

## League of Women Voters Asheville-Buncombe County Board Meeting

November 21, 2024; Zoom at 6 pm

Submitted by Patricia Hearron, Secretary

**In Attendance:** Suzanne Fisher, President, Nicole Wheeler-Schumacher, Vice-President, Kathy Schofield, Treasurer, Board members: Kelly Carlson, Nadine Hamby, Donna Mann, Cheryl Williams, Sharon Withrow, and visitor Julie Meer.

Suzanne called the meeting to order at 6:05.

**Minutes** from October 17 Meeting were approved by acclamation.

**Finance and Budget Update:** Kathy submitted a written report via email prior to the meeting. She noted that significant expenses for Vote 411 direct mail campaign and media advertising were made possible by a large anonymous donation and that the organization is in good shape financially.

Suzanne mentioned that she is keeping a list of possible uses for the donated funds (e.g., voter education, gender equity efforts, subsidizing attendance at NC and US conventions, and paid internships with mandatory community engagement). She asked members to submit other suggestions to her.

Suzanne's suggestion that in lieu of the customary appeal for donations at the end of the year, we encourage people to donate to hurricane relief efforts was approved by consensus. Suzanne will make that suggestion as part of her newsletter column.

**Membership Committee:** Nicole has suggested that the winter social be held at the Tempe Avery Center in Montford. If that is unavailable the committee will explore other venues. Suzanne noted that if the social is scheduled for January 16, we will still need to hold a board meeting to comply with bylaws requirements for notifications to be sent in advance of the annual meeting.

Sharon said that planning has not yet begun for the LWV 101 event and that she has attended a training meeting regarding Chapter Spot (the LWVUS system for reporting dues and maintaining league rosters. Suzanne asked members to think about the possibility of raising dues. Ours (\$50.00) are currently among the lowest in North Carolina. Sharon said she did not think an increase to \$75 (the amount suggested by LWVUS) would deter members from joining or renewing. Given that our bylaws require any change in dues to be approved by a vote of the membership, Sharon suggested that we include any proposed change in the issues to be voted on in connection with the annual meeting. Suzanne noted that that LWVUS has training materials for Chapter Spot on its website.

**LWVNC:** The state convention will be held May 2-4 in Durham; they are looking for members to join the Program Priorities Committee whose work must be finished by March. A regional meeting will be held in Hickory March 22; each chapter may send 10 attendees. Suzanne will attend a session on the Citizen Initiative project in December.

**LWVUS** is starting a study of the federal judiciary system (transparency, accountability, ethics, qualifications) which will entail a very involved consensus project with local league input. She noted that LWVUS currently has no position on the judiciary and therefore cannot make statements regarding it.

**Voter Outreach Update:** Cheryl reported that tabling at festivals had been curtailed following Hurricane Helene, but that the action team had provided information at community relief sites. Team members had spent over 200 hours observing Board of Elections meetings during the election. Since there will be only municipal elections in the coming year, the team will take the time to re-think and make adjustments to their outreach efforts, such as providing education activities to prevent the types of errors that invalidate absentee ballots. They will continue their outreach to senior centers.

**Vote 411:** North Carolina had a 50% higher usage of the site than the remainder of the country. LWVUS would like to know what accounts for that—e.g., our direct-mail campaign. Members wondered if there was a way to determine how many individuals who received the mailing actually voted and suggested that Kathy check with the source she used to derive her mailing list to see if it could be compared with voting records once they are finalized.

**ERA/Gender Equity Action Team:** The current effort is to urge President Biden to publish the ERA as part of his legacy.

**Election of the President by Popular Vote:** The team will ramp up its activities in 2025. In the meanwhile, Suzanne has applied to make a presentation at Nerd Nite at RAD Brewery on December 5 and awaits acceptance.

**Communications:** Nadine has posted several ways to reach President Biden regarding the ERA on the Website and Instagram. Newsletter deadline is November 29 for December publication. Suzanne reported that she established a Bluesky account: <http://lwwab.bsky.social/> She has frozen the LWVAB X account in order to prevent the name being usurped by another entity.

### **Old Business**

**ACLU Film Screening:** Suzanne and Kathy both thought that the focus on abortion was too narrow and would prefer a broader emphasis on reproductive rights. Donna suggested that Suzanne watch the film to determine whether it would be appropriate to screen for our membership.

Board Retreat/Planning Session will be held on March 5, 2025 from 4-7 p.m. in the club room at 60 North Market Street. Kathy volunteered to reserve the space, cover the nominal rental fee and pick up box lunches from Publix. She will distribute a menu via email.

### **New Business**

Suzanne suggested that we make our board meetings on Zoom accessible to individuals who request the link. We will advertise this possibility in the newsletter and on the website.

**Next Meeting:** December 17 at 6:00 p.m. via Zoom.

**Schedule of Meetings** (third Thursday at 6:00 p.m.)

- **2025:** January 16 (Winter Social?), February 20, March 20, April 17, May 15 (Annual Meeting?), June 19

Meeting adjourned at 7:00