

Newsletter

Volume 7 Issue 6

July/August 2001

Unit Meetings Planned

by Priscilla Leith

UNIT MEETINGS are small group discussion meetings for League members to talk about League program and action issues in depth. They will be led by people knowledgeable in the topics. The discussions are intended to inform members on the issues, update them on existing LWV positions at local, state and national levels, and sometimes to obtain "consensus" on new items that LWV is studying.

Possible topics for the 2001-2002 League year are: Evaluation of the Ed Reform Act of 1993 and the local aid formula; Newton's election and voting procedures; Regional Transportation Problems; World Trade; Health Care Reform; and Campaign Financing. See the calendar for dates of the September unit meetings on the Community Preservation Act (CPA).

Please call Priscilla Leith, Vice President for Program, if you are specially interested in any one of these topics. Her number is 617-969-6837. ■

Newton Election Procedures Face Restructuring

by Priscilla Leith, VP and Deb Crossley, Local Action Chair

The Newton Election Commission has two new members, Stephen Smith (R) and Fay Cohen (D) who were appointed by Mayor David B. Cohen earlier this year in response to reports of problems and irregularities with the November 4, 2000 elections. The new chairperson, Attorney David Mofenson (D), is a longterm member of the Commission.

Frances Shaer (R) is the fourth member. At its June 20 meeting, the Commission specifically asked for input from the LWVN on redrafting a mission statement and action plan proposed by the Commission and its executive secretary, Alan Licarie. The LWVN Local Action Committee is now involved in this task.

The Commission especially welcomed suggestions that it modernize procedures for educating and training election workers, develop new methods of recruiting workers, increase accuracy and speed of reporting election results,

and comply with relevant state statutes governing local elections.

Specific areas for change include:

A manual for workers. LWVN and the Commission propose to develop an Operations and Training Manual for election workers and for the staff working in the Newton Election Commission office. Such a manual would be given to workers at their training sessions. It would also be available at the polling places on election day as a resource for solving problems that arise.

Recruitment efforts. Current methods are insufficient to staff the polls. Efforts to increase the pool of potential workers should include advertising in local media and via citizen organizations, newsletters, and educational institutions.

Hours for workers. People can work in shifts. Hours can be arranged with the Newton Election Commission and with the Warden of the polling place.

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Voters' Service—Preliminary Election

by Ann Grantham

A preliminary election is scheduled for Tuesday, September 11, 2001, with polls open from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m. On the ballot will be contests for the Ward Alderman races in Wards 2 and 4 to narrow the field to two candidates for each ward. There is one preliminary race for the School Committee in Ward 5 which will result in two candidates for the November election ballot.

The candidates appearing on the

September ballot have been invited to participate in a Candidates Forum on Thursday, August 23rd in the air-conditioned studios of NewTV, 90 Lincoln Street in Newton Highlands. The taping of the evening will begin at 8 p.m. Check the Program Schedule in the TAB or the NewTV Webpage (newtv.org) for the viewing schedule of the event.

NewTV and the PTO Council are

appropriate cosponsors of this event as they are also nonpartisan organizations. In keeping with our commitment to be factual and unbiased, the State League will provide us with a moderator for the evening.

Additional plans for the Preliminary election include the publication of a Voter's Guide to be published in the TAB on Wednesday, September 5, 2001. ■

LWVN Officers and Directors 2001-2002

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Vice President	Priscilla Leith	617969-0771
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The LWVN Newsletter is published nine times per year. The League of Women Voters is a nonpartisan political organization open to all citizens of voting age. For more information about the League of Women Voters, call 964-0014.

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Newton, MA 02461

Settling In

Summer is going fast and I am beginning to feel as if I know a bit more about what it will be like to be President. It is exciting to be involved with such a dynamic organization and I have begun by trying to get to know it a little better. It's funny to find out so many new things about the League after five years of being on the Board. I am learning what a "unit meeting" is (as will you if you look for Priscilla Leith's explanation in this issue). I better understand the difference between action and program. I know more about our Non Partisan Policy, although I still have much to learn, and most important I am beginning and only just beginning to know the strengths and weaknesses of the many wonderful people who are in this adventure with me.

Summer with the League is a time of planting. We have had a series of lively Board and Planning meetings which I think will result in a rich and interesting harvest of information. Come and reap the rewards of our efforts by learning about the candidates, attending unit meetings on the Community Preservation Act (CPA) and the formula for distributing state aid for schools, and watch the Legislative Roundtable on New TV. Drop us a note any time to suggest topics or volunteer to help.

I can't quite believe how much is getting done between vacations, and I would like to mention just a few such accomplishments and their instigators. Priscilla Leith is planning units and

working with Deb Crossley and Carol Ann Shea on local issues. Since I work full time out of state, it has been great to have Priscilla keeping me up to date with the goings-on around the city. Deb Crossley thought she was taking a break from being President, but after the start she's getting in Local Action I'm not sure she still thinks so. Between the CPA, work with the Election Commission, and her new role as League representative to the Energy Commission she's as busy as ever!

It's great to have Ruth Neiberg with us; she is new to the Board and has already taken the minutes at two board meetings. Thanks for diving in Ruth! Beth Wilkinson has taken on not only reporting on Legislation but also corralling the legislators for the New TV Legislators Round Table, and Beth and I are going to be trained at NewTV to work behind the camera so we can make the show run smoothly. Ann Grantham is tackling Voter Service and would welcome help with typing candidates responses and many other tasks which keep voter service humming.

Thank you to everyone I haven't mentioned. It takes all of us on and off the Board. Together, there is no question, we make a difference.



Amelia Koch, President

BRIEF UPDATE ON SALLY FLYNN

by Andrea Kelley

Sally Flynn is doing remarkably well, and will give us a more thorough update in the fall. Meanwhile, she is still getting assistance from a visiting nurse. She plans on returning to work at Lincoln-Eliot elementary school in September. She "probably won't have a prosthesis until November, because the healing process is so slow. In the meantime I am wheelin' in my chair and bumping up and down the stairs." Sally would love to hear from you, and I suspect she wouldn't mind some rides to appointments! She can be reached at her home phone and by email at: Sally_Flynn@newton.mec.edu ■

New Ward Lines to be in Place for Future Elections

by Priscilla Leith, Vice President for Program

At its July 9 meeting, the Newton Board of Aldermen approved (11 yes, 10 no; 2 absent; 1 vacancy) new ward and precinct lines to comply with state requirements that precincts be substantially equal in population following each federal census. The new lines change some residents in Wards 5 and 6, and will place School Committee candidate Patricia Kellogg, now running from Ward 5, in Ward 6 and competing with another incumbent School Committee member in the 2003 election. It keeps Alderman Ken Parker's house in Ward 6, vs. the original Ward Lines Committee (Ald. George Mansfield, Chair) proposal which placed his house in Ward 5.

Ald. Leonard Gentile (W3) filed a motion to reconsider the vote taken on July 9, and a Special Meeting for this purpose was held on Thursday July 19 from 7:00 - 8:30 pm. After considerable discussion and debate, the Aldermen voted (10 yes, 13 no, 1 vacancy) against a motion to substitute the original Ward Lines Committee proposal for the one approved on July 9. The Board then approved (14 yes, 9 no, 1 vacancy) the boundaries originally passed on July 9.

During work on the drawing of new ward and precinct lines, it was discovered that the lines on the current "Ward Map" of the City of Newton do not correspond with the actual city ordinance that was approved a decade or two ago laying out descriptions of the current ward lines. Nor does the "Street List" (a printed document, listing each street in the city alphabetically, showing which house numbers are in which ward and precinct) correspond to the actual city ordinance.

Thus, Ald. Ken Parker, elected as a resident of Ward 6, has actually been living in Ward 5 since he purchased his house about 3 years ago. This information came to light during June, after the Ward Lines Committee approved its original new proposal on May 22, 2001.

The City's Law Department and the Election Commission are now working on how to resolve this problem. The

League has been advised that several hundred voters will be notified by postcard that they must vote at a different polling place for the Sept 11 and Nov 6, 2001 elections. The new boundaries just approved by the aldermen will take effect on January 1, 2002. They still require formal approval from a state agency and/or the Secretary of State's Office. ■

July 16, 2001

Representative Barney Frank
2252 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515-2104

Dear Representative Frank:

On behalf of the members of the board of the Newton League of Women Voters, we are writing to you to state our support of Shays-Meehan Bipartisan Campaign Reform Act of 2001 (H.R. 2356) and to encourage you to try to revive that legislation.

The members of our organization believe that the passage of this bill is crucial to the strengthening of good government in our country. They strongly favor the ban on soft money and the closing of the loophole that permits issue ads and, thus, allows significant amounts of campaign spending to escape disclosure.

We are particularly opposed to Representative Ney's alternate proposal and the recent actions of the Rules Committee, which are directed at weakening the Campaign Reform Act.

Thank you for your attention to our request.

Sincerely,

Amelia S. Koch, President
League of Women Voters of Newton



Committees - in - Action

E d u c a t i o n

Focus Increasing high school enrollments, school financing, testing & standards

Members Nancy Crowley Anne Larner
Deborah Hirsch Robin Maltz
Andrea Kelley Beth Wilkinson
Andrea Kozinetz

Contact Beverly Spencer 965-6365
Board Liaison

H u m a n R i g h t s

Focus League outreach, relevance and support for the human rights of Newton's diverse populations

Members Joan Bates Ruth Nemzoff
Marion Cowan Wand Persimmon
Holly Gunner Dorothy Reece
Lilly Jefferson Jeanne White
Anne Larner

Contact Holly Gunner, Chair (964-0767)

L a n d U s e / T r a n s p o r t a t i o n

Focus Interrelationship between land use and transportation and its effects on Newton & surrounding communities

Members AnnaMaria Abernathy
Anita Capeless
Carol Ann Shea
Susie Heyman

Contact Anita Capeless 617-969-9483

L o c a l A c t i o n

Focus Various local issues

Members In formation - all welcome

Contact Carol Ann Shea 617-969-2121
Deb Crossley 617-244-7597
Co-chairs

N e w s l e t t e r

Members Jane Leighton Liz Lieberman
Deb Hirsch Linda Morrison

Contact Andrea Kelley 617-964-4609

You may call committee contact or a Board officer or director to learn more about current committee work. All are welcome to participate.

Regional Transportation Study and Land Use

By Anita Capeless, Transportation and Land Use Chair

Deb Crossley's hard work at the LWV State Convention in April alerted other leagues to the need for a new Transportation Study. As a result of her efforts, many delegates lobbied for such a study, but it did not get the two-thirds vote necessary to be adopted as a non-recommended item.

The interest shown at convention encouraged Sandy Findar, State League Chair, to convene a meeting at the LWVM office in Boston to consider "concerns and issues" on June 28. A thorough discussion of possibilities for the future and the need to recognize some of the complex issues associated with transportation were met with enthusiasm. A further meeting will be held September 13, at the Newton Free Library at 6:30 P M.

Area transportation advocates are lining up in support of a Newton lawmaker's bill to encourage more commuters to use public transit and car-pooling programs. The legislation would provide expanded tax breaks to businesses offering benefits such as subsidized MBTA passes and van pools to reduce the number of employees who drive to work. "It's a recognition of the fact that we ought to be encouraging people to take advantage of the commuter rail and ride sharing," said State Senator Cynthia S. Creem of Newton, chief sponsor of the bill.

Three large and important petitions for Special Permit and Site Plan Approval are currently before the Aldermanic Land Use Committee. All three have had public hearings before the Committee:

Terraces LLC at Andover Newton on Herrick Road has petitioned for forty-two single family attached dwellings and six single detached dwellings with 113 parking spaces on 552,226 square feet of land, zoned single residence 3. The petitioner has asked for an extension of time until September. A number of issues with the Langley Road Coalition have not been resolved.

The Roman Catholic Archbishop of Boston and the Emerald Development Group are petitioning for nine single family attached dwellings and the development of thirty-five units of affordable elderly housing at 243 Watertown Street, Nonantum, on approximately 54, 193 square feet of land in Multi Resident two district. Traffic is a concern.

The Pillar House Redevelopment Group by National Development Group has outlined plans to move the Pillar House original structure to a new site on Washington Street, Newton Lower Falls. It would be replaced with a 122,000 square feet office building and garage. The parcel contains 94,648 square feet. However, the July 21 Boston Globe carried an article reporting that the Massachusetts Highway Department will take the parcel by eminent domain for "safety reasons". The site is deemed a traffic hazard.

His Honor the Mayor has requested the sum of \$8,000 be appropriated to Budget Reserve and expended for the purpose of contracting with the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Department of Urban Studies and Planning, for work on the Land Use and Transportation elements of the City of Newton Comprehensive Plan. ■

2001 Election Calendar

AUGUST 22, 2001	8 p.m. - Last hour and day to register to vote for the September 11th CITY PRELIMINARY ELECTION.
SEPTEMBER 4, 2001	5 p.m. - Last hour and day for ALL Candidates and Non-elected Political Committees to file Political Finance Forms.
SEPTEMBER 10, 2001	12 NOON - Last Hour and day to apply for an Absentee Ballot for the September 11, 2001 City Preliminary Election.
SEPTEMBER 11, 2001	CITY PRELIMINARY ELECTION DAY, POLLS OPEN 7 a.m. to 8 p.m.
SEPTEMBER 12, 2001	5:10 p.m. - Drawing for Ballot Position for the November 6th Municipal Election. Drawing to be held in the Cafeteria at City Hall.
OCTOBER 17, 2001	8 p.m. - Last hour and day to register to vote for the November 6th Municipal Election.
OCTOBER 29, 2001	5 p.m. - Last hour and day for ALL Candidates, Elected and Non-elected Political Committees to file Political Finance Forms.
NOVEMBER 5, 2001	12 NOON - Last hour and day to apply for an Absentee Ballot for the November 6, 2001 Municipal Election.
NOVEMBER 6, 2001	MUNICIPAL ELECTION DAY - POLLS OPEN 7 a.m. to 8 p.m.
JANUARY 21, 2002	5 p.m. - Last hour and day for ALL Candidates, Elected and Non-elected Political Committees to file Political Finance Forms.

On the Lookout for Prospective Members

by Elaine S. Reisman

This fall, LWVN will hold two meetings for new and prospective members. Robin Maltz will host a morning get together on Tuesday October 2, and Elaine Reisman will host one the following week in the evening on Wed. Oct. 10 (see Calendar on back cover).

The goal is to introduce prospective and new members to the League and our work, and to give an update or review on issues of local concern. We see these as social and informational events, with the hope that we can involve new members more actively and possibly enroll some new people.

Please send names and addresses of anyone who might be interested in the LWV or who you would like to encourage to join to Elaine Reisman.

email: bresreisman@mediaone.net

Continued from page 1

Newton Election Procedures Face Restructuring

Calls to the Secretary of State's office and to other communities reveal that there appear to be no statutory requirement that election workers serve for the entire day until the ballots are completely counted. On the contrary, the Towns of Acton and Concord have, for years, hired workers in shifts. An official in Acton commented that there is no way the town could find enough workers without allowing them to work only part of the day. The Secretary of State's

office confirms that nothing prohibits such part-day workers for elections.

Minutes of meetings. For years, the Newton Election Commission did not keep regular minutes of its meetings, in violation of the Massachusetts Open Meeting Law. Such minutes are required for the public record and must be made available to anyone asking to see them. The new Commission has been taking minutes and intends to provide such records in the future.

Accuracy. The Commission intends to utilize voting procedures and practices that will assure efficiency, accuracy and reliability of the vote count.

The above are just a few of the proposals to be discussed at the next meeting of the Commission, which will be held on Wed Aug 8 at 5:30 pm at Newton City Hall. Meetings are open to the public. ■

Membership Application

Name _____

Address _____

Telephone _____

Email _____

- ☐ I would like to join the League of Women voters of Newton. Enclosed is my check for \$50 payable to LWVN.
- ☐ **Lifetime membership \$1000**
- ☐ I would like to receive materials about the League.
- ☐ I would like to be contacted by a League member to talk about LWVN.

Mail this form (and your check, if joining) to:
Andrea Kozinetz Holtz at 8 Stoney Brae Road,
Newton Highlands, MA 02461

LWVN CALENDAR

July

- 5 5 pm, Last hour and day for submitting Nomination Papers for fall election
- 10 Tues. LWVN Board meeting, 7:15 pm. at Deb Hirsch, 49 Olde Field Road, Newton Centre
- 10 LWVN Local Action Committee meeting, 8:30 am. Century 21, Walnut St. Newtonville

August

- 1 Wed. LWVN Board Meeting, 7:15 pm. @ Crossley, 16 Circuit Ave. N.Highlands
- 8 Wed. Election Commission meeting, 5:30 pm at Newton City Hall
- 14 Tues, LWVN Local Action Committee meeting, 8:30 am., Century 21 Garden City Homes, Walnut Street, Newtonville
- 15 Working Board, 6:30 pm. @ Koch, rsvp
- 22 8 pm., last hour and day to register to vote for Sept. 11 City Preliminary Election
- 23 Thursday, 8 pm, Candidates night for the preliminary election, live and taped at NewTV studio, Lincoln Street, N. Highlands

September

- 5 Wed. 7:15 pm, LWVN Board Meeting @ Leith, 192 Islington Rd. Auburndale
- 10 12 noon, last hour and day to apply for Absentee Ballot for Sept. 11 election
- 11 CITY PRELIMINARY ELECTION, polls open 7 am. to 8 pm.
- 12 Wed. 11:30 am -1:30 pm Unit Meeting - topic: Community Preservation Act, brown bag lunch @ Kelley, 28 Putnam Street, West Newton
- 13 Thursday, 7:30 pm Unit Meeting - Community Preservation Act, Stone Institute, 277 Eliot St., Newton Upper Falls. Please park in the parking lot off Eliot St. Meeting is in large conference room, 1st floor.

October

- 2 Tuesday a.m. 9:30 am New and Prospective Members- Social and informational meeting with an update on issues of local concerns, home of Robin Maltz, 20 Chatham Rd. N. Highlands
- 10 Daytime Unit. 11:30am - 1:30pm. Topic and location TBA.

- 10 Wednesday 7:15 pm Membership meeting, Social and informational meeting with an update on issues of local concern, home of Elaine Reisman, 28 Fairway Drive, W. Newton
- 13 Saturday, LWV of MA Fall Conference, location tba, topic: Election Reform, LWVN leading a workshop

November

- 14 Daytime Unit. 11:30 - 1:30 pm. Topic and location TBA.
- 13 or 15. Evening Unit. 7:30 - 9:30 pm. Topic and location tba.

NEWTON LEGISLATIVE ROUNDTABLE

airs on Channel 10 (the blue channel) on AT&T Broadband on:

- Mondays 1:30 pm, 5:30 pm, 10:30 pm
- Tuesdays 3 am, 5:30 am, 9 am, 1:30 pm, 5:30 pm, 10:30 pm
- Wednesdays 3 am, 5:30 am, 9 am

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