



The League of Women Voters Of Weston

November, 2010

No. 131

OPENING MESSAGE

Katty Chace

Usually, I enjoy election years, finding all the politics and opportunity for change exciting, but this year, having been inundated by the repetitive political ads and the overwhelmingly nasty tone of much of the discourse, I was eager for it all to be over. There were victories to be savored, however. The Massachusetts League, which had taken a position to oppose all three ballot questions, saw some success as the measures to repeal 40B and roll the sales tax back to 3% were defeated. The proposal to repeal the sales tax on alcohol sales passed narrowly.

On the local level, our league offered voters rides to the polls and flew our banner over Boston Post Road, reminding voters that "Democracy is not a Spectator Sport". We did not hold a voter registration drive for High School students turning 18, as we did before the last presidential election. I think it is probably worth our while to do so in future years before gubernatorial elections.

We had planned to hold a coffee hour on November 20, in response to a request from the School Committee to familiarize voters with some of the school-related issues that were expected to be dealt with at the Special Town Meeting on Monday, November 29. In the end, some of those issues have been rolled back to the Annual Town Meeting in May, so we will plan to hold a coffee hour just before that in late April.

We encourage you to pay your dues for the 2010-2011 year if you have not yet done so. A membership form can be found elsewhere in this Bulletin. We are delighted to welcome new members Priscilla Hindmarsh, Leslie Vensel and Cindy Buzby, and look forward to engaging them in League activities.

League of Women Voters of Weston

President..... Katty Chace
781-891-1087

Treasurer..... Kathie Strehle
508-358-8937

Voter Service.....Sally Currier
781-235-9506

Membership..... Rochelle Nemrow
781-790-1138

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Editor 781-891-9549

This LWV/Weston Newsletter is published monthly except July and August. The LWV is a nonpartisan political organization open to all citizens of voting age.

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VOTER INFORMATION

1-800-882-1649

League of Women Voters
of Massachusetts
133 Portland Street
Boston MA 02114
(617)523-2999

Submit articles to Katherine Wolfthal in
typewritten hard copy or by e-mail to

kate@weichi.com

At our last board meeting, we decided to continue our recent practice of a yearly League Book Club selection. Our next book will be *Denialism* by Michael Specter on Wednesday, February 9 at 7:30. It was recommended by Rochelle Nemrow, who found it quite thought-provoking and intriguing.



League of Women Voters of Weston

wishes to extend sincere thanks to the following Friends
and Sponsors who have generously given their support to our work.

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SEPTEMBER – NOVEMBER 2010

November 25, Thursday..... THANKSGIVING

November 29, Monday..... Special Town Meeting

7:30 P.M.

Weston High School Auditorium

December 14, Tuesday..... LWVW Board Meeting

9:15 A.M., 56 Bogle St.

(All members welcome)

(Kathy Rousseau, 781-235-6659)

December 25, Saturday..... CHRISTMAS

February 9, Wednesday..... LWVW Book Group

7:30 P.M.

Location To Be Announced

Denialism

by Michael Specter

URGENT REMINDER!!

It's time again to renew your membership to the Weston League of Women voters. We are fortunate to have a group of dedicated individuals who have kept the Weston chapter active and vibrant, but it is only through your continued support that our League can survive and flourish.

As a member, you'll receive our informative monthly bulletin about local issues. You'll also be a member of the state and national chapters, and will receive their newsletters and other educational materials. You can stay informed, know the issues and support the power of women's influence in politics.

Please print, complete and return the attached membership form with your check made payable to the League of Women Voters of Weston.

WHEN IT'S TIME FOR ACTION

President

President Barack H. Obama
The White House
Washington, D.C. 20510
<http://www.whitehouse.gov/>

U.S. Senators

- The Honorable Scott Brown
2400 JFK Building
55 New Sudbury Street
Boston, MA 02203
(617)565-3170
317 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510
(202)224-4543
No e-mail address currently available
- The Honorable John F. Kerry
One Bowdin Square, Tenth Floor
Boston, MA 02114
(617)565-8519
304 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510
(202)224-2742
E-mail: john_kerry@kerry.senate.gov

U.S. Representative 7th District

The Honorable Edward J. Markey
(781)396-2900
(202)225-2836
2108 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515
(202)225-2836
<http://www.house.gov/markey>

Governor

Governor Deval Patrick
Office of the Governor
State House, Room 360
Boston MA 02133
(617)727-3600
E-mail: Goffice@state.ma.us

State Senator 5th Middlesex District

The Honorable Susan Fargo
(617)722-1572
State House, Room 505
Boston MA 02133-1054
E-mail: sfargo@senate.state.ma.us
Home: (781) 259-9623

State Representative 4th Norfolk District

The Honorable Alice Hanlon Peisch
(617)722-2320
(781)237-4719
State House, Room 26
Boston MA 02133-1054
E-mail: alice.peisch@mahouse.gov

BOARD HIGHLIGHTS

Robin Reisman

The November meeting was held on November 9 at the home of Rochelle Nemrow.

We began the meeting with a short discussion of the election results in Weston. The League drove a number of people to the polls, a service we usually offer.

Statewide the ballot question results were mostly those that the state league wanted.

The treasurer reported a balance of \$1845 in the treasury with half our per-member-payments for the year paid. Kathie Strehle will pay some of the rest soon, since we are making next to no interest on our accounts.

The Candidate's Night with Alice Peisch and Royall Switzler was fairly well attended. A number of high school students were there as a part of their government course. The event was also broadcast on the local cable TV station.

The proposed Coffee Hour on November 20 will not be held because there are very few issues to decide, and none of them is very controversial.

There was some discussion about what we could do to address the issue of civility in local politics. This issue has been brought up in the past. Our new town moderator, Wendy Spector, might give a short talk about it before Town Meeting. She has suggested having pro and con microphones on the aisles for the discussions. There could also be a time limit on speakers. Wayland has both a speaker limit and an 1-hour time limit for any issue. Could the presentations be pared down to allow for such a limit? Perhaps there could be a vote required to extend the discussion after a given time period.

Community Preservation Committee – The selectmen are not doing anything about the old library right now. The old barn on Newton Street will not be rebuilt right now, but it will probably be saved. The Housing Partnership is talking to the CPC about forming a Housing Trust with enough money to do a project in town.



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COMMUNITY PRESERVATION COMMITTEE UPDATE

November 2010

Barbara Hill, CPC Member

The Community Preservation Committee continues to work with the Housing Partnership to consider what kind of parameters on a Housing Trust would be appropriate for Weston. The Housing Partnership, a group of 12 members committed to bringing quality, appropriate, affordable housing to Weston has been working for about 18 months to create the framework for a Housing Trust that the Town of Weston will embrace. The Housing Partnership hopes to bring their proposal to the Town in May 2011.

At the November 29, 2010 Special Town Meeting, there will be three Community Preservation Act proposals on the warrant for consideration. Those proposals have been described in more detail in previous League Bulletins:

1. \$80,000 for an historic preservation restriction on the property at 171 North Avenue (Whitney Tavern);
2. \$75,000 for the replacement of a well and driveway as part of the rehabilitation and

restoration of Malone Homestead at 27 Crescent Street

3. \$9,000 for the replacement of the roof at 15 Jones Road

The Selectmen have decided not to pursue rehabilitation of the exterior of the Old Library at this Special Town Meeting. The facilitator hired by the Town to help move the process of determining what to do with the Old Library and the Josiah Smith Tavern is scheduled to complete her work by the end of February, and there is some hope that the Town will be prepared to move forward, even if only on some interim matters, by Annual Town Meeting in May, 2011.

I would like to issue a correction to my last update: I erroneously identified a Weston resident in October's update: Dan Santangelo was the resident who suggested considering piping water up to the Malone Homestead.



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OBSERVER CORPS

1. Weston Board Of Selectmen

October 26, 2010

Jean Thurston

1. Bond refunding

A bond for \$8,450,000 for work on the schools, of which \$2,761,000 remains, was refunded at 1.74314%. This will save about \$1, 000,000 and reduce our debt load.

2. Inter-municipal Agreement – Paramedic (ALS) Service

3. National Grid Hearings (7) – Rectifier & Post Installations

Installation of this equipment at 7 locations in town will help to protect our 8,000 feet of gas pipe. Three other locations will be requested later. Most gas pipe in town was installed in the late '50s and early '60s. The life of the pipes can be extended by installing these anodes to prevent further corrosion.

4. Old Library – Request for CPA funding

There are serious problems with the Old Library building. The roof leaks, some of the leaded windows leak and are bowed . Repairs are needed to flashing, downspouts and gutters. The work proposed would be permanent, not patching and would not restrict any future use for the building. Existing plans and specs can be used.

Mr. Harrity favors holding off on any work for now. Consultant are about to be hired to help the town reach consensus on use for the building, and the Special Town Meeting is very soon. However the Permanent Building Committee can continue their work in

the meantime. There are some funds already appropriated that would allow some work to be done, and further decisions could be made at the Annual Town Meeting in the spring. All three Selectmen agreed.

5. Consultant Selection – Josiah Smith Tavern/Old Library

There were three consulting firms bidding. The recommendation was to choose the Cecil Group, which, in the opinion of the Selectmen, had the greatest bench strength, with traffic and engineering expertise and a historic preservation developer available. All three firms planned a town-wide survey later in the process. The base fee is \$38,000. The Cecil Group was chosen.

A suggestion was made to facilitate communication by having a chat room on the town website.

6. Town-Wide Transportation Committee – work with MWRTA Rep

Representative from the MWRTA regional transportation group and from the Weston Council on Aging proposed the formation of a Transportation Committee to look at unmet public transportation needs. Sudbury and Wayland are looking at this also. It was agreed to try to form a committee by February.

7. License Agreement – Relocation of Driveway at 40 Acre Field

A contract for this work has been awarded to KNR Construction to relocate the current driveway and parking area (which are on private land) to a location farther along Newton Street. The bid for the work is \$27,450. The soil removed from the new area will be stockpiled and replaced by the gravel from the old area. The topsoil will then be used to restore the old area. A question was raised about the possibility of lead arsenate in this soil although there never was an orchard in that area. The Selectmen agreed to test the soil.

8. Review Draft Warrant

1. Appropriate for additional design fees – High School science

Because of extensive improvement to the science labs, the entire school must be sprinkled. \$70,000 requested.

2. Appropriate for Energy Engineering Services – upgrades to municipal and school buildings. This will be to inventory energy efficiency measures intended to achieve a minimum of 30% energy savings. This information will be used to create a capital plan for improvements which is one element of being designated a “Green Community”. The exact amount to be requested is not yet decided but will range from \$65,000 to \$100,000.

3. Appropriate for Repairs to College Pond Dam

The College Pond dam was damaged during heavy rainfall in March of

2010. The Conservation Commission has requested that \$60,000 be appropriated for this work.

4. Appropriate for Historic Resources – Whitney Tavern, 171 North Avenue. This is to purchase a historic preservation restriction on the land and buildings . The Historical Commission is requesting \$80,000 in CPA funds to purchase this restriction.

5. Appropriate for Historic Resources – Melone Homestead

This request for \$75,000 would allow replacement of the driveway and a new water supply.

The property is currently served by a well.

6. Appropriate for Community Housing – 15 Jones Road

\$9,000 is requested to replace the roof on this property.

7. Amend Section II of Zoning By-law by amending definition of “grade”

8. To approve Connection to MWRA Sewer

This would allow the premises at 24 Dean Road to be connected to the MWRA sewer in Wellesley.

9. Grant of Permanent Easement to MWRA
The easement for an additional 300 square feet is needed to complete the utility connection needed to rehabilitate the Hultman Aqueduct.

10. Rescind Bond Authorization

The \$525,000 authorized in 2003 for Landfill Gas Mitigation is not needed.



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BOARD OF SELECTMEN

November 9, 2010

Jean Thurston

1. OPEB Actuarial Study as of 6/30/09

Donna VanderClock describes this meeting as: "Kathy Riley from The Segal Group, Inc. discussed with the Board the most recent actuarial study completed of the Town's OPEB liability. OPEB stands for Other Post Employment Benefits and refers to the Town's long-term liability to pay health insurance benefits for its retirees. Although the Town is not required by law to fund this liability, it is now reported on the Town's balance sheet. The Finance Committee recommended that the Town begin to fund the "Annual Required Contribution" of approximately \$1.5 million which would be in addition to the amount budgeted each year for the cost of health insurance for current retirees and intended to address the long-term, unfunded liability."

2. The Cecil Group

The Selectmen met with Ted Brovitz of The Cecil Group to discuss plans for their work regarding the Josiah Smith Tavern and Old Library. Scheduling of meetings was presented and the plan is to complete work by the end of February.

3. Northeastern University Tuition Vouchers

There were two applicants and both were awarded vouchers.

4. Adopt Alternative Posting Method for Public Meetings

New Open Meeting Law changes in July allow the posting of agendas on the website. Currently agendas are posted on the doors of Town Hall. They will also be available from the Town Clerk's office.

5. Adopt Special Town Meeting Warrant

With one change from that presented at the last meeting (expanded explanation of Article 3 – Appropriate for Repairs to College Pond Dam) the warrant was approved for the Special Town Meeting on November 29, 2010.

6. Draft Charge to Transportation Advisory Committee

No action was taken since Mr. Gillespie was not present.

7. Holiday Schedule

Since Christmas and New Years are on Saturday this year, the preceding Fridays will be holidays.

8. Approve Agreement with Weston Superior Officers' Union, Council #93

A one year contract was approved and signed which provides for no cost-of-living increase. Other provisions were for buy-back of sick leave and discontinuing this benefit and limitation of restricted duty duration.

TRAFFIC COMMITTEE
November 10, 2010
Katty Chace

The Traffic Committee met on Wednesday, November 10 to discuss the traffic problems at the intersection of Wellesley Street, Brown Street and the Middle School driveway. During morning rush hour, the intersection becomes very congested and dangerous, due to school buses, parents driving their children to school, cars driving north through the stoplight at Route 30, and people driving east on Brown Street trying to avoid the Route 30 stoplight. There are also young pedestrians trying to cross Wellesley Street at the crosswalk to get to school. The Traffic Committee has been working with the Town engineer to apply for state money

to improve the intersection at Wellesley Street and Route 30 which might alleviate the situation, but it appears that those funds won't become available until 2013.

The Traffic Committee discussed three possibilities to deal with the congestion at the Brown Street intersection: a rotary (cost - \$570,000), traffic lights (cost - \$240,000), or a raised intersection (cost - \$113,000). They voted 4 to 2 for the traffic lights over the rotary. They will present their recommendation to the Selectmen.



League of Women Voters of Weston

MEMBERSHIP FORM 2010-2011

The League of Women Voters is a non-partisan, political organization, which encourages informed and active participation in all levels of government and influences public policy through education and advocacy. We serve the local community in many ways:

- Sponsor Candidates and Issues nights before elections
- Provide voter information and conduct voter-registration drives
- Encourage voter participation with banners and rides to the polls
- Study local, state and national issues and hold open meetings
- Act upon carefully considered positions by lobbying and circulating petitions
- Publish a "Know Your Town" booklet
- Train members to be active and involved citizens.

Our membership year runs from July 1 to June 30. As a Weston member, you also belong to and receive publications from the State and National Leagues.

Name _____ Date _____

Address _____

Phone _____ Fax _____

Email _____

Check one: Renewal New Member

I enclose a check made payable to **The League of Women Voters of Weston*** for:

\$60 Individual Membership (covers required local dues to the State and National Leagues)

\$75 Family Membership (two individuals in the same household)

Name of second household member: _____

\$50 Basic Membership

\$ _____ Additional Contribution (Any contributions above and beyond regular dues are greatly appreciated and assist our local league in providing more services and offsetting our operating expenses.)

\$ _____ TOTAL ENCLOSED

.....
 \$ _____ LWV Education Fund (Tax-deductible contribution made payable by separate check to the LWV Education Fund)

Return form to: Rochelle Nemrow, 61 Beaver Rd., Weston, MA 02493

Do you know a friend who might be interested in joining the League of Women Voters?
Name, address & phone _____

* It is the policy of the LWV of Weston that no resident shall be refused participation in the League because of inability to pay. If a hardship preventing payment of dues exists, please contact Katty Chace at 781-790-1087.