

# **LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS RIVERSIDE**

Minutes of the 63<sup>rd</sup> Annual Meeting  
Saturday, May 20, 2017  
Romano's Restaurant  
3557 University Avenue, Riverside, CA 92501

## **Introductions**

President Joan Donahue welcomed members and guests at 12:15 P.M. Twenty League members and three guests were in attendance. Ruth Wilson, 60-year League member was recognized.

## **Guest Speaker**

Due to scheduling difficulties, the speaker asked to go first. Jesse Melgar, Deputy Secretary of State Chief Communications Officer, was introduced by Joan Donahue. His topic was Citizen Access to Voting in California. He outlined several state initiatives to increase voter registration and turnout. They included

- Pre-registration at 16 years old
- Same day voter registration
- Apple I-phone application with links to County-administered elections
- Comprehensive mailing of mail-in ballots to all registered voters
- Voter information tool on Secretary of State's website
- Voter's Bill of Rights
- Video guide for newly naturalized citizens
- Outreach to veterans

He also identified current legislative priorities:

- 2018 Initiative to modernize voting systems in California
- Prime time primary SB 568
- Consolidation of state-wide elections with presidential elections

## **Luncheon was served**

## **Call to Order and Preliminary matters**

Joan Donahue appointed Chani Beeman as the Annual Meeting Parliamentarian

The Call to the 2016 Annual Meeting provided links to our website for members to review the Rules of the Annual Meeting, the 2016 Annual Meeting Minutes, and LWVR current positions. The meeting agenda, 2017-18, Draft Budget, the Nominating Committees' 2017-18 slate and a list of 2016-2017 accomplishments were sent to members by e-mail and provided in hard copy for attendees.

Without objection, the Rules of the Annual meeting were accepted.

Without objection, the President appointed Judith Auth as Secretary for the Annual Meeting.

With no corrections, the Minutes of 2016 were accepted as presented.

### **Re-affirm Positions of LWV Riverside**

Joan Donahue called for consideration of the positions of our LWV Riverside. Sheila Kay Riley moved to adopt the LWV Riverside positions for 2017-2018. The motion was seconded by Joan Breeding Letbetter. A brief discussion ensued recommending that the local league undertake local studies as it had in the past. Motion passed.

### **President's Report**

We live in a time of unexpected change. To cope successfully, we need to change our attitudes. We need to become more energized and engaged. LWVUS will be monitoring and opposing efforts across the nation to suppress voter turnout. 2017 may be the biggest year for voter rights since the 1960s. Our task is to keep the voters informed about ways that voting in California is being made more accessible.

### **Budget Adoption**

Barbara Purvis presented a draft budget for 2017-18. Joan Breeding Letbetter moved to accept the budget. The motion was seconded by Pat Reynolds. The motion carried.

### **Membership Report**

Barbara Purvis reported that we have our first non-profit organization member: Latino Network. Our total membership is 47: 30 individuals, 16 households and one corporate member. Barbara announced that due to the increased cost for per member payments to the State and National Leagues, we are considering an increase in the local dues for household members. This matter would be taken up in next year's Annual Meeting.

### **Nominations and Election of Officers, Directors and the Nominating Committee**

Joan Breeding Letbetter presented the Nominating Committee's report and recommended slate of Officers, Directors and nominating Committee members for the 2017-2018 league year.

#### **Officers:**

President	Joan Donahue
Vice President	Patricia Reynolds
Secretary	Judith Auth
Treasurer	Cheryl Holsey
Membership	Joan Breeding Letbetter

#### **Directors:**

Chani Beeman, Local Action  
Virginia Field, Environmental issues  
Selina Bremenstuhl  
Katie Greene  
Barbara Purvis  
Jennifer Vaughn- Blakely

**Nominating Committee:** Joan Breeding Letbetter, Chair, Virginia Field and Tom Donahue

There being no additional nominations, a motion was made by Theresa Hanley to accept the slate as presented. The motion was seconded Helen Norman. The motion carried and the nominees were duly elected.

### **Adjournment**

Joan Donahue thanked the members for attending. She acknowledged Tom Donahue as the A.V. committee chair and adjourned the meeting at 1:50 P.M.

Judith Auth, 2017 Annual Meeting Secretary  
LWV Riverside

### **2016-2017 President's Report**

Typically, at the end of a League year, we review past actions and accomplishments talk a little about plans for next year.

This year was different. This year was all about unexpected change and the ability to define that impact and focus our priorities on what can be done to address the challenges ahead.

At the beginning of this League year we were all about the 17 state propositions on the ballot. We prepared diligently, working very hard to wrestle the pros and cons down to manageable language that we used to speak to 13 community groups.

I was anxious to learn what propositions passed, but as the election results came in, that interest evaporated.

I was overwhelmed by the fact that we would *not* have a President who would be amenable to the kinds of policies that League favors - but instead one who would likely be down-right hostile.

So, as Maya Angelou said, 'if you can't change something - then change your attitude.' And that's what millions of Americans have done. It's no longer good enough to be well-informed and vote.

Just as the League has championed for almost 100 years - legislators must be reminded regularly of their constituent's policy priorities through phone calls, emails, letters and town hall meetings.

This re-energized activism is great news - but be aware of League's chief concern.

Each legislative victory, each march that brings out thousands of protesters and each investigation - also serves as a warning to the hyper-partisan politicians in several states that citizens are engaged and will vote in the 2018 mid-term election.

We believe, this may encourage hyper-partisan officials to increase their efforts to suppress the vote in 2018.

We saw it last November with restrictive voter ID laws, purging of voter rolls, cuts to early voting and polling places, and use of outdated and faulty voting machines in populous lower-economic districts.

Just one example - in the City of Detroit - 75,000 votes for the office of President were not counted because they were read by old, worn-out voting machines. Instead, they were judged to be 'under-votes.'

Michigan asks us to believe that 75,000 people braved nasty Detroit weather, some waiting in line for hours - got in to their polling place and did not vote for President. Keep in mind - Donald J Trump carried Michigan by 10,900 votes.

League of Women Voters believes voter suppression had a decisive impact on the November election's outcome.

LWV US President said this about Trump's creation of the new "Election Integrity Commission."

"The real problems with our electoral system are the suppressive laws that prevent eligible voters from access to the ballot.

False claims of voter fraud have been used to push through more restrictive voting laws.

This administration is laying the groundwork to usher in widespread discrimination in our systems of voting and manipulate our democracy."

Look for state Leagues to take a stand in statehouses and courtrooms across the county as 2017 may be the biggest year for voting rights since the 1960's.

We should be very proud of ourselves as Californian's to support one of the most fair, transparent and accessible voting systems in the nation.

We heard the good news from Jesse Melgar for Californians. But now, nation-wide, Leagues must and will be vigilant about supporting voting rights.

Joan Donahue, President  
League of Women Voters Riverside