

Brown County League of Women Voters (BCLWV) Minutes of the February 9, 2015 Board Meeting

The Board of the BCLWV convened for its regular monthly meeting at the Brown County Public Library. Present were Julie Winn, Marge Cook, Janet Kramer, Mary Perez, Judy East, Cathy Rountree, Shari Frank, Suzanne Gaudin, Jeanne Lager, Robyn Rosenberg-Bowman, JoAnne Heimbaugh, Sue Cannavo, and guests, Dorothy Babcock and Charlie Cole.

Minutes:

The January Board minutes were approved as submitted with a minor spelling correction.

Treasurer's Report:

Marge Cook reported the League has \$7440.96 in its account and her report was accepted. The Dorothy Stewart Scholarship Fund has \$10299.17. The Board agreed to donate \$500 to We the People.

Correspondence:

Janet Kramer reported that BCCF, as part of its initiative on Volunteer Needs, has asked for information about the BCLWV and its logo as well as its suggestions for recruiting volunteers/new members.

Current Business:

Janet reported that Meet Your Legislators 2015 will be held at 10AM on March 7, 2015 in the Salmon Room of the County Office Building. It was noted that this date is not optimal as bills will have already been closed and sent to committee. It is unclear if further amendments will be possible. Announcement of the meeting will be published in the BC Democrat the week of February 23rd. Janet will make posters for distribution. BCLWV members are encouraged to attend the meeting.

The annual LWVIN Presidents Day Workshop will be held in Indianapolis on Saturday February 21, 2015. Julie, Marge and Janet will attend.

The 2015 LWVIN Convention, sponsored jointly by the Bloomington-Monroe County and BCLWV chapters, will be held in the Abe Martin Lodge at Brown County State Park on April 17-19, 2015, with the 17th being an extra day for attendees to experience various attractions in Brown County. The Business meeting will begin at 9AM on the 18th. This year's theme is "Democracy Is Not a Spectator Sport." Plenary sessions will include discussions of the LWVIN State positions and the role of social and traditional media. Lee Hamilton is a potential convention speaker. Cathy Rountree suggested that someone from Wild Indiana could be asked to speak as well. Volunteers from the BCLWV membership will be needed to assist with various convention activities. It was suggested that discounted passes for touring the new History Center might be offered.

Shari Frank, who is coordinating the convention's silent auction, asked that the membership be instructed to bring donated items for auction to the Presidents Day Workshop. It was agreed that a basket of Brown County items will be donated and the membership will be asked for donations and for suggestions for the basket contents. Suzanne Gaudin agreed to donate a 3 night stay in her cabin to the auction.

State Positions Review: LWVIN has asked each chapter to poll its membership regarding the list of State League positions to determine whether the positions should be retained, reviewed/revise, or dropped. Our chapter will meet at 7PM on Tuesday, February 17th in the Library in Conference Room B to review the list and prepare its response to LWVIN. Judy East will email the membership about the meeting.

BC Fiscal Viability Study: Fiscal Study Group met on February 6th and agreed there is more data to be determined concerning this complex issue. The Group suggested asking the membership how confident they feel the public can be regarding the County's basic fiscal health, the appropriateness of large expenditures given the County's resources, and whether officials and appointees know their jobs, are appropriately accountable and have sufficient oversight. A brown bag lunch with Beth Mulry was suggested, as was contacting Sara Clifford to include fiscal issues as well as the State Legislation on non-publication of budgets in an article/interview in the BC Democrat for Sunshine Week, March 15-21st. The interview will need to take place in early March.

Fire District Update: Suzanne reported the minutes of the Commissioners' last meeting indicate they are disinclined to pursue an appeal of the Court of Appeals decision affirming the ruling of the trial court. The Commissioners have until February 11th to do so. If the case is transferred to the IN Supreme Court, Page Freitag will represent the plaintiffs.

New Business:

Columbus Open House: Julie attended an Open House on Jan. 31st about forming a Columbus chapter of LWV, attended by 5 people (8 are required to form a chapter). Julie invited the attendees to our meetings.

Charlie Cole, representing Friends of Yellowwood, spoke to the Board and expressed that group's concern that there has been no public/stakeholder input about the local impact and watershed issues associated with the \$6.6 M Yellowwood Roads Project. Given its potential impact on tourism and the natural environment as well as the fact that the County will be responsible for maintenance of the roadway once it is built, the Board agreed to discuss the issue further at its State Positions meeting and to query the Commissioners with regard to their plan for the project.

The Board agreed that two more Community Conversations about Wellness & Heritage Tourism should be convened in late May/early June. It was suggested that the Historical

Society be considered for a possible venue for the Conversations. The Yellowwood issue as well as the Water Commission's initiative to designate Brown County as a Clean County could be included in the conversations.

Suzanne will assign Who's Where pages to Board members to update and return to her.

Newsletter/ Website:

Robyn will be assuming responsibility for the website from Peg Lindenlaub.

Observer Corps:

The new Commissioners passed a 10 month moratorium on the Courthouse Remodeling while they become familiar with the finances involved. Julie will discuss this with Diana Biddle.

JoAnne submitted a document (see attached) to the Board describing observations from a recent work session on finance/budgeting held by the Commissioners, the Council and Auditor Beth Mulry. It was recommended that the BC Council work backwards from maximum Indiana Code levies when doing budgets.

Robyn reported the Commissioners indicated they will try to recoup legal fees associated with the Card/Story dispute.

Shari reported that in order for high school students to be registered to vote, they must be 18 years old by the time of the next general or municipal election. The Board agreed to revisit the issue in the fall and to postpone registration of the students until 2016.

The next Board meeting will be March 9, 2015 at 10AM.

Respectfully submitted,
Sue Cannavo