



The League of Women
Voters of Hingham

HINGHAM VOTER

**celebrating our 84th year*

The League of Women Voters is a non-partisan political organization that encourages active and informed participation of citizens in their government.

Summer 2017

Steering Committee: Chair Elizabeth Danis, Eva Marx, Catherine Salisbury, Jane Malme, Carolyn Locke
Treasurer: Nancy MacDonald; **Facebook:** Erica Sweeney; **Communications:** Eileen McIntyre; **Website:** Liza O'Reilly; **School Outreach:** Lisa Stein; **Candidates Night:** Chris Wilk; **Membership:** Kate Boland

Steering Committee Letter

A few days after our May 3 Annual Meeting I awoke a little earlier than usual (It seems I have a lot on my mind these days!) and headed downstairs. The cold floor reminded me more of fall weather than the approaching spring and with that thought I snarled and grimaced. You know....thoughts of cold winds, tightly closed windows, bare trees, layers upon layers of clothing, etc. etc. Then I thought of Hingham's LWV and how in the fall we would return from summer vacation and kick off a new year.

Working countless hours on behalf of our League, Kate Boland has led our local organization with enthusiasm, professionalism, and creativity. Her efforts over these past six years have caused our membership to soar and our image in the community to continue to be visible with our positions and involvement respected and valued. Although Kate will continue in our League as Membership Chair, she will share her skills and talents with LWVMA as a member of the Board of Directors. While her leadership will be greatly missed, we will always be appreciative to Kate for her tireless contributions and endearing friendship.

The newly elected steering committee met in May and began to plan for the fall. Our first LWVH membership meeting will be on Wednesday, September 27, at the home of Anne Fanton, 46 Ridgewood Crossing. This will be a welcome back to all with our new members invited as special guests. This meeting will offer a brief orientation to the League and an overview of the year ahead. Much time will be available to socialize and discuss informally the issues facing our town, state, and nation and to catch-up with friends while enjoying wine and cheese. We look forward to seeing you and extend our appreciation to Anne for opening her home for this meeting.

So the thought of fall is not so bleak. While I don't want to rush summer away, I am excited about our year ahead. As we grow and work together, I hope we can continue to get new people involved, educate ourselves and others on positions that are important to us, and have fun!

Regards,

Elizabeth



Flowers by Julie Strehle and Cynthia Galko Photos Chris Wilk

Annual Meeting 2017

A speech by Ann Bookman, PhD, launched the 2017 annual meeting, which was attended by 43 members and guests. Dr. Bookman examined gender equity and ways to increase leadership and economic security for women. She has over three decades of experience working in academia and government and was a Presidential Appointee in the Clinton administration, serving as Policy and Research Director of the Women's Bureau of the U.S. Department of Labor.

Members' questions indicated a strong interest in this important issue. After the presentation, Chair Kate Boland started the business meeting by recognizing special guest, Hingham Town Clerk Eileen McCracken, for her exemplary service to the town, support of voter participation, and receipt of a Silver Medal award for implementation of early voting for the November 2016 election. Eileen also managed the very confusing MA Senate and Representative races in the fall of 2016 with her customary calm and professional style. The League also acknowledged Eileen for being named Hingham's Citizen of the Year.



Jane Malme, Steering Committee



Town Clerk Eileen McCracken & Kate Boland



Ann Bookman PhD



Eva Marx, Steering Committee

Student Voter Registration Excels

This past March, School Outreach Chair Elizabeth Danis and member Lisa Stein registered 13 students, making them eligible to vote in the April election. This number is in addition to the 16 students they registered in the fall. They also handed out 10 of the new pre-registration cards for 16-17-year-olds. The Town Clerk reported that 149 students had registered between September and October. This is the largest number of students we have seen registered to date.



Elizabeth Danis and Lisa Stein with HHS students

State of the State

Anne Fanton

On March 8, 25 members and friends of our League filled Marisa Costello's living room to hear from our elected state officials. Senator Patrick O'Connor and Representatives Joan Meschino and James Murphy shared their Legislative priorities and goals for the coming year, highlighting bills that they had sponsored or co-sponsored. Kate Boland provided them with a list of the bills supported by the League and asked them to express their opinions on them as well. They said that they are working well together to address issues of importance to the South Shore, *(including economic, environmental, health and safety issues among others. Details are available on each of their websites.)* They encouraged us to contact them with questions and concerns. Their presentations were followed by a lively question-and-answer period, with some informative debate about local needs and the impact of state mandates on our communities. Discussion with our elected officials continued even after the meeting closed with everyone appreciative of the opportunity to talk one-on-one with them in a League member's home. The State-of-the-State is always one of the League's most interesting and participatory meetings!



Candidates Night

Candidates Night proved to be another great opportunity for voters to learn about candidates' views on local issues. Voters filled the double room at the Town Hall and the League received four pages of questions sent by email and by hand, indicating the level of interest for the five contested races. Chris Wilk ran the seamless evening with her usual professionalism and with assistance from multiple League members. The LWVH couldn't have been happier with the attendance by voters and participation by contested and uncontested candidates.



Cynthia Galko, Julie Strehle,
Elizabeth Danis, Kristen Arute



Moderator Elizabeth Foster-Nolan and
Chris Wilk



Elizabeth Foster-Nolan, Chris Wilk
and Eva Marx

Archiving our League's Records

At the 2017 Annual Meeting, Steering Committee member and Archives Project Co-chair Catherine Salisbury reviewed the process of inventorying the LWVH's records and shared that the Hingham Historical Society has offered to accept the archives as a permanent gift. Ms. Salisbury distributed a description of the project and moved "to approve the unanimous recommendation of the Steering Committee to donate the archival records of the League of Women Voters of Hingham to the Hingham Historical Society, Inc., and to authorize one or more members of the Steering Committee to implement this vote by delivering any and all documents on behalf of the LWVH they may deem necessary or useful to complete the donation." The motion was seconded and voted.

Ms. Salisbury noted that the gift is permanent and irrevocable. She explained that future records may be donated to the collection; only full boxes will be accepted and the gift of each box must be voted by the LWVH membership. In response to a question, Ms. Salisbury explained that the expense precludes digitizing the records. Archives Project Co-chairs Ms. Salisbury and Ms. Malme were thanked for their commitment to this project and their generous support.

Members asked if they could contribute to the cost of the project and Treasurer Marisa Costello welcomes all donations! Please send your checks to our new Treasurer Nancy MacDonald @ 190 High Street. No donation is too small!!!

April Elections and *I Voted Today* Stickers

During the last four years Hingham has experienced low voter turnout at town elections. In 2014 Hingham had 2976 voters; 2015 had 4708 voters; 2016 had 2045 voters and 2017 had a whopping 4035 voters. However, our League was out in force, handing out *I Voted Today* stickers at the polls! Thanks goes out to Carolyn Locke, Judy Parsons, Julie Strehle, Marisa Costello, Eileen McIntyre, Anne Fanton, and Nina Wellford-Price. Marisa captured Anne hard at work!



LWVMA 2017 Charter School Study Position

Our League participated in the LWVMA Charter School Study. The LWVH committee included Mary O'Donnell, Kate Boland, Liza O'Reilly, Kathy Reardon, Lisa Stein, Kristen Arute, Eva Marx, Elizabeth Danis, and Liz Comrack. All study members agreed that their understanding of the subject was immeasurably expanded! If you were unable to review the [Charter School Research materials](#) they are still available [here](#).

The LWVMA convention approved a position on charter schools to be added to their current education position. It was agreed that the foundation budget applies to both district schools and charter schools, and the position developed from that consensus belongs as an addition to the Statewide Standards section at the beginning of our education position. Therefore, the following addition, shown bold and underlined, is added at that point:

Education

Goal: Equal access to education. (LWVUS) (1967)

Statewide Standards (1967)

The League supports:

- the principle that the state Board of Education should set minimum educational standards for local public school systems with reasonable criteria for implementation
- the principle that the state Board of Education should provide services to assist local schools and to motivate them to improve the quality of education
- reasonable measures to implement these services
- adequate teacher certification
- **adjustment of the state's education funding formula (the foundation budget formula) to meet changing needs and to cover costs, including those associated with mandated programs (2017)**

Below is the approved LWVMA charter school position:

Charter Schools (2017)

The League supports:

- The exclusive authority of the state to establish and oversee charter schools, and to adopt and enforce regulations relating to them
- State approval and regulation of the number and location of charter schools
- The establishment of charter schools only on a not-for-profit basis
- Funding both district schools and charter schools in ways that do not disadvantage either type of school. The state should have a formula to adequately fund both district schools and charter schools, and should develop methods for addressing the financial impact of charter schools on sending school districts.
- State responsibility for fostering robust cooperation and collaboration between charter schools and district schools. This includes, among other things, fostering the sharing of innovation and ideas between charter and district schools and minimizing the competition between them for scarce resources.
- State responsibility for the accuracy, transparency and ease of accessibility of charter school reports, to ensure accountability
- Equal access to charter schools for all students. This includes making every effort to have charter school applicant pools be comparable to the populations of their sending districts.
- Community and parent/guardian engagement in governance of charter schools. A charter school board of trustees should include, among others, community representatives, and charter school boards should seek to actively engage parents/guardians of currently enrolled students.

The League opposes:

- For-profit charter schools

If you were unable to review the Charter School Research materials they are still available [here](#).

Welcome New Members (We are still growing!)

It is no surprise that Leagues across the United States are growing in membership. It doesn't matter which political party you are affiliated with. Civic engagement is on the rise! Our League is also experiencing an increase. In addition to the members we welcomed in our spring Voter (Jane Kringdon, Nina Wellford-Price, Diane Morrison, Nancy Bettinger, Meg Wheeler, and Chris Murphy) we welcome Lexi Lefort, Katie and Michael McBrine, and Skip and Leanne Jenkins. We look forward to seeing you in September!

LWVMA Supported Legislation 2017-18

The legislative advocacy efforts of the LWVMA are led by the Legislative Action Committee (LAC), composed of the League's legislative specialists. Each legislative specialist follows one or more focus areas. For those areas, the specialist researches bills filed with the Massachusetts legislature, recommends League action on them to the LAC, writes testimony on the League's position to submit to the relevant committee of the legislature, and follows the progress of the bill. The bills LWVMA acts on must be consistent with LWVMA or LWVUS positions. The specialist may also join with approved coalition partners or advocacy groups to work together to support or oppose bills. The Legislative Action Committee decides on support or opposition for a bill, with the LWVMA board of directors retaining final authority on those decisions.

Legislative specialists encourage League members who are interested in closely following an area of legislation or a specific bill to contact them and be added to that specialist's "team" for notifications of committee hearings and other activities related to specific legislation. Here are the [legislative priorities](#) for 2017-2018.

Thank you Marisa Costello



Retiring Treasurer, Marisa Costello received special thanks for her 10 years of diligent service at our Annual Meeting. Besides her ability to keep our League on sound fiscal ground, Marisa's support and contributions to the mission of the League are unending. Whether she is offering her home for meetings, even when she is at a band concert, or making fondue for the fall launch meeting, Marisa jumps in with both feet!

The great news is she continues to be a member. Thank you, Marisa!