



# Commentator

October 2016

*The League of Women Voters, a nonpartisan political organization, encourages the informed and active participation of citizens in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy. The League does not support or oppose candidates for public office but does encourage its members as individuals to participate actively in the political process. The League acts on those issues the membership chooses for study and action. The LWV of the Mid-Hudson Region covers the Ulster County area and the Dutchess County area. We belong to the LWV of New York State and the LWV of the US.*

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<b>WE WELCOME THE GENERAL PUBLIC AT ALL EVENTS!</b>		
<b>2016</b>	<b>Check our online <a href="http://lwvmidhudson.org/calendar.html">calendar</a> for updates.</b>	
<b>October</b>		
4	5:30 PM	Materials Management (Solid Waste) Study Committee at Opa Restaurant (333 Wall St, Kingston, NY 12401). A group will proceed to a 7pm showing of <i>Just Eat It</i> after the meeting. For more information, contact Kathy OConnor at (845) 757-2247 or <a href="mailto:oconnor.kraye@gmail.com">oconnor.kraye@gmail.com</a> .
8	11:00 AM - 3:00 PM	Feeding the Hudson Valley at Walkway over the Hudson. We will have a pop-up tent with Voter Registration, Refusing, Reducing, Reusing and Recycling information, and Recycle Arts and Crafts activities for children.
13	4:00-6:00 PM	Board Meeting at Jacki Moriarty's, 167 Apple Hill Rd, Hurley, NY 12443.
17	8:30-9:00 AM	Kingston Community Radio, WGHQ 920 AM LWV On Air. Go to <a href="http://www.mykcr.org">http://www.mykcr.org</a> to listen on your computer. Call 845-331-9255 to ask a question or make a comment.
18	10:00 AM - 12:00 PM	<b>FIX ALBANY NOW!</b> Consensus Meeting for the LWVNY Statewide Legislative Update Study at Deisings Bakery on North Front Street (111 N Front St, Kingston, NY 12401). Members can participate in the consensus. Non-members are welcome to join the discussion. We will have a private room and you are welcome to order from the menu, otherwise, no charge. See a summary of the study and the consensus questions at: <a href="http://lwvmidhudson.org/files/HELP_FIX_ALBANY_NOW.pdf">http://lwvmidhudson.org/files/HELP_FIX_ALBANY_NOW.pdf</a>
25	1:45-3:30 PM	Book Club Meeting Club at Enzo's Pizzeria, Boices Lane, Lake Katrine – <i>The Boys in the Boat</i> For more information, contact Jacki Moriarty at 331-3418 or <a href="mailto:jackim@hvc.rr.com">jackim@hvc.rr.com</a> .
<b>November</b>		
8		Election Day

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**Prez Says**

We are in the middle of Vote 411, Voter Registration, Debates and Forums, it is the voting season. The Mid-Hudson League is soliciting information from candidates for State Assembly and State Senate for half a dozen districts that overlap the Dutchess and Ulster County area. We are also responding to requests to attend various events and bring our voter registration materials, as well as doing our annual voter registration at local colleges on September 27, National Voter Registration Day. Organizations are reaching out to us to moderate political debates, which are then conducted in accordance with our moderating guidelines.

This is an exciting time to be a member of the League. We are needed, we are useful, and we make a difference. If any of you feel like participating, you don't need to be invited. Check out the online calendar and join us. Call Jean McGarry at 336-6622 if you want to help on September 26 or September 27. The more the merrier.

With regards to the actual election itself. Last night I watched (or more accurately listened to) both Hillary Clinton and Donald Trump on the Commander in Chief Forum. The moderator asked each of them to answer only the questions as themselves and not use the Forum as an opportunity to attack the other candidate. I appreciate the attempt by the media to improve the quality of the information made available to the voters, something that has been made very difficult by the fact that Donald Trump is so different from past candidates. No one appears to be an expert at evoking information from Mr. Trump.

On the one hand, I'm sad that the League of Women Voters no longer hosts the Presidential Debates, on the other, I'm happy that for most of the debates that we host at the local level, our candidates are not as difficult.

*Jolanda Jansena*

*Monthly Board meeting minutes and more can be found at:  
<http://lwvmidhudson.org/Committees.html>*

**MEMBERSHIP NEWS**

It is with great pleasure that we welcome our newest member, Nora Scherer. Nora retired from the Kingston School System after dedicating 37 years to special education students from the elementary level through high school. She served on numerous committees throughout her long career and, because of her leadership qualities, she often was chosen to be the facilitator or chairperson. Still very much concerned about education after her retirement, she opted to run for a seat on the Kingston School Board. She won handily and today lends her expertise as President of the school board. Despite the commitment and time she gives to the school district, Nora says she looks forward to being an active member of the league. We look forward to working with you, Nora.

**NOTICE: BYLAWS AMENDMENTS**

The Board of Directors will submit a revised Bylaws at the next general membership meeting to be scheduled at a future date. The primary purpose of the amendments is to provide for the position of "Co-President" and define the duties and authority of the office. A draft of the amendments will be included in the notice of the meeting and can be viewed or downloaded from:

[http://lwvmidhudson.org/files/PROPOSED\\_AMENDMENTS\\_TO\\_THE\\_BYLAWS\\_-2016.pdf](http://lwvmidhudson.org/files/PROPOSED_AMENDMENTS_TO_THE_BYLAWS_-2016.pdf)

**VOTER SERVICE****Moderating Guidelines**

*Guidelines for moderating and sponsorship of candidates' events by the League are on our website at <http://lwvmidhudson.org/Moderating.html> or from the [Home](#) page and the [Elections](#) page.*

**What Voter Service has done and What We're Doing**

Linda Hackett and Daisy Tyler welcomed and handed out voter registration materials to 49 individuals on September 23rd. In reporting on the success of the Naturalization Ceremony, Daisy had this to say. "It always is very refreshing to see people from all over the world who want to participate and believe in all the good things that this country still has to offer. It's a source of pride to represent the League of Women Voters on such an occasion."

Voter Service has been busy with various voter registration drives throughout Ulster and Dutchess Counties.

## General Election Deadlines

### FOR GENERAL ELECTION Absentee Ballot deadlines

Date	Deadline Information
Nov. 1	Last day to postmark an application or letter of application by mail for an absentee ballot.
Nov. 7	Last day to apply IN-PERSON for absentee ballot.
Nov. 7	Last day to postmark ballot. Must be received by the local board of elections no later than Nov. 15th. Military Voter Ballots must be received no later than Nov. 21st.
Nov. 8	Last day to deliver ballot IN-PERSON to the local board of elections (by someone other than the voter).

### November 8, 2016 General Election Deadlines

MAIL REGISTRATION (N.Y. Election Law Section 5-210(3))

Applications must be postmarked no later than **October 14th** and received by a board of elections no later than **October 19th** to be eligible to vote in the General Election.

IN PERSON REGISTRATION (N.Y. Election Law Sections 5-210, 5-211, 5-212)

You may register at your local board of elections or any state agency participating in the National Voter Registration Act, on any business day throughout the year but, to be eligible to vote in the General Election, your application must be received no later than **October 14th**.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS (N.Y. Election Law Section 5-208(3))

Notices of change of address from registered voters received by **October 19th** by a county board of elections must be processed and entered in the records in time for the General Election

**Congressional debates** Attempts were made to set up debates in Kingston for the Teachout/Faso race and the Amedore/Niccoli campaign. Unfortunately, we were not successful in scheduling either debate.

*The candidates for New York's 19th Congressional District seat between Republican John Faso and Democrat Zephyr Teachout will meet in the following televised debates.*

**October 13, 8 to 9pm on WMHT-TV.** The debate, moderated by Matt Ryan, also will be streamed at [wmht.org](http://wmht.org) and [timesunion.com](http://timesunion.com).

**October 24 at 7 and 10 p.m. on Time Warner Cable News.** It will be moderated by Liz Benjamin.

*The 19th District includes all of Ulster, Greene and Columbia counties and most of Dutchess County.*

**Constitutional Convention-** This past April our league had its first presentation on the Road to the Constitutional Convention. New Yorkers will have the opportunity to vote on whether to have a constitutional convention in November, 2017. To continue to provide information to the public on the pros and cons of having the New York State Constitution revisited and possibly amended, we will attempt to offer forums that will focus on specific areas of concern regarding any changes in the constitution. Presently in the works is a forum on education to be scheduled in November. By then we will happily have the presidential campaign behind us and will welcome other topics for discussion and debate. Stay tuned and if you wish to help out with these forums or have ideas for other topics and speakers, please contact Jean McGarry.

### Voter Guides

Three thousand LWWNYS *Voter Guides Part 2* have been ordered for distribution in Ulster and Dutchess Counties. Three hundred will be at no charge due to our participation in the *Organ Donation Drive*. Thank you to Lee Cane for volunteering to distribute 2,000 of the guides.

### Does One Vote Matter?

After the November 2000 presidential election, most people would agree that every vote counts. One vote can be powerful enough to change the course of history, as the following statements attest.

- In 1645, one vote gave Oliver Cromwell control over England.
- In 1649, one vote caused King Charles of England to be executed.
- In 1776, one vote gave America the English language instead of German. Thomas Jefferson and then, John Quincy Adams, were elected by one-vote margins in the Electoral College.
- In 1839, Marcus Morton was elected governor of Massachusetts by one vote.
- In 1845, one vote brought Texas into the Union. A single vote also admitted California, Oregon and

Washington to statehood.

- In 1868, President Andrew Johnson's impeachment was defeated by a single vote.
- In 1876, with the presidential election thrown into the House, Rutherford B. Hayes won by a single vote. It was cast by an Indiana congressman who himself had been elected by a one-vote margin. That same year, one vote changed France from a monarchy to a republic.
- In 1923, Adolph Hitler became leader of the Nazi Party by a one-vote margin.
- John F. Kennedy's margin of victory over Richard Nixon was less than one vote per precinct.
- One vote per precinct passed women's suffrage in California in 1911.
- Loretta Sanchez was elected to Congress from California by less than four votes per precinct in 1996.

*From the League of Women Voters of New York State Incentive Program Tools , pg 66*

*(No longer available in print. Thanks to Shirley Kobran for saving a copy)*

## STUDY AND ADVOCACY

### Materials Management Committee

... is back into its Fall Swing.

On October 4th, we will meet at the Opa Greek Restaurant in Kingston, prior to attending a screening of "Just Eat It" at BackStage Productions on Wall Street. The unwarranted disposal of perfectly good food (or perhaps even imperfect good food) is the subject of scrutiny.

On October 8th, we will be joining with the Hudson Valley Regional Council as well as Dutchess Outreach and others, at an event on the Walkway Over The Hudson (11-3), where free lunches will be handed out, prepared with otherwise discarded food. Our Materials Management tent will offer voter registration information, along with addressing issues regarding the Three R's, and holding a crafting recycling activity for children. The Committee wants to keep attention on minimizing the acquisition of stuff (i.e., refusing/reducing), as well as composting and recycling.

And last, the Ulster County Solid Waste Management Improvement Commission is now approaching the final stage of its report and recommendations to the County Legislature. Stay tuned to the "League of Women Voters of the Mid-Hudson Region's" FaceBook page, for updates on this very important activity.

(Submitted by Kathy OConnor)

### Book Club TRIBE Discussed

On Sept. 20, the book, TRIBE: On Homecoming and Belonging by Sebastin Junger was discussed by Linda Hackett, Vic Melville (leader), Jackie Moriarty, Margaret Sellers and Daisy Tyler. The group explored the concepts of TRIBE as explained in the book and from our own heritage and experiences. TRIBE compares and contrasts the attitudes and behaviors of people in tribal societies to "western society", especially when they are under stress, either by conflict or natural causes. We discussed our own "tribes" and social institutions, and how they relate in today's complex and divided world – sometimes in harmony and sometimes at odds in our communities and in the world.

Could the League be more effective by better understanding and taking into account these social forces? I think so. (submitted by Vic Melville)

October's selection is THE BOYS in the BOAT by Daniel James Brown It is the story of 9 Americans and their quest for the Olympic Gold at the 1936 Berlin Olympics. It is the "All American" story of love & redemption for the underdogs. Join us October 25, 1:45pm for a most interesting discussion.

(submitted by Jacki Moriarty)

## ULSTER COUNTY OBSERVER CORP

*Audio recordings, addenda and minutes of Legislative Committee meetings can be found at*  
<http://www.co.ulster.ny.us/legislature/committeesinfo/index.html>

### Become A Member Of Our Observer Corps

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**Laws and Rules,  
Governmental  
Services Committee**

Sept. 19, 2016, 6:30 PM – 7:43 PM

Committee Members: Kevin A. Roberts, Chairman, David B. Donaldson, Deputy Chairman, Richard A. Parete, Hector S. Rodriguez, Carl Belfiglio (absent)

Other Legislators: Ken Ronk, Legislature Chairman (voting), Jonathan Heppner, Jennifer Schwartz Berky, Tracey Bartels

Other: Nicholas Pascale, Esq., Legislative Counsel, Christopher Ragucci, Esq., Minority Counsel

Meeting called to order by Chairman Kevin Roberts.

Minutes from Aug. 15, 2016 meeting approved.

These observer notes focus on proposed resolutions and the LATE resolution process.

Proposed Resolution No. 291 regarding finance reform was postponed.

Proposed Resolution No. 382 regarding a public hearing of a proposed law prohibiting discrimination on the basis of gender identity was passed after extensive discussion within the committee and with, and between, the legislative counsels. There was not agreement on policy and enforcement matters, and the authority of the county and the county Human Rights Commission, and the effect of NY State Human Rights regulation.

The proposed resolution passed the committee, but then apparently withdrawn by its sponsor.

Proposed Resolution No. 390 regarding a public hearing of a proposed law to limit gifts that county officers and employees may receive. Approved, as amended.

Proposed Resolution No. 411 and Resolution No. 412 regarding public hearings of proposed laws for the Ulster County Human Rights Commission were not acted upon, as a proposed workshop was accepted.

The LATE Resolutions No. 415, No. 416 and No. 417 regarding execution of county contracts were approved after a difficult discussion with Susan Plonski, Commissioner of Public Works, regarding the process of submitting LATE resolutions. (Vic Melville, LWV Observer Corps, 9-23-16)

**Economic  
Development,  
Tourism, Housing,  
Planning & Transit  
Committee**

Sept. 6, 2016, 6:02 PM – 6:27 PM

Committee Members: James F. Maloney, Chairman, Hector S. Rodriguez, Deputy Chairman, Ron G. Lapp, Herbert Litts III (called in), Mary Beth Maio, Jennifer Schwartz Berky, James Delaune (absent)

Meeting called to Order by Chairman James Maloney.

Minutes of Aug. 2, 2016 meetings approved.

These observer notes focus on the report by Suzanne Holt, Director, Office of Business Services – Office of Economic Development's activities and accomplishments update:

This is a quarterly report that includes:

A discussion of the Consolidated Funding Application of proposed projects. An open meeting will be on Sept. 12, 2016.

A discussion of Community Economic Development regarding municipalities (longer-term).

Two videos of two marketing campaigns: Tech Entrepreneur and Already Here projects.

Two videos on Foursquare, Karina (clothing) and Find Ellenville projects.

Otherwise at the committee meeting, Robert DiBella, Director of Public Transportation announced that he is retiring. The committee commended Bob on his good work for the county and his helpfulness to the committee. (Vic Melville, LWV Observer Corps, 9-23-16)

**Energy and  
Environment  
Committee**

Sept. 12, 2016, 6:04 PM - 8:04 PM

Committee Members: Richard A. Parete, Chairman, Tracey A. Bartels, Deputy Chairman, Jonathan Heppner, Ron G. Lapp, Jr., Mary Wawro Other Legislators: Manna Jo Greene

Chairman Richard Parete called the meeting to order. Minutes from the Aug. 8, 2015 meeting were approved.

These observer notes focus on a report, two resolutions, new business and old business:

Resource Recovery Agency Report – Tim Rose, Executive Director: Mr. Rose addressed the budget and asked if the committee had any questions (no, but later discussed several items). The budget is to be finalized on October. Rates: for MSW tipping fee is flat, town rates will go from \$62 to \$75 per ton as some towns did not sign up. Single-stream recycling continues to be a concern, but the tipping fee is zero for now, but could rise (it was +/- \$10 per ton last year).

Mr. Rose discussed the debt: \$10m now (the MSW tipping fee would be \$82 per ton (about \$20 less)



without the debt payment), a balloon payment of \$4m is due in 2024 with \$3m in reserve.

Proposed Resolution No. 388 regarding the scoping process for State Environmental Quality Review of the proposed Pilgrim Pipelines Project was approved.

Proposed Resolution No. 389 regarding opposing additional anchorage grounds for commercial vessels in the Hudson River was approved, as amended.

Under New Business, Plastic Bag Legislation was introduced by Legislator Tracey Bartels. Various topics were discussed. No resolution is drafted at this time but a draft resolution is expected for next month's meeting. The topics discussed included: what facilities do we want covered, bands v. fees, and contents of a report entitled Plastic Bag FAQ prepared by Tom Konrad, Ph.D., Chair, Marbletown Environmental Conservation Commission. Mr. Konrad attended the meeting and participated in the discussion.

Under Old Business, Climate Smart Committee – Legislator Manna Jo Greene discussed the Clean Energy Community Funding – the funding criteria, related to the Hudson Valley Regional Council. Projects for two county buildings and an electric vehicle meet-up are under consideration.

A moratorium for sighting solar farms was mentioned.

The Environmental Management Committee - Climate Smart funding was discussed. Dave Halderman of the EMC was present.

Solid Waste Management Disposal Improvement Commission – Brief Update by Legislator Greene: the committee is preparing a document for review and input by other organizations. It may contain a regional focus. (Vic Melville, LWV Observer Corps, 9-23-16)

## UC Board of Health

On September 12, 2016 the UC Board of Health met. However, given that there was no quorum, those in attendance discussed various point of interest on the agenda.

Those on the Board in attendance were Dr. Woodley, Dr. Tack, and Mrs. Cardinale.

Commissioner Smith and Shelley Mertens the Environmental Health Director and Katrina Kouhout, Secretary to the Commissioner and the Board were also present.

Discussion began at 6:40 and ended about 7:30.

The minutes of the June, 2016 meeting will need to be addressed at the next meeting.

Some of the information that was included in the discussion came from the agenda that had been prepared for the meeting:

- the Medical Examiner, Dr. Heller has resigned effective October 1;
- the Deputy Medical Examiner, Dr. Grovenburg has resigned, but has not set an effective date;
- those forensic pathologists who have been involved with this area have also terminated their participation.

Under NYS County Law, a county must have a medical examiner. At present UC has been in contact with potential considerations in neighboring counties, but as yet have not acquired a definite candidate. Apparently UC has until October 1 to complete its selection, or it could possibly face some form of fine if it does not have a medical examiner in place.

The Naegleria fowleri case was referenced:

-19 year old woman brought to Health Alliance Emergency Room complaining of headache and vomiting; had been at a party; diagnosed as being dehydrated, discharged;

-10 hours later she was brought back to the emergency room, testing was performed and an amoeba found in her blood, diagnosed at that time with viral meningitis, determined from information provided at that time that she had been vacationing in Maryland, swimming and jumping from bridge into the water, ingesting contaminated water;

-the NYS Health Department has been involved as well as confirming the results of the diagnosis...encephalitis.....she was brain dead at that point. Further the NYSHD contacted Maryland regarding the case and the results of the testing.

The problem with the water at the Old Homestead Mobile Home Park has been removed.

With respects to the Winchell's Pizza apparently the permit has been pulled; and the UCDOH is hopeful that the new person who is coming to handle matters will result in a better situation.

With respects to the Walkkill River Algae Toxins the DEC will post "no use allowed", no one is to go in the water.

Eastern Equine Encephalitis (EEE): apparently a horse was so diagnosed in Saugerties; had no history of such, but the horse died. Test are being done, check of mosquitoes as well, state results are pending. It was noted that while there is a vaccine for horses, there is none for children or adults.

**Ulster County  
Legislative  
Committee on Public  
Health and Social  
Services**

NYS Immunization Requirements on School Entrance 2016-17: According to the handout meningococcal disease apparently one should receive two doses.

-with reference to ages pre-kindergarten-12th grade for diphtheria, tetanus, polio, measles, mumps, hepatitis, chickenpox, influenza, while the hand out was extensive, room does not permit putting it here; but further information can be obtained from the NYS Department of Health/Bureau of Immunization: [health.ny.gov/immunization](http://health.ny.gov/immunization). Telephone # 518-473-4437.

For proposed 2016-17 Flue Rate: it appears from the handout to be \$26. (Lee Cane, Observer Corp)

The Ulster County Legislative Committee on Public Health and Social Services was convened on September 7, 2016 at 6:05 by Chairman, Legislator Craig Lopez and adjourned at 7:08.

Present: Lopez, Allen, Belfiglio, Heppner, Roberts; Others: Nettie Tomshaw-secretary .

The first order of business following the call to order was approval of the minutes of the August 1, 2016 meeting.

Next on the agenda was attention to the resolutions.

Resolution #131: The resolution dealt with setting a day, time for a public hearing on proposed local law #3 of 2016: (A Local Law protecting children from exposure to toxic chemicals) to be held on October 11, 2016 at 6PM. Chairman Lopez indicated he believed, given that time frame, it was time to discuss under the circumstances....as the resolution had been on the agenda for 7 months.

Motion to discuss was passed. The committee engaged in considerable discussion noting among other things:

- the resolution had been on the committee's agenda since February, 2016;
- the questions which the committee had at that time had not yet been answered;
- the resolution as presented then had not been changed in anyway, it remained the same; -it was noted that the sponsors of the resolution, Legislators Bartels and Wawaro, were not present at this meeting to provide answers to committee questions; and
- there are still "holes" in the existing resolution that are still concerns of the committee.

The committee passed a motion 3-2 to vote on the resolution. The motion to pass the resolution was not passed, defeated 4-1.

Resolution #402: Dealt with a resolution submitted by the County Executive on behalf of the UC Department of Mental Health, as the latter had received notification from the NYS Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services (OASAS) that there would be increased funding of 0.02% cost of living adjustment per the July 18, 2016 letter from OASAS. In order to note the \$1,345.00 increased funding, the 2016 budget needed to be amended. The committee passed the resolution.

Resolution #413: Referred to establishing a policy to provide for tick removal kits, informational signs about self-monitoring for ticks, and informational pamphlets about Lyme disease and other tick borne illnesses.

The committee had no problem as such with the resolution. However, in the course of discussion it became clear that the members wished to extend the resolution. The amendment that the committee developed and passed was to be an additional resolve that the Commissioner of Health and the County Executive seek public-private partnerships to fund the costs associated with this program.

Having passed the amendment, the committee then passed the resolution.

It was noted throughout the discussion the concerns were primarily due to the expansion of the rail trails and the influx of tourists to the area as well as the residents of Ulster County who use the rail trails.

Legislator Belfiglio advised the committee that the 3 resolutions it had passed at July's meeting referring to enacting rules and regulations requiring and governing the licensing, conduct and monitoring sober homes and/or recovery residences in NYS would require that they be passed by the UC County Legislature before NYSAC (New York State Association of Counties) could consider them. He noted he had not been aware of this requirement, being a new member of its committee. At the next meeting he will propose a memorializing resolution, then the Ulster County Legislature can vote on such and in February, 2017 the 3 resolutions can be presented to NYSAC. He did note that those at NYSAC who had seen the resolutions liked them.

There was no new business.

Old Business:

-The reference to Vending Machine Food Policy; "Let the market regulate itself, or provide other food options now available, or repeal the policy was not discussed or finalized.

-With reference to the subject of Dyslexia discussed at the July meeting: a reference to the committee's letter of support, which was done then; and it was noted that the organization representative, Evelyn Whitebay,



**UC Association of  
Town Supervisors  
and Mayors**

has been granted privilege of the floor for the month of October.

Prior to adjournment Legislator Roberts noted that while the Zika virus had not reached this area, that possibly a meeting could be arranged down in the Plattekill area and an expert on the matter could be invited to attend. He was particularly concerned as there were many seniors living in that area who traveled back and forth to Florida (site of the problem). Having such a meeting that the seniors could attend would be helpful in learning how to handle their time with respects to this problem while in Florida. Inquire will be made to learn who would be such an expert available to talk to such a group. (Lee Cane, Observer Corp)

The UC Association of T/Supervisors and Mayors was convened on September 20, 2016 at 8:39 by President T/Rochester Supervisor Chipman and adjourned at 9:57.

Present: Hardenburgh, Marletown, Rochester, Wawarsing, Hurley, Marlborough, Rosendale, Ulster, Denning, Gardiner, Esopus, New Paltz, Mayor of New Paltz

Others: Legislator Manna Jo Greene

Following the call to order and introductions Mr. Chipman asked Legislator Greene if she had anything from the UC Legislature to comment on. She indicated that a referendum on Family Court will be coming up. There are concerns about moving the court from the City of Kingston to the T/Ulster. Apparently the referendum has been redone to be less problem some. Legislator Greene also noted that the League of Women Voters has been contacted to possibly moderate an informational meeting on the topic.

Mr. Chipman also mentioned that one item that is being commented on concerns charging back to the towns certain costs incurred by students in college. He indicated the towns would not support.

The subject of insurance rates indicated on the agenda was then taken up. Apparently the towns have communicated with each other on how they are providing insurance for their employees. It appears that they are trying to come up with a standard for all the towns to be able to use. MVP and CDPHP are primary providers used by the towns apparently. In the course of the discussion, the towns seem to have different plans which results in different costs for premiums, co-pays, deductibles, for long time employees, newly retired employees, individuals, families, as well as whether the dealing with union personnel or non-union members.

Additionally, there was some commentary on Workmen's Compensation. Some of the towns are reviewing their positions on this.

Next were brief comments on the increases in rates by the UC Resource and Recovery Agency: there have been some changes in rates. Not all the towns apparently are involved with this agency. Ulster, Marletown and Saugerties have gone private and it appears may have saved some dollars, but also have gained more control over the process. There was also comment on possibly coming up with a regional approach to some of the concerns.

When discussing budget considerations as applied to the towns the following observations were made:

-the 2% tax cap while "an education" for those involved and raised awareness of fiscal considerations, it has now been found "to be unsustainable." Several of the towns indicated they will be over the legally established cap. Others will "struggle" to remain at no more than the cap.

-the group passed a motion to override the tax cap for the reason that it is unsustainable; the attorneys will be consulted about this motion and its correctness;

-there appear to be a variety of problems facing the towns ranging from retirement costs, infrastructure repairs, engineering costs, loss of businesses resulting in reductions of taxes, health insurance to name only a few.

-it was noted that to meet staying at no more than the cap, taxes are lowered and once that occurs can see that services to be provided will be the next reduction.

Minutes for May and June were approved; there were no minutes for July as there was no quorum; and there was no meeting in August. Figures for the treasurer's report were not provided.

Lee Cane, Observer Corp

## HELP FIX ALBANY NOW!

### Legislative Procedures Update Study

Our League will be participating with the State League and other NYS chapters in an Update Study of NYS Legislative Procedures as summarized below. The two recent corruption convictions of New York lawmakers have left the state good government groups and citizens concerned over the ethical issues inherent in outside income for legislators. In 2015, the Center for Public Integrity ranked New York State government as the most corrupt of the 50 states, with the most legislators forced out of office for ethical or criminal offenses. We will have a special membership meeting on **Tuesday October 18<sup>th</sup> at 10 AM** to noon to vote on the Consensus Questions that have been proposed by the LWVNY. Jean McGarry, Jackie Moriarty, Daisy Tyler and Margaret Sellers are preparing for the meeting. You are welcome to join us. You will find the materials needed on the LWVNY web page. We need a quorum of 15 members to make this vote count in the statewide total. Non-members are welcome but cannot be part of the consensus. The meeting will be held at Deisings Bakery on North Front St. You will be able to order from their menu as you wish. We will be taking reservations to assure a quorum. Email Margaret Sellers at [mcsellers@aol.com](mailto:mcsellers@aol.com) or call 845-339-3180.

#### Summary

During the 2015 LWVNY State Convention, the delegates approved the Board recommended Program Update Study of our position on **Legislative Procedures (1977)**. The section of the current position that we are looking at in this study reads:

**“The legislature should continue to serve as a part-time body. Terms for legislators should be longer, and possibly staggered.”**

The Legislative Procedures position is critical to our core mission as a state good government group. Many of the public corruption scandals involving members of the state legislature involve outside income, self-dealing, bribery, and fraud. The Moreland Commission Report, issued in December 2013 cites “One out of every eleven legislators to leave office since 1999 has done so under a cloud of ethical or criminal violations...” Banning or limiting outside income is a very important issue in ethics reform. Our current position warrants reexamination in this context since it constrains our approach to the outside income issue.

The update study will address the ambiguities in the current position and re-focus the position on the policies most significant to ethics reform and performance of the Legislature: ***Outside income, Length of terms, Staggered terms, Tenure for Legislative Leadership.***

### Summary of Consensus Questions

#### Outside Income

Q1. Should there be limits on income from outside employment by state legislators?

Q2. If there are limits, should:

1. All outside earned income be prohibited?
2. New York follow the federal model using a percentage of base salary?

3. A dollar amount to be specified? If, yes, how much?

4. Some other criteria applied. Please specify:

Q3. Should legislators' salaries be weighted by the cost of living in different regions of the state?

### **Term Lengths for State Legislators**

Assembly 2 year terms or 4 year terms?

Should terms be staggered?

Senate 4 year terms or 4 year terms?

Should terms be staggered?

### **Legislative Leadership and Committee Chairs**

Q1. Should there be restrictions on how long a particular legislator is allowed to serve in any of the leadership positions?

Q2. Which ones?

Q3. If you restrict a member who holds one of these titles, shall that person be allowed to take on a different title after that term expires?

Q4. If you restrict a member holds one of these titles, should it be a life-time limit or for a specified period of time?

Q5. Should there be a restricted tenure for committee chairs?

Q6. If you restrict the length of time one can hold a committee's chair, shall that person be allowed to take on a different committee's chair after that "term: expires?

Q7. If you restrict the length of time one can hold a committee's chair, should it be a life-time limit or should reappointment be allowed after a specified period of time?

Q8. Should stipends (lulus) continue for committee chairs and all leadership positions?