

**2016 LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF ALAMEDA
ANNUAL BOARD RETREAT MINUTES, AUGUST 6, 2016**

PRESENT: Board members: Alice Fried, Marian Breitbart, Juelle-Ann Boyer, Mari Clark, Georgia Gates Derr, Ruth Dixon-Mueller, Keasha Martindill, Felice Zensius, Karen Butter, Doris Gee, Cynthia Silva, Dorothy Kerwin.
Non-board members: Anne Spanier, Shubha Fpanse, Marilyn Ng, Kate Quick, Karen Scanlon, Katherine Cameron, Maria Dominguez, Sally Faulhaber.

Call to Order - 9:00 a.m.

National Chapter Review LWVUS Focus – Alice Fried and Anne Spanier

The priorities for the LWV were discussed that were presented at the national convention. Voter education (voter rights) is a major priority this year. National will focus on Campaign Finance Reform (money in politics), state level on redistricting. An important cause to focus on is to turn over the Citizens United.

We are to no longer use the word **non-partisan**.

Literature on the recent debate event held at the College of Alameda was a popular handout at the convention. More materials will be available in hard copies and on the website.

Discussed how to handle inquiries from the public and what to do when questioned on issues by the press or individuals.

State/Regional Issues – Felice Zensius and Karen Butter

There are 17 propositions on the November California ballot. Felice announced LWVC positions.

Local issues: Rent stabilization, Alameda City Utilities Modernization Act, School bond extension and a county housing bond. More issues could be added when finalized. The propositions were reviewed. Soon to be sent out with the LWV support decisions. (Support Oppose NP: No position, N: Neutral)

Alameda County Council (ACC) Alice Fried & Ruth Dixon-Mueller

Representatives of six East Bay Leagues attended. LWV County Pros and Cons; working on their issues. County Affordable Housing measure could result in funds for the City. SB 1107 Deletes ban on public financing of elections. We're encouraged to include all candidates on the ballot to attend the forums.

Committee Reports:

Programs: (forums) Patty Young

Programs to be held after the election were reviewed. Committee to work together and share the duties on presenting the programs. Discussed various options for programs that can go beyond the current program year. No topical forums in the fall because of Election Forums; will begin in February 2017.

Membership: Doris Gee

Looking for more members to join her committee. Promoting ways to sustain current membership. Looking to recruit younger members; high school and college. Suggestions were made to have LWV applications at the various events such as the college. There was a short discussion about student members. Keep LWVA visible with signage available. We currently have 143 members.

Finances: Marian Breitbart

No immediate need to raise the dues. Approved payment for the banner.

Local Action: Karen Butter & Felice Zensius

First committee meeting has been scheduled.

Communications: Georgia Gates Derr

Members depend on E-blast, dist. 299, read newsletter on-line. Possibly reduce the frequency of VOTER newsletter. Website is critical and serves the broader community. It is the first initial contact when searching through the internet. Need to stay on top of keeping the website current. Passed around a distribution list for review of community contacts. Patty Young will present a workshop on Sept. 3rd for LWVA on improving media skills and utilizing Dropbox for document sharing. Discussed LEW (League website platform). Georgia requested bios and headshots of board members for the website.

Voter Services: Dorothy Kerwin

Fall forums, voter registration. Major priority this year. Pros and Con forums to be held. Judge candidates to be added to the forums. Possibly four forums this year.

Looking for volunteers to assist as presenters. Easy Voter Guide to be distributed. It is a concise description of each state ballot proposition. 1000 copies to be ordered. Also available on their website in many languages.

Voter's Edge (formerly known as SmartVoter): Juelle-Ann Boyer

Education is the purpose of the Voter's Edge. Advocacy and education are to be kept separate. Discussed that the Maplight organization has joined forces with LWV for the Voter's Edge California. Provides on-line instructions to register to vote and where to vote and information on candidates and issues, including funding sources. Bookmarks with the info were distributed. More to be ordered. There is a store on the Maplight website to order more bookmarks.

Fundraising: MYPO and other events:

A chair is needed. Alice and Ruth will help; there is a full committee in place. The MYPO fundraising event is very important and helps to keep the community informed. The event is March 30, 2017 at the Harbor Bay Community Center. Ideas for other fundraising events welcome.

Youth Outreach:

High school debates, voter registration, etc. More schools have shown interest in participating in the debates (a tournament). Could grow outside to other schools in the east bay. Maria D. Dominguez volunteered to chair the committee.

Healthcare: Shubha Fanse

Discussed the current status of the Alameda Hospital. Many changes in healthcare coverage, problems with insurance. Suggested two programs to be presented in forums. Need committee members.

Directions to Board from Annual Meeting: Alice Fried

2016: Revision of local position on Port of Oakland:

This position had been removed from the annual report.

The issue was the transport of coal through Oakland by train to the ships. Oakland CC voted against the transport. It is in the Oakland jurisdiction. We are impacted by the Port of Oakland as they also control the airport. We have an outdated Port position; needs updating if we are to keep it. Further research.

2016: Diversity of LWVA membership, outreach

Our partnership with the college and high schools is a step in the right direction. It is also on the membership agenda.

2015: LWVA Observers at City Boards and Council meetings, ("Observer Corps")

We had a great plan, but it did not work out last year. You have to have volunteers to do this. Can be watched in person, on TV or streaming. Minutes are approved two meetings later to be official. Most meetings end by 11:00 pm. Report actions taken and the nay and yea votes. Good to have observers show up to all meetings. They then know they are being watched. Is the corps necessary? Suggestion to review the meeting packet on-line and look to see if there are issues we need to take notice of. It is too big of a job for one person. List the opportunity on the website for volunteers who may wish to be part of the corps. It is an ongoing plan, not just one year. We should put the city council link on website for reviewing meeting packages.

Draft and Event Schedule for 2016-2017

A rough draft was distributed. Open membership/community meeting on September 22, 2016 to discuss goals and tasks. Need the dates for forums. Program chair is in charge of arranging all venues for public events.

Appointments to be made by the Board: Alice Fried

Budget Chair 2016-2017: Joel Saldinger, plus one more member to be selected.

D. Gee , 1st, K. Martindill, 2nd. MSP. Treasurer is also on the committee.

2017-2018 Nominating Committee:

Two Board members were appointed: Doris Gee and Patty Young.. J. Boyer 1st, M. Breitbart, 2nd, MSP (Non-board members elected at annual meeting are Dorie Guess Behrstock, Anne McKereghan, Kathryn Saenz Duke)

Open Discussion: .

Kate Quick stated that the LWVA is a model board in the eyes of the LWVCA. Known as a forward thinking group. The student debate caught their attention.

Handouts:

Agenda; League of Women Voters of the U.S Summary* of Public Policy Positions; Communications Update; Attendance List; Draft 2016-2017 Event Schedule; Voter's Edge Bookmark

Adjourned - 2:30pm

Respectfully Submitted
Cynthia Silva, Recording Secretary