide nearly 250,000 signatures have been gathered. Our league is doing a great job there, having gathered 63 at Pride in the Park and, so far surpassing 200 total petitions. Volunteers for the petition drive are still welcome, and we are attempting to be at the Lakeland Public Library Main Branch every Thursday morning.
- Voter Services: Jo Shim reported that due to SB 7050 third party registration is becoming risky. While we can still help those who want to register, after July 1, many of the services we once provided will be restricted. There are two trainings in the near future that will help volunteers understand what can be done. On June 29, there will be a panel discussion, a Latino forum, discussing voting and voting rights. We will be staffing a table at Red, White, and Kaboom, registering voters as well as we can.
- Returning Citizens Restoration Rights Action Group: Larry Rankin reported that the postcard campaign is in full swing, with the postcards informing returning citizens how to make contact with a lawyer who can assist in establishing full voting rights. Larry Rankin will be representing the LWVPC at the June 29 forum (see above). Linda Donaldson has a "good summary of the postcards and their purpose" and she will send it out via email.

Old Business

- Linda Donaldson moved to ask Lynn Paredes if she would want to serve on our board as a voting member. Jessie Gomez seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. If Lynn Paredes agrees, we will invite her to a future board meeting so she can see what we do and how we do it.
- Terry Lauretta spoke to us about ways to look at our budget and to assess its meaning. Essentially, ours is a cash-basis organization, which seeks a balanced budget: no money left over, and never short of money. We want to spend what we have, and no more than that. We are a 501(c)(4) organization which means if people donate to us, they cannot deduct their donation on their taxes. Moreover, we do pay sales tax, but we do not pay income tax. This discussion addressed our left over gift cards from last July—we have a lot of them from the Lakeland Solidarity Activity, a project to educate about redistricting, and these cards do not have an expiration date according to Jessie Gomez. The conversation probed if it would be possible to

use these cards a little more broadly, though keeping it within the context of education. It was decided to move this issue—how to and when to use the cards—to a future meeting.

- Sallie Stone of The Well, contacted Trudy Rankin to see if Trudy's "Closing the Gap" might be replicated at The Well. To conduct Closing the Gap at The Well, we would need \$150.00 per session, so we are not moving forward on that right now.
- Carole Essy continues to research other local leagues to see how they handle their yearly program.

New Business

- Breezi Hicks ***moved*** that we should make the Returning Citizens restoration Rights Action Group a sub-group of the Voter Services Committee. Terry Laurretta seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Our next meeting will be on July 28, 2023, at noon.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:38 PM.