

**Darien League of Women Voters (LWV)
Meeting Minutes, Wednesday, March 3, 2021
Zoom Call**

Attendees

Stephanie Maher, Evonne Klein, Martha Banks, Vicki Baldwin, Clara Sartori, Amy Zerbe, Mary Genco, Arlene Tulacro, Sue Okie, Karen McNicoll, Martha Olson, Vivian Liu, Jill McCammon, Sarah Neuman, Kate Larson, Carolyn Bayne, Laurie Williamson, Shelly Skoglund, Millynn Gaaserud, Tiffany O'Connor, Jean Sweeney

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Clara Sartori at 9:04 AM.

Motion to Amend the Agenda

Jill McCammon moved, and Kate Larson seconded a motion to amend the Agenda to include comments from Jean Sweeney regarding the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA).

Approval of Minutes

Amy Zerbe moved, and Mary Genco seconded a motion to approve the minutes of the February 3rd meeting. The minutes were approved.

Treasurer's Report (Stephanie Maher)

Stephanie Maher reported that the bank balance as of February 28 was approximately \$19,000. Two new memberships were received. She also reported that she has placed a call to the Rebecca Traister contact, although legal comments from Jean Sweeney indicate the contract regarding the \$10,000 fee for the event that could not occur considering Covid was very solid. We have already paid the \$5,000 deposit which is therefore unlikely to be returned. It was determined that, rather than have a Zoom event, we should reschedule the event to be in-person next September or the following June. The plan had been to co-sponsor with the Darien Library which was to contribute \$2,500 of the \$10,000 fee. Alternatively, we will consider making this a paid event with the Darien LWV as the sole sponsor. Evonne Klein volunteered to assist Arlene Tulacro for planning the event.

Review of Voters Service Events for 27th District State Senate Special Election, March 2, 2021

Voters' Guide (Martha Banks and Gwen Mogenson)

Thanks were expressed to Martha and Gwen for their efforts, and for publication in the Darienite and Darien Patch, and posting on the Darien LWV website.

Candidates' Night

This was a collaboration with the Stamford LWV (Kris Goldhawk). Thanks were expressed to Mary Genco, Sue Okie, Stephanie Maher and Amy Zerbe, and for technical help from LWVCT. 176 people registered for the event and it was broadcast on Channel 79. A discussion followed about inappropriate dress and comments vs. free speech, and the role of the LWV in setting and enforcing standards. The consensus was that the LWV has both a right and an obligation to set standards. Kate Larson volunteered to spearhead our effort to develop these standards, and Laurie Williamson and Mary Genco volunteered to help. Jean Sweeney will provide a draft Dress Code.

Legislative Coffee

Thanks were expressed to Kate Larson and Mary Genco who coordinated the event, and to Martha Banks, Carolyn Bayne, Evonne Klein, Deepika Saksena and Laurie Williamson who all helped with developing questions for the legislators. Technical assistance was obtained from LWVCT.

A discussion followed regarding Senator Duff's last-minute cancellation, despite the event date having been coordinated with him. Clara will send a letter to Senator Duff communicating our disappointment, and the lost opportunity for us to hear his answers to our questions. Laurie Williamson suggested that perhaps we could consider a subsequent event with the two Senators who represent voters in Darien.

Membership Update (Jill McCammon and Shelly Skoglund)

Thanks were expressed to both Jill and Shelly for their continued efforts. As reported by the Treasurer, two new members joined this month. Theresa Vogt and Vivian Liu continue work on the Membership Directory, which we expect to be electronic.

Government Guide (Sartori)

We will have an update on this at the April meeting.

Consider and Act on Request from Darien Housing Authority

A discussion followed on this request to manage the election of representatives to the Darien Housing Authority. Mary Genco has background on this from the past and will summarize volunteer requirements and timeline for our next meeting.

Publicity

Clara suggested a need to have a roster manager as advised by the National web master.

Programs

We need volunteers for the Darien Town Officials Program. It was suggested that this could possibly be combined with a second Legislative Coffee with the two Senators representing Darien voters. The "Future of Darien" program, which we had agreed was of interest, has been scheduled for April 5. The Fairfield County Community Foundation plans to sponsor this program around the economic future of our region, in conjunction with the Darien Library. It will be via Zoom, free and open to the public. Information is currently on the Library's event page, with the live registration link at <https://www.darienlibrary.org/event/4906> .

Food for Thought

The last meeting included a discussion on Freedom. Meetings are usually held on the 3rd Thursday of each month.

LWVCT Call to Action: Contact your State Legislators

We view protecting the right to vote and the opportunity to exercise that right as paramount for our representative democracy to survive and thrive. Members were encouraged to contact their State legislators to ask them to support the two resolutions to amend the State Constitution:

- [SJ-3 RESOLUTION PROPOSING AN AMENDMENT TO THE STATE CONSTITUTION TO PERMIT EARLY VOTING](#)
- [SJ-4 RESOLUTION PROPOSING AN AMENDMENT TO THE STATE CONSTITUTION TO PERMIT NO-EXCUSE ABSENTEE VOTING](#)

The Agenda provided links and contact information regarding these two resolutions.

Equal Rights Amendment (ERA)

Jean Sweeney led a discussion regarding the passage of the ERA. She proposed conversations regarding what equality looks like. For example, do we want a Women's Agenda for CT to be developed? Anyone interested was encouraged to contact Jean.

Announcements

We have received thanks from Person-to-Person for our donation in memory of Joan Davis.

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, April 7th at 9:00 AM via Zoom.

Motion to Adjourn:

Sue Okie moved, and Jean Sweeney seconded a motion to adjourn the meeting at 10:03 AM.

Respectfully submitted,
Vicki Baldwin, Secretary