



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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Commentator

OCTOBER 2015

	WE WELCOME THE GENERAL PUBLIC AT ALL EVENTS!	
2015	Check our online calendar (http://lwvmidhudson.org/calendar.html) for updates.	
October		
Thur. 8	4:00-6:00 pm	Board Meeting at Moriarty home, 167 Apple Hill Rd, Hurley, NY 12443.
Tues. 13	1:45 pm	LWV MHR Book Club at Enzo's Pizzeria, Boices Lane, Lake Katrine
Thur. 15	2:00 pm	Resource Development meeting will be at Margaret Sellers' home at 80 Ringtop Road. Please check at 845-339-3180 to confirm.
Tues. 20	6:00 pm	Salad Supper Fall Gathering , at the Town of Esopus Library in Port Ewen featuring LWVNY President, Dare Thompson and SUNY New Paltz Professor of Sociology, Brian Obach, author of <i>Labor and the Environmental Movement: The Quest for Common Ground</i> .
Mon. 26	7:15-8:45 pm	Ulster County Executive Forum at the George Washington School, 67 Wall Street, Kingston, NY 12401
November		
3	6:00 AM - 9:00 PM	Election Day

Nobody will ever deprive the American people of the right to vote except the American people themselves--and the only way they could do this is by not voting.

attrib. Franklin D. Roosevelt

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MEMBERSHIP NEWS

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

Salad Supper Fall Gathering, 6PM at the Esopus Library, October 20

Our October 20th meeting will feature Brian K. Obach, author of *Organic Struggle: The Movement for Sustainable Agriculture in the United States*.

The meeting will be held at the Town of Esopus Library in Port Ewen. There will be a salad supper at 6:00 PM. Supper dishes are welcome, but coming is more important. The President of the New York State League, Dare Thompson, will bring us up to date on what is happening at the State League. She'll be followed by a short business meeting to give members a chance to input their program ideas for this year. Dare will introduce Brian Obach at about 7:30 PM. He is Professor of Sociology at the State University of New York at New Paltz.

Professor Obach is also the author of *Labor and the Environmental Movement: The Quest for Common Ground* which, like *Organic Struggle*, is from MIT Press.

Last year the League examined GMOs and other agricultural issues in a statewide study so Professor Obach's book is of particular relevance. The issues he examines include the evolution of organic farming since the 1970s from an obscure agricultural practice of the counterculture to a multi-billion dollar industry. He has studied the ideological divide between those he calls the "spreaders," who welcome the wider market for organic food and want to work with both government and agribusiness, and the more purist "tillers," who see organic practices as part of a broader social transformation that will take place outside existing institutions.

The Esopus Library is located at 128 Canal Street, Port Ewen, (just off 9W to the east). The library phone number is 338-5580.

Anne Needham and Margaret Sellers

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 we've done What We're Doing

Naturalization

Thanks to Daisy Tyler and Anne Needham who congratulated 52 individuals on September 4th. All of the new citizens received a voter registration form and the LWWNYS publication *First Vote*.

Voter Registration

September 22 was National Voter Registration Day. Thanks to Jean McGarry, Jacki Moriarty, Anne Needham, Margaret Sellers, Soyal Smalls, Daisy Tyler, Doug Thompson and Dorothy Winrow for participating in voter registration training before heading out to SUNY Dutchess, New Paltz, Ulster and Marist College. Our efforts paid off. We signed up 107 students for voter registration and 25 students for organ donor registration.

Moderating

On September 7th, the league moderated a Poughkeepsie mayoral primary forum

sponsored by the Family Partnership Center. Jean McGarry moderated and Soyal Smalls served as timekeeper. Assisting with sorting and organizing submitted questions were Jacki Moriarty, Anne Needham, Dare Thompson, and Daisy Tyler. Despite it being a hot evening on Labor Day, there were about 100 people in attendance.

The Saugerties League has asked us to moderate candidate events on October 6th and October 8th. We have also agreed to serve as moderator at the Temple Emanuel in Kingston for a mayoral forum on October 8th or 15th (check the online calendar for updates) and at Woodland Pond for a Meet the Candidates event on October 27 for those running for the Town of New Paltz supervisor and the town board. At long last, a date for the LWVMHR sponsored Meet the Candidates forum for Ulster County Executive has been agreed upon and will take place on October 26. Plans are in the works to have this event at the George Washington School on Washington Avenue in Kingston from 7-9pm.

Interested in moderating, time-keeping or assisting at these events? Please contact Jean McGarry at jfmcg@hvc.rr.com or at 336-6622.

Why does the league refer to our moderating events as a forum and not a debate?

According to the LWVUS guidelines, a debate allows the candidates to appear concurrently in face-to-face confrontations, with opportunities to respond to each other. All other formats are considered "Non-debate Candidate Appearances" defined as a place, meeting or medium where ideas and views on particular issues are exchanged.

Why does our local league prefer the "Non-debate" format?

Our league typically moderates local races. Most incumbents have the advantage of name recognition and have had countless opportunities to be heard in the community and to be reported in the press. Allowing the league to control the conversation guarantees that all candidates have an equal opportunity to be heard. It also insures that the candidates spend their time answering questions important to constituents rather than devoting any time to mudslinging.

Jean McGarry

STUDY AND ADVOCACY

Raising the Age of Criminal Responsibility to Eighteen Years of Age

A statewide study of raising the age of criminal responsibility from 16 to 18 years old has been undertaken in New York State. Our league will be conducting consensus meetings in the coming months. Our committee (Anne Needham, Jacki Moriarty and Margaret Sellers) is working on community participants, including people from the law enforcement, mental health and community organizations, for these meetings so we get a broad viewpoint.

On Saturday, November 21 at 9:45 to 11:45AM we will be holding a meeting in the Community Room of the Kingston Library to explore concurring with parts of the LWV of Ohio's position on juvenile justice.

We are anticipating a consensus meeting on Dec. 1, time and place to be determined, as LWVNY needs the results by January 1, 2016.

The Governor included enabling legislation in his program bills last January, and funds were included in the budget, but the enabling legislation was not enacted. The NYS League needs this concurrence to enable us to lobby for the passage of these bills.

We are limiting this to Ulster County. It would be wonderful to do Dutchess County also, with a meeting at the Adriance Library in Poughkeepsie. We need volunteers to make that

happen..

Look for more information in the November *Commentator*.

Below are excerpts from materials available on the in a link on the first page of the League of Women Voters of New York State website lwvny.org.

Margaret Sellers

Concurrence will be sought on the following statements:

- 1. Children under the age of 18 are not adults and their treatment within the juvenile justice and criminal court system should relate to their stage of development.**
- 2. Children should not be held in adult jails.**
- 3. Rehabilitation is the purpose of the juvenile justice system.**
- 4. The legal rights of children should be protected.**

Brief Overview:

Typically the criminal law treats children differently than it treats adults. **New York is the only state other than North Carolina that prosecutes ALL youth 16 years of age and older as adults.**

New York is one of only two states in the country that have not adopted laws which reflect brain development research and science which has found that the human brain is not fully formed until the age of 26. Further, New York allows children as young as 7 years old to be arrested and charged with acts of juvenile delinquency.

Research has shown:

- As the cognitive skills of adolescents are developing, adolescents' behavior is often impulsive and adolescents lack the ability to focus on the consequences of their behavior.
- Because the adolescent brain is still developing, the character, personality traits and behavior of adolescents are highly receptive to change; adolescents respond well to interventions, learn to make responsible choices, and are likely to grow out of negative or delinquent behavior.

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>

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

September 1, 2015, 6:03 – 6:13 PM

Committee Members: **Thomas J. Briggs, Chairman, James F. Maloney, Deputy Chairman, Chris Allen, Lynn Archer, Tracey Bartels, Herbert Litts, III (absent), Mary Beth Maio**

Meeting called to order by Chairman Thomas Briggs, and approval of Aug., 4, 2015 and August 12, 2015 meetings minutes, as amended.

Resolutions for September 15, 2015 Session:

Resolution No. 340 – Appointing member to the Ulster County Planning Board – City of Kingston: Approved.

Resolution No. 341 pertaining to adopting anti-discrimination polices: Approved.

Resolution No. 342 pertaining to a citizen participation plan regarding NYS Community Development Block Grant – Disaster Recovery: Approved.

Resolution No. 343 pertaining to an affirmative action plan regarding NYS Community Development Block Grant – Disaster Recovery: Approved.

Resolution No. 344 pertaining to a contract regarding the Community Development Block Grant – Disaster Recovery: Approved following a discussion led by Dennis Doyle, Director of Planning, about the revenue and the NY Rising program.

Old Business: Legislator Lynn Archer asked about a date regarding a broadband update to the committee: Suzanne Holt, Director of the Office of Economic Development is to address the committee in October.

Vic Melville, LWV Observer, 9-25-15

**Energy and
Environment
Committee****September 3, 2015, 7:02 PM – 7:50 PM**

Committee Members: **Peter Loughran, Chairman, Kenneth J. Ronk, Jr., Deputy Chairman, Richard A. Parete (absent), Hector Rodriguez, Mary Wawro**
Other Legislator: Manna Jo Greene

Peter Loughran, Chairman, called the meeting to order.

Minutes of the August 12, 2015 meeting were approved.

Guest Presentations:**Proposed Microbead Local Law**

Jeremy Cherson, Advocacy and Volunteer Coordinator, Riverkeeper, briefed the committee on state law proposals and communications with the state Attorney General regarding their objections to the sale and use microbeads.

Ulster County Resource Recovery Agency Report:

Tim Rose, Executive Director, introduced Marlyn Akhtar, the new UCRRA Recycling Coordinator.

Mr. Rose reported on the preliminary budget that was delivered to the Legislature in August. The tipping fee is held at \$103 per ton at this time. Reserves are expected at 15% (good by DEC). Regarding contracts, 14 towns signed the proposed contract, but 5 towns and the City of Kingston did not.

Recycling is down because of the slowdown in China.

Resolutions for September 15, 2015:

Resolution No. 318 pertaining to accepting the NYS DEC to purchase a parcel of county-owned real property: Approved.

Resolution No. 325 pertaining to setting a public hearing on a proposed local law regarding prohibiting microbeads: Postponed for language clarification, following discussion about the definitions and provisions of the proposed local law, and the need for uniform enforcement at the state level.

Resolution No. 332 pertaining to establishing a policy for use of electric vehicle charging stations on county property: Failed in Public Works Committee. In this meeting, there was a discussion of questions and concerns about the intent and scope of this proposed policy. Chairman Loughran wants a comprehensive parking policy and Legislator asked for more data and clarification of the proposed policy.

Vic Melville, LWV Observer, 9-25-15

**Laws and Rules,
Governmental
Services Committee****September 14, 2015, 7:04 PM – 8:26 PM**

Committee Members: **Richard A. Parete, Chairman, Kevin A. Roberts, Deputy Chairman, David B. Donaldson, Kenneth J. Ronk, Manna Jo Greene**
Other Legislator: **John Parete, Legislature Chairman**

Meeting called to order by Richard Parete, Chairman

Minutes from August 17, 2015 meeting approved.

Resolution No. 298 – Pertaining to setting a public hearing regarding campaign finance reform in Ulster County: Approved amendment for Nov. 17. Regarding the proposed resolution, County Attorney, Beatrice Havranek, Esq. reported e-mails sent regarding concerns about the resolution, and some committee members are concerned about the intent of the County Executive and about some proposed provisions. The resolution is to be reconsidered at the committee's Oct. 17, 2015 meeting.

Resolution No. 354 – Pertaining to setting a public hearing regarding allowing use of county-owned and leased building space by veterans and disabled member of Ulster County: Approved.

Resolution No. 356 – Pertaining to a proposed local law establishing a county animal abuse registry: Approved.

Resolution No. 357 – Pertaining to setting a public hearing (2nd) regarding a proposed local law regulating pet sellers: Several pet breeders and sellers attended to offer comments and concerns about the intent and content of the proposed law. Several legislators shared those concerns and they had a heated discussion about the legislative process and content of the proposed law. The resolution was referred to the Law Enforcement Committee.

LATE Resolution No. 358 - Pertaining to a memorandum of agreement regarding the Sheriff's Police Benevolent Association: Approved.

Vic Melville, LWV Observer, 9-25-15

**UC Legislative
Public Health and
Social Services**

The UC met at The Northeast Center for Rehabilitation and Brain Injury on August 31, 2015.

Present: Lopez, Litts, Belfiglio, Allen

Absent: Provenzano

Others: Nettie Tomshaw, Secretary to the committee, members of the center staff, and Representatives of the local group UCAN

Initially the Administrator of the Center Seth Rinn explained to the group what the "Star System" was. In his brief talk Mr. Rinn referenced the following points:

- to be involved in the star system a facility is surveyed annually by the NYS Department of Health;
- the Center was last surveyed in March 2015. At that time it was very successful with only two deficiencies which is considered good as apparently a facility would have up to six;
- the survey involves:

Health survey: staffing ratios: number of nurses to neighbors (patients of the center are so referred to);

And number of physical therapists to neighbors;

Quality measures: there are 17 measures, three of which apparently can create challenges for the facility being surveyed: the population and the nature of the illness; the types of medication: anti-psychotic and anti-anxiety are used in the therapy component for the neighbors needing such. In a nursing home these are medicines which are not good, but at the center, a skilled nursing facility so licensed, they are part of the therapy;

Behavior: the neighbors act out.

Mr. Rinn again referenced the star system which he noted tends to be very exacting, pointing out how difficult the acquisition of the star rating system is.

Legislator Belfiglio suggested that the committee obtain the ratings of all the skilled nursing homes in Ulster County for discussion/comparison purposes

The Star System is all for nursing homes. It apparently can be found on public website. It was noted that it is also a system conducted at the Federal level.

Following the above commentary, Legislator Belfiglio noted how proud UC was to have the Center in the county, how well it did and that Chairman Lopez would read the statement giving the Center a Price of Ulster County Award. Chairman Lopez read the citation and presented it to the Center.

Following the above, the members of the committee and the center staff who were present took a tour of the center. This writer did not take the tour. Once the tour was over the committee returned and the meeting was called to order at 7:45.

The first order of business was approval of the minutes of the August 3 meeting: approved.

There were 7 Resolutions. All were passed.

The resolutions dealt with a variety of subjects:

#333 dealt with the concerns that have been generated nationally that drug induced overdose deaths now surpass deaths by gun-shot wounds or motor vehicle crashes in the US; the UC Legislature recognized this, created the UC Coalition Against Narcotics (UCAN) to recommend solutions to prevent and protect the public from opiate drug abuse in UC. September, 2015 proclaimed by UC Legislature as Lost to Addiction Awareness Month in UC. The Legislative Clerk has been directed to forward copies to the County Executive, County Department of Health Commissioner and all UC media.

#334 and #335 dealt with providing case management, intervention for those who need such and have received Person In Need of Supervision or JD petitions through Family Court (#334). Such services would be provided by Multi County Community Development Corporation, located in Saugerties. #335 would provide funds Gateway Community Industries, located in Kingston to receive payment for providing services for those receiving Food Stamps (SNAP) under the Food Stamp Employment and Training Program.

#336 dealt with a program provided by Family of Woodstock for support and diversion services through the Supervision and Treatment Services for the Juveniles program for youth who have received Person in Need of Supervision (PINS) of Juvenile Delinquent petition through the Family Court.

#338 dealt with foster care and related services which would be provided by Vermont Permanency Initiative, Inc. located in Bennington, Vermont where the services/program for foster children would be provided at the Bennington School.

During the discussion it was suggested that the UCDSS should provide the committee with statistical results for all the programs noted in all the resolutions. Further, it was suggested that inquiry be made as to whether there were any groups or organizations which could provide the type of services that any of those being employed whether in UC or outside it.

#339 authorizes the chairman of the UC Legislature to execute a contract with the NYSDOH to participate in the Childhood Lead Poisoning Primary Prevention Program.

This is a 5 year program costing \$1,408,610. Should funding for the program be eliminated, the program will be eliminated as well. Note: Material made available shows the cut for the program would be borne by UC and NYS.

#345 would authorize Chairman of County Legislature to execute a contract and any amendments to the contract with the NYS DOH to continue the WIC (Women, Infants, and Children) Program. This is also a 5 year contract at a cost of \$3,775,085. It is also a case of should funding for this program be eliminated the program will also be eliminated. Cost for the program would be borne by UC and Federal dollars with the latter responsible for the major amount.

Under Old/New Business: committee agreed that the group associated with dyslexia would be invited to make a presentation at the October 5, 2015 meeting.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:12.

Lee Cane, Observer Corp

UC Association of Town Supervisors and Mayors

The September 15, 2015 meeting of the UC Association of Town Supervisors and Mayors was convened at 8:39 by President, T/Rochester Supervisor Carl Chipman and adjourned at 9:57.

Present: Hurley, Ulster, Marletown, Rochester, Hardenburgh, Shawangunk, Plattekill, Gardiner, Dennin, Rosendale

Mr. Chipman opened the meeting referencing the program Save farmland Program. He then introduced Dennis Doyle, Director of Planning, Economic Development and Department of Transportation.

Mr. Doyle referenced the following points in his presentation:

- NYS Farmland Preservation has slated \$20 million dollars solely for the Mid-Hudson Valley plus an additional \$15 million dollars for related matters;
- Purchase and Development Rights involves unique lease development rights of up to 10 years;
- money for farmland protection is available in various parts of the area like Marletown, Shawangunk;
- Farmland Preservation to help farms be preserved for appropriate use and to utilize existing soil in an appropriate way-T/Rochester has two farms that are being assisted under that section after the farmland has been appraised;
- Cornell Cooperative has been involved in working with this program.

Under the area of Transportation, Mr. Doyle indicated the Transportation Council is adopting a long range policy as it refers to fiscal use; must be adopted prior to the beginning of the Federal fiscal year which starts October 1. There are various planning projects being considered.

Transportation Improvement Funding: Mr. Doyle noted there is about \$7 million dollars available but to utilize these dollars federal projects must be involved. One of the main considerations involves the bridges in Ulster County, which are presently being evaluated as to their condition and need to be repaired. It was noted that apparently more and more situations have developed where local governments are having to do the needed work on the bridges.

One concern mentioned by attendees was about road shoulders. Apparently such are not being done in all instances when roads are worked on. Mr. Doyle did say that the county does look at safety issues and does put shoulders in accordingly; noted that the county now

has acquired shoulder equipment.

Following Mr. Doyle's presentation the meeting was devoted to a variety of items of concern to those present:

- a recent legislative resolution with regards to shared services between the county and the towns was viewed as not in the towns' best interests as it appeared to be one sided in favor of the county, which suggested the agreement should be renegotiated. Apparently when this point was raised with the county, the latter apparently said the towns must take care of their own circumstances.

Following discussion by the members of the group present, the group voted to have the highway superintendents contacted and advised about the supervisors' concerns. Eventually it seemed that as needed the group would contact the Commissioner. The group wants to do shared services by wants to be sure all the parties are protected.

Further, the concerns of the group with the present contract on shared services would be presented in a letter to the Chairman of the County Legislature and Chairman of Public Works; and have attorneys from both sides present to indicate what is needed.

- RRA: apparently 14 of the 20 towns signed on to the agreement and are satisfied that rates will not be raised now and not before 2016.

Minutes from July and August were approved.

Treasurer' Report: will be presented at the next meeting. It was recently learned that the Association had a CD worth \$13,000 that was due to mature.

There was some general discussion on the tax cap that towns must not exceed; costs of operating individual towns with respects to pay, medical insurance, benefits whether for full or part-time employees and post retirement costs.

Lee Cane, Observer Corp

Jean McGarry & Jacki Moriarty at Kingston Public Radio speaking about Voter Registration Day

