

**LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF FRANKLIN COUNTY - MAL UNIT**  
**May 13, 2017 MINUTES**

**Date:** May 13, 2017 **Time:** 3:00 p.m. **Place:** Greenfield Public Library

**Board Members in Attendance:** Marie Gauthier, Nicole Moore

**Guests in Attendance:** Ellen Story, Rebecca Fricke, Susan Miller-King, Kate Lucy, Julie Margolis, Barbara Roman, Elizabeth Irving, Peg Hall

**Members in Attendance:** 19 (Marie has sign in sheet for count)

**Call to Order:**

Marie Gauthier opens meeting and welcomes members, and gives brief introduction of retired Rep. Ellen Story, who discusses how legislation works at the state level, and answers questions.

**Key takeaways:**

- Legislature is reactive, not proactive. Esp. reactive to press. Neg. press is very powerful.
- Write letters to editors: most read section of a newspaper is the comics page. 2nd most read section are the letters to editors page.
- Recommend showing up in groups to rep office hours to make a point/support a bill
  - Ask “What can we do to help you get this bill passed?” Put yourself in their position, use their title. Write hand-written letters.
  - Legislator must think they won’t be re-elected if bill doesn’t pass.
  - Legislators are beholden to constituents and to colleagues (committees & chairs). Hard to reconcile, have to navigate both worlds.
  - Speakers/chairs are extremely powerful. Parking space, staff salaries, future committee assignments all in their hands.
- MA is 1 of 7 states with a full-time legislature.

Rebecca Fricke, president of Amherst LWV, recommends we participate in Day on the Hill (sometime this fall) and also keep an eye on Boston LWV as they are very involved with bills. Focus on a few points for more effect, and call Amherst LWV anytime for support.

**Community Outreach Committee/Membership Committee:** Marie discussed the difference between the two committees: Membership is from the outside in, about serving and retaining our members, while Community Outreach is from inside out, about our members serving the community at large in a more immediate, tangible way: community service. Community Outreach functions as the coordinating committee, finding volunteer opportunities for our League, while actual volunteer work revolves among different members. Christine Turner offered to work on that committee. Nora Bixby knows RSVP List which maintains lists of community needs, and will forward that info. Membership co-chair Nicole Moore added that in regards to membership, the idea of recruiting isn’t negative, that loving your work with the League leads to talking about it with those not involved; it follows naturally.

**Equality & Justice Committee:** Annie Sexauer reports they’re shifting focus to women in prison and local action. Please contact if you know any opportunities.

**Information/Media Literacy Committee:** Co-chair Katie Beth Ryan reported they have an event scheduled on Thurs. May 18 @7pm at the St. James. UMass professor Steve Fox will

present “Navigating the News: Who Can You Trust in Today’s Media Landscape?” Digital projector and volunteers to provide refreshments needed.

**Voter Services Committee:** Co-chair Suzanne Patnaude reported the ideas the committee is exploring:

- Civics Bee/Trivia Night/Death Match night in Sept, possibly on National Voter Registration Day (Sept 26), and possibly as a fundraiser.
- Working on a voter registration calendar based on local community days, fairs, etc.
- Looking to be able to register voters at schools, GCC, etc
- Next meeting Tues, May 23 at Ruth Odom’s house — email for info if interested.

**New Business:**

- Marie, Nicole, and Suzanne talked about their experiences at the LWVMA 2017 Convention in Framingham, and encouraged members to attend if possible. Convention offered dynamic panelists and speakers, and the opportunity to network and brainstorm with other Leagues.
- Shelburne’s town election is Monday, and the select board has 3 write-in candidates: Roland Giguere, Jackie Walsh, and Matthew Marchese.
- Greenfield’s town government will have several openings for Nov’s election, including openings on the School Committee, and the Precinct 7 councilor in particular. Trying to pass Sanctuary City, also civil rights officer, issues with corporate tax breaks, etc.
  - Jess Osit has started a [change.org](http://change.org) petition for to make Greenfield a Sanctuary City, looking for signatures by Franklin County citizens. Will present to Mayor.
  - May 22nd is next meeting by organizers of this effort.
- June 2, 4-6pm, Greenfield Common: gathering for National Gun Violence Awareness Day. Wear orange. Not designed to be controversial. Focus is remembering victims and encouraging responsible behavior. Resources: [momsdemandaction.org](http://momsdemandaction.org), [everytown.org](http://everytown.org), SMART campaign
- LWV of Northampton Area is holding a Postcard Writing Session at the Forbes Library in Northampton on Sat. June 17 from 9:00-10:30am.
- LWVMA has released its list of League-supported bills of the current legislative session. Visit [lwwma.org](http://lwwma.org) for the full list, which includes links to the full bills.
- Annie Sexauer recorded the minutes this meeting. Marie reminds the members that the office of secretary is still open, and perhaps could be a revolving job among members. The board needs members as well. Please email if any members wish to fill either of these roles.

Marie thanked members for coming and next meeting was scheduled.

**Next Meeting:** June 17, 2017, 3:00 PM, Greenfield Public Library