



***League of Women Voters of Greater Hartford®  
2018-2019 Annual Meeting  
May 15, 2019  
Pond House, Elizabeth Park***

**Welcome**

**Dinner**

***Guest Speaker  
Denise Merrill***

*Secretary of State Merrill will speak to  
Elections: Expanding and Securing the Vote*

**Business Meeting**

Announcements  
Annual Report  
Treasurer's Report  
Proposed Budget  
Adoption of Consensus Positions  
Proposed Program  
Nominations  
Other Business  
Adjournment

## Board of Directors

**Treasurer-** Gail Frahm (2017-2019),

**Co-Treasurer, Program** Karen Licht -co Treasurer (2017-2019)

**Secretary, Voters Service-** Carole Mulready (2017-2019)

**Membership, Administrator-** Libby Swietek (2017-2019)

### At large

Mary Everett- (2017- 2019)

Sarah Hambrick -Communications, Member Database (2017-2019)

Karen Licht - Voter Service (2016-2018)

Doretta Andonucci-Communications, Social Media (2018-2020)

June Rosenblatt- (2017-2019)

## Credentials Report

Number of members present \_\_\_\_\_

There is/is not a quorum \_\_\_\_\_

## **Minutes**

The minutes of the 2018 Annual Meeting were approved  
by the Board at its meeting of June 2018

# LWVGH ANNUAL REPORT 2019

## Programs, League Events and Activities

### Fall Pot Luck Dinner

On October 4, 2018, the League hosted its annual Potluck Dinner at St. John Episcopal Church and welcomed Max Reis, political reporter for NBC 30. Mr. Reis spoke about the upcoming Gubernatorial race, and the challenges the new Governor will face dealing with Connecticut financial crisis. He compared the landscape of Connecticut in regard to taxes and services



provide with states he has lived and reported in. In his opinion, Connecticut wins out for quality of life and finds the level of taxes not unreasonable because the services promised are actually provided quite efficiently. He displayed a very impressive comprehension of the political scene in the state.

It was a very interesting presentation and entertaining Q&A.  
Thank you, Max!

### Voter Forum featuring Virginia Kase



On Oct 20, 2018 we had the opportunity to meet the new CEO for LWV US, Hartford native Virginia Kase at an event at Changa Rosa in Hartford. Eight chapters of local Leagues were present for a panel conversation about two ballot questions relating to the Transportation Lockbox and Parks and the Environment. Other topics of conversation included overcoming barriers to voting, women and voting, and making your vote count. The event was cosponsored by LWVCT, Center for Latino Progress, Everyday Democracy, CT Civic Health

Project and CT Civic Ambassadors-Hartford Votes. Thank you to **Doretta Andonucci** for being our point person for this event

### Wine and Cheese for Elected Officials

On Nov 18, we met at the home of **Susan Fellman** for our traditional *Meet and Greet* for newly elected officials. This year we were pleased to converse with veteran Beth Bye and newly elected representative Jillian Gilchrist, as well as local town and BOE elected officials. More than 50 League members, neighbors and friends joined in an evening of informal conversation as we prepared for the new legislative session.

## Legislative Breakfast



Over 50 people attended the Legislative Breakfast on January 5, 2019 at St John Episcopal Church. **Sandy Fry** moderated a panel that included l-r, Matt Ritter (Hartford), Derrick Slap (West Hartford, Avon), Mike Demicco (Farmington), Jillian Gilchrist (West Hartford), Kerry Wood (Wethersfield, Rocky Hill, Newington), Jane Garibay (Windsor), and Ed Vargas (Hartford).

The panel fielded questions about Early Voting initiatives (including accessibility issues), the Citizens Election Program (CEP), protecting Net Neutrality, as well as fielding questions from the audience about Environmental issues and the state deficit.

## Voter Service Election Results 2018

The League of Women Voters of Greater Hartford started off local election preparations by holding our annual Questions session in August to develop the questions to be used for televised debates and voters guides during 2018. Studio debates were held and shown on WHC-TV, local access, and through streaming during the last weeks leading to the elections. LWVGH members served as moderators and timers to assure that the conversations and debates among the Democrat and Republican candidates went smoothly.

LWVGH produced a Voters' Guide for West Hartford that was posted on our website, LWVGH.org, and in West Hartford LIFE. There was no request for a guide in Bloomfield this year. **Karen Licht and Libby Swietek** collaborated with newspaper staff to publish an excellent presentation of the State Senate and Legislature Candidates.



**Special Election debate** for the 5<sup>th</sup> Senate seat vacated by Beth Bye. **Carole Mulready** moderated the event held in the West Hartford Council Chambers which was filled to capacity. The League provided the first three questions which were followed by audience submitted questions. The four candidates provided a most interesting hour discussing their various positions. Many people commented at the end

that it was one of the best debates they have heard. Go LWVGH!

Members **Kathy Golas, Jean Blair, Eileen Leo and June Rosenblatt** served as timers. Questions from the audience were screened for duplication and appropriateness to the office by **Gail Frahm, Joan Twiggs, and Mary Everett.**

### **Debates for State Office 2018-19**

18th District Assembly primary -Andrew Fleischman, Republican and Jillian Gilchrist, Democrat

5<sup>th</sup> District Senate -Beth Bye, Democrat and Philip Chabot, Republican

18<sup>th</sup> District Assembly - Jillian Gilchrist, Democrat and Mary Fay, Republican

5<sup>th</sup> District Senate special election, Derek Slap, Democrat, Mark Stewart Greenstein, Amigo Constitution Liberty Party; Jeffrey F. Przech, Independent Party and Bill Wadsworth, Republican.

18th District Assembly special election Bob Margolis , Republican and Tammy Exum, Democrat

### **Voter Service Activities for the Fall 2018 election cycle**

#### **Voter Registration-**

Community Day – University of Hartford

Constitution Day/Hispanic Heritage Month- Capital Community College

Hartford Promise: New Student Reception and Hartford Yard Goats event

National Voter Registration Day- Hartford Public Library

Rock The Vote- Universalist Church of West Hartford

Squire Village - Manchester

Many thanks to **Carole Mulready** and the volunteers and friends from Call to Action who gave their time to these events and the NIEA event that follows: **Rick and MaryEllen Thibodeau, Eileen Leo, Jean Blair, Margo Callahan, Sandy Wood Forand, Priya Morganstern, John Thomas, Ellen Thomas, Leo Harrington, Jane Zande, Kathy Golas, Nan Streeter, Leta Marks, Doretta Andonucci, June Rosenblatt, Gloria Bent, Joseph Mulready, Sharon**

**Conway, Libby Swietek, Joan Twiggs, Shari Kaplan, Peter Arakas, Karen Kellerman, Hilary Silver, and Ed Savage.**  
**Special Event**

LWVGH was asked to monitor two days of elections for the NIEA (National Indian Education Association). This association is largely a membership of indigenous people of the United States. During its annual convention held in October of 2018 at the Hartford Convention Center, NIEA members were voting on new Board members and voting on revisions of the association by-laws. Traditionally, NIEA has invited a local LWV chapter to monitor their elections at their Annual Meeting. Each year the convention is held in a different city around the country. Each day LWVGH had volunteers monitor the official tables in three hour shifts from 8:00 to 5:30. It was an honor to be asked to serve in this capacity and also interesting to meet and talk with the educators about their work and traditions.



*Members of the Board of NIEA meet with LWVGH Voter Service Chair Carole Mulready who coordinated League monitoring of the elections held during the convention at Hartford Convention Center.*

## **WORKING WITH OUR STATE LEAGUE**

Our Greater Hartford chapter has engaged with the state league (LWVCT) in a number of efforts.

### **State Positions**

We participated in reviewing the LWVCT policy position on Teen Pregnancy. Thank you to 32 members who responded via email or phone. We will continue this model as we review other

State and Local Positions when they become due for review, including: Election Law, Ethics, Transportation, Environmental Land and Water Use, and Internet/Media

## LOCAL PROGRAM CONSENSUS STATEMENTS

### League of Woman Voters of Greater Hartford Education Position **Board Reaffirmed May 2018**

Greater Hartford League members have the opportunity to review the local consensus prior to considering them for reaffirmation at the Annual Meeting each spring.

#### **Education - Board approved May 2014** Reaffirmed May 2018

A quality public education is essential for a strong viable and sustainable democratic society and is a civil right. The League of Women Voters of Greater Hartford supports EQUAL and EQUITABLE EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY FOR ALL CHILDREN in the areas of program, personnel, and facilities. All students should be offered high quality and developmentally appropriate learning experiences in a welcoming and multicultural environment that reflects economic, ethnic, and racial diversity.

**Children learn at different rates, have different learning styles and different life experiences; therefore, to facilitate development of each child's full potential we support and encourage:**

Access to high-quality pre-school programs that meet the needs of children and their families so that children come to school (K-12) prepared to learn. Quality, developmentally appropriate and voluntary early learning experiences should be available to all children with opportunities going first to families in poverty or to children of special need as funding and space become available;

Adoption of a rigorous, effectively articulated standards based curriculum;

Flexible methods of instruction in all areas of curriculum that address student differences and assure growth at every level including acquisition and application of knowledge, critical thinking skill development and higher order thinking skills;

Nutrition, wellness and physical education; foreign language; career and technical education; fine and performing arts; and extra-curricular activities as integral parts of a comprehensive program that builds on core academic disciplines;

Flexible class size that enables effective teaching and learning, and sufficient additional support for classrooms which include highly impacted special needs children;

Development of technological competency in all students through incorporation of technology applications wherever appropriate throughout the curriculum;

Use of the best available local, state, and national data and research to drive decision-making in order to address student needs and improve student learning;

A substantive and qualitatively different gifted program for grades one through twelve;

Exposure to possible career opportunities at all levels of education; including opportunities such as mentoring, job shadowing, internships, cooperative work experience;

Implementation of an intensive program in spoken and written English for non-English speakers at all levels;

Preparation of students to actively participate in the civic and political life of the community, the nation, and in the global economy;

**In order to ensure high quality teaching we support:**

Rigorous and appropriate training and state certification for all educators in the areas in which they teach and supervise;

Effective, ongoing supervision and evaluation of all teachers, principals and administrators (tenured and non-tenured);

An ongoing program of curriculum evaluation and improvement;

Curriculum and staff evaluation programs that incorporate specific, measurable criteria of performance and effectiveness;

A strong, ongoing staff improvement program which includes opportunities from outside of the school system as well as from within;

A technologically-literate staff;

A cohesive, comprehensive, and user-friendly system for assessing and reporting student performance;

Providing the assessment results and information to students and their parents on how to improve performance;

Innovative utilization of all staff, whenever and wherever possible, to maximize student learning and experiences.

**Children need an appropriate, safe and orderly facility in which to learn. Therefore we support:**

Well-maintained school buildings with spaces appropriate to the programs offered, flexible learning spaces, and sufficient classroom and building supplies;

Infrastructure to support the integration of technology into teaching, learning, and administration;

Relevant resources, up-to-date texts, and media centers;

A safe environment for students, teachers and families, one in which self-discipline, personal responsibility, and respect for others are taught, modeled and expected.

**Recognizing that education begins in the home and that the community plays an integral role in the successful education of its children, we encourage:**

Schools, families, and community to assume supportive and cooperative roles in meeting the needs of children, including pre-school; parent education to support effective strategies for student learning; access to services such as mental health care; nutritionally adequate food; home-school partnerships; school-business partnerships; before and after school extended day; and summer school programs;

A shared role for all in addressing and meeting the challenges of funding.

**TOWN GOVERNMENT:**

Reaffirmed 2017

COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING FOR TOWN GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT, May 1985

The League of Women Voters of West Hartford continues to support long-range comprehensive planning which protects orderly growth. The League wishes to preserve the suburban character of the Town, while recognizing that optimal use of commercial areas is necessary for economic well-being. We support a diversity of dwellings, including multi-family units, located in areas which provide ease in shopping and access to public transportation. Special attention should be given to traffic safety, adequate parking, provision for open space, and buffering. The League favors preservation of as much open space land as is realistically possible, and places priority for acquisition in the most densely developed sections of town. We support diligent maintenance and the judicious use of open space. The Town Plan of Development should include an open space plan.

The League believes that the properties in West Hartford Center could generate more revenue for the Town. At present, Town Center properties are under-utilized from both a physical and economic standpoint. The League supports an easing of the four-story height restriction in the Center, taking into account topographical conditions, adjacent residential neighborhoods, esthetic considerations, traffic patterns, and parking.

In order to accommodate commercial growth, increased parking demands must be satisfied. The current method of granting case-by-case exceptions does not promote orderly development. The League suggests a variety of approaches, such as:

- Making better use of existing surface parking
- Providing separate parking for Center employees
- Encouraging flexibility of parking requirements which restrict building expansion
- Developing new schemes for sharing off-site parking
- Building a parking garage located away from residential areas, serving all businesses equally, and integrated unobtrusively into the commercial district. The primary financial responsibility for a parking garage should not be borne by residential property owners.

The League supports mixed-use buildings, with retail establishments on street level and office space or residential units above.

*Examined by Brita Tate for relevance in 2011*

*Reaffirmed May 2017*

### **SPECIAL DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT, Spring 1986**

The West Hartford League of Women Voters supports the concept of the Special Development District as a means of allowing flexibility in land development while maintaining strict control over it. Since 1979 when the acreage limitation was eliminated in the ordinance, Special Development Districts have often been used on small developments located in what have become buffer or mixed-use areas of town. The League feels that such use of Special Development Districts should be minimized. By revising and updating the town's zoning ordinances, new zone districts can be created which would protect community interests in these mixed-use areas.

The League feels the procedure for applying for and obtaining a Special Development District designation should be modified to encourage interaction between the developer and the affected community interests before the Council receives the formal petition. Such modification should not attempt to simplify the application and approval process; instead, its purpose should be to eliminate some of the problems which prolong the process.

The League also feels that a distinction should be made in the Special Development ordinance between minor and major changes in established Special Development Districts. The procedure for a minor change should be simplified, but notification to the public and opportunity for public input should be required in the process.

*Reaffirmed May 2017*

### **MENTAL HEALTHCARE, Spring 2003**

We support comprehensive community-based mental health systems for children and adults. These systems should include early detection and intervention with a range of services to facilitate recovery.

We support a public health education initiative on mental health.

*Reaffirmed May 2017*

### **Recommended League Programs 2019-20**

No study in place at this writing, but things to watch going forward:

- *Transparency in Government - Watch*
- *Voting Rights –Support the Secretary of State’s Office in securing open and fair elections*

**Focus and activities for the year:**

- Voter Service - Voters Guide for West Hartford and Bloomfield; sponsor debates
- A finance drive will be conducted to support Voters Guides
- Hold a calendar/program planning in June
- Hold a pot luck supper with program in September
- Hold an elected officials' reception in November or December
- Hold an annual meeting and dinner in May
- Distribute information electronically via e-mail and our website
- Publish League's Annual Report
- Hold program meetings as warranted and from results of June planning
- LWV 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration Activities

**Collaborate with others**

- Coordinate activities throughout the year with the Windsor League and New Britain when interests merge.
- Collaborate with other groups as positions allow.

## Membership Report

At the time of this meeting, membership stands at 94 members.

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Congratulations to **Libby Pearl who has reached Lifetime Status as a 50 year member**

### **Welcome New Members:**

Margaret Rick Savage	Karen Kellerman and Peter Arakas	Edward
Sharon Conway Leong	Leslie Chase	Shirley
Polly Moon Bristol	Freda Turner	Susan
Karen Perham-Lippman Goodrich	Cassie Bachman	Dee

### Proposed Board of Directors for 2019-2020

**Administrator/Contact-** Libby Swietek (2019-2021)

**Treasurer-** Cassie Bachman(2009-2021)

**Secretary-** Carole Mulready (2019-2021)

**Membership-** Libby Swietek (2019-2021)

### **Committees**

Communications, Member Database - Sarah Hambrick (2019-2021)

Communications, Voter Service - Doretta Andonucci (2018- 2020)

Program - Karen Licht- (2018-2020)

Voter Service - Carole Mulready (2019-2021)

At Large- Gail Frahm (2019-2021)

At Large- June Rosenblatt- (2019-2021)

At Large-Joan Twiggs-(2019-2021)