



2022 ANNUAL MEETING: APRIL 21

March 2022

The 2022 annual meeting for LWV WBLA will be held in person at Boatworks Commons, White Bear Lake.

Dinner will be served beginning at 5:00 PM, followed by our speaker for the evening, **Sara Hanson**, who will talk about *Exploring Our Roots: Then and Now*.

The annual business meeting will begin at 6:30 PM. Members will vote on an annual budget, approve existing local positions on education, natural resources, environmental protection, land use, representative government, and social policy, and elect officers and directors for 2022-23.

Complete information on the meeting together with the agenda and copies of all position materials will be sent to members the week of April 4 in a special issue of BEAR FACTS.

Mark your calendar now and plan to join us for our first in-person annual meeting since 2019! RSVP [here](#).

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Sara Hanson
Executive Director, White Bear Lake Area Historical Society

Sara has been the executive director at the White Bear Lake Area Historical Society since 2001. Through her position, she has been able to develop programming objectives that meet the needs of the community and fit her enthusiasm for research, writing and sharing the past. A focus on community involvement, building relationships and maintaining a strong sense of place are key components to Hanson's role as a leader in the White Bear area. She embraces the challenge to uncover new information and continue adding to the collective story. Connecting people to the past through commemorative events, publications and programs are her passion. Hanson earned a bachelor's degree in American Studies with minors in English and Anthropology and a master's degree in Public History, both from St. Cloud State University.

League of Women Voters of Minnesota Council: April 30, 2022

The LWV of Minnesota will hold a statewide Council on Saturday, April 30, 2022. This will be a virtual all-day event, with morning and afternoon sessions. Any member of a Minnesota League may attend the morning session, but only assigned delegates from a local League may attend the afternoon session. Information about being a delegate for the WBLA LWV is below. The cost is \$10. Register online at <https://www.lwvmn.org/council-2022>.

Some highlights of the morning session of Council this year are:

- Keynote address by H. Adam Harris. According to his bio, Mr. Harris is, "an artist, teacher, and cultural equity consultant. He works at the intersection of theatre, education, social justice, and community engagement."
- Updates and annual report from LWV of Minnesota staff, board, and interns
- Preview of what's ahead for LWV of Minnesota
- Parade of local Leagues

The afternoon session will be a business meeting that will include:

- Update on FY22 budget and discussion of FY23 budget
- Vote on resolution for concurrence with LWV Utah on End of Life Options*
- Vote on resolution to accept committee recommendations to update LWV Minnesota Firearms position*
- Vote on resolution to conduct a full consensus study of the LWV Minnesota Firearms position*

*Two-thirds of the voting delegates present would have to vote in favor for the resolution to pass.

To be a WBLA LWV delegate to Council

The White Bear Lake Area LWV can send up to 6 delegates to LWV of Minnesota Council. If you would like to attend as a delegate, please contact co-President Liz Lauder (lizlauder@gmail.com; 651-357-8519). You can be reimbursed for your registration fee if you attend as a delegate. You must be able to attend the afternoon session, which starts at 1:00 pm. Information about the resolutions are on the Council page of the LWVMN website: <https://www.lwvmn.org/council-2022>. On this site, you may also register for a separate Council Q&A session on April 27th at 7:00 pm.

Attending Council is a great way of finding out what is going on at the state headquarters and with other local Leagues around the state. If you attend as a delegate for the WBLA LWV, you could also shape history by voting on some important resolutions that will change how we take action in important public policy discussions. Take part and see what it's all about!

From Liz Lauder, Co-President

FOLLOW UP: 2022 LWV WBLA MEETINGS

End of Life Options January Meeting

Please Vote!

We would like to hear from our League members on how you would like our delegates to vote at the upcoming LWVMN Council meeting on April 30th. If more than 50% vote for concurrence then all WBL delegates will vote for concurrence. If more than 50% vote against concurrence, then all WBL delegates will vote against concurrence.

Our January Unit Meeting was concerning the MN End of Life Options Act and it was presented by Dr. Rebecca Thoman. Many states and many Leagues support Dignity in Dying legislation. The League of Women Voters Utah did a comprehensive study in 2016 before they added it as a Utah State League position.

To add this as a Minnesota State League position, we first would need to either create our own comprehensive study (which is very lengthy and time consuming) or concur with the comprehensive study done by the Utah League. If we concur with the Utah’s study the Minnesota State League may adopt a position that supports the Dignity in Dying Legislation / MN End of Life Options Act.

The details on the Utah study were emailed to all members in January. You can also watch Dr. Thoman’s presentation on our YouTube channel: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YpGFPKnfCzk>.

How to Vote?

**Vote in person at our annual meeting on April 21st. There will be a ballot box and ballots.

**Send an email to shannonmoorewbl@mac.com

**Call Shannon Moore at 612 275 9219

Ballot

Concurrence on the Utah Death with Dignity Report 2016:

Do you vote **for** concurrence on the Utah Death with Dignity Report 2016? []

Do you vote **against** concurrence on the Utah Death with Dignity Report? []

Name - _____

From Shannon Moore

CMAL County Government Study - Poll Results

March Meeting

Fifteen people attended the March unit meeting on the Council of Metropolitan Area Leagues' 2022 update of their County Government position. Liz Lauder, Bev Driscoll, Becky Siekmeier, and Susan Travis presented background information about county government, as well as the study's findings.

The members who attended voted on six consensus questions. The results of the WBLA vote will be added to the votes of members of the other 18 metro-area local Leagues. The CMAL board of directors will review the total aggregate votes and determine if consensus was reached on any of the six questions. Delegates to the CMAL annual convention in May will vote whether or not to change the existing County Government position. The position can be used by metro-area local Leagues to advocate for changes to their county government's practices.

Here are the results of the voting by WBLA members who attended the March meeting:

1. County governments should provide ample time and easily accessible notice and background information regarding all County Board, County Board Committee Meetings, County Board Work Sessions/Workshops/Briefings, and Advisory Committees/Commission Meetings
 - Yes: 14
 - No: 0
2. County government should video record and post recordings on their websites:
 - County Board Meetings
 - Yes: 15
 - No: 0
 - County Board Committee Meetings
 - Yes: 12
 - No: 3
 - County Board Work Sessions/Workshops
 - Yes: 10
 - No: 5
 - Advisory Committee/Commission Meetings
 - Yes: 9
 - No: 6
3. County government should post information on their websites regarding: the number of members for each advisory committee/commission, the current appointees, and the minutes of their meetings
 - Yes: 15
 - No: 0
4. County government should provide members of the public opportunity for public comment at:
 - County Board Meetings
 - Yes: 15
 - No: 0
 - County Board Committee Meetings
 - Yes: 10
 - No: 5

- County Board Work Sessions/Workshops
 - Yes: 5
 - No: 10
 - Advisory Committee/Commission Meetings
 - Yes: 8
 - No: 7
5. County government should offer opportunities outside of meetings for members of the public to give timely and meaningful input into the county budget, policy development, initiatives, and capital projects
 - Yes: 15
 - No: 0
 6. County government should post information on their websites about funds they receive from or through the Metropolitan Council and how such funds are used
 - Yes: 12
 - No: 3

Some members provided feedback on why they voted no on some of the questions. Presentations at workshops are often very technical, one member said, and public input would disrupt the free flow of information. Another member commented that meetings other than the County Board meetings are more informal and don't need to be video recorded. Video recording those meetings was not worth the expense, added another member. Regarding the question on posting information about funds received from or through the Met Council, one member said that money was already accounted for on the counties' budgets, so separate accounting was unnecessary.

Many thanks to all those who attended the meeting and voted on the questions. Thanks also to the presentation team!

From Liz Lauder, Co-President

Save the date

WATERSHED 101

May 11 – 12:30 PM – Boatworks Commons, WBL

May 12 – 7:00 PM – Location tbd

Water Matters. Do you know what your Watershed is doing?

Where does the water go from your yard and street?

Is your local water healthy?

How does a Watershed organization fit into the matrix of local government?

Who is paying for Watershed efforts?

Member Interests Survey – An Encouraging Report

The Member Interests Survey was conducted online in February, and despite having only about a 40% return rate, has given helpful information. First, we learned that not everyone has a personal Google account or could access the survey! So, at the Annual Picnic in August, we will have time to take a survey on paper, as well as sign up for the Program topics to be announced at that time.

We were able to compile lists of interested members for each of our committees and activities and have given those lists to the committee chairs so that they can enlist wider participation. You may be contacted as the work of the LWV-WBLA proceeds through the winter and into the spring. For example:

- The Legislature is in session and the Observer Corps and Lobby Corps are working with the Action Committee to monitor and respond to Action Alerts.
- Voter Services is preparing and training for a campaign and election season that may conduct a record number of candidate forums (maybe 20!).
- The newly formed Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee will give an eye to our activities to ensure we are including the voices of underserved groups, and our liaison to *Many Faces of the White Bear Area* will promote collaboration with other organizations with similar goals.
- The Program Committee will begin making plans for an exciting and informative 2022-2023 calendar year, informed by a list of Topics of Interest from the survey. Researchers and event planners will be needed every month!
- The Membership Committee will continue to seek and welcome new members and will support all members in getting orientation and training (through LWV-WBLA, LWVMN, and LWVUS websites and programs).
- A newly formed Communications Committee will streamline our means of sharing information, from media publicity, to *The Bear Facts*, our website, Facebook page, YouTube, Twitter and Instagram postings.
- A Mini-Database offered by the LWVMN is being brought on-line and our local league will be trained to use it for Communications.
- Other non-committee activities which are informed by the survey include listing helpers for event days and assigning delegates to the LWVMN Council (Saturday., April 30).

Thank you to all who participated in the Member Interests Survey! We hope that your interests and reasons for joining the League will continue to be met, and that everyone will know how appreciated you are!

From Barb Memory, Membership Chair

ACTION REPORT

Many of our members are keenly aware of issues associated with the fluctuating water levels in White Bear Lake. Recent legislation, SF3055, authored by Senators Housley and Chamberlain, and signed onto by Senator Wiger, addressed the issues of permit applications and included a provision that some potential related lawsuits would not be allowed.

We learned about this proposed limitation on lawsuits through testimony from the Minnesota Center for Environmental Advocacy (MCEA). MCEA pointed out in written testimony to the Committee on Environmental and Natural Resources Policy and Legacy Finance that this bill would conflict with the Minnesota Environmental Rights Act (MERA). LWVMN positions strongly support MERA, and, thus, we do not support this bill. The LWV-WBLA Board Members sent a letter explaining our stance to Senators Housley, Chamberlain and Wiger, and to the author of the companion bill in the House, HF 3880, Representative Leon Lillie. We also contacted Representatives Wazlawik, Fischer and Christensen. These legislators represent the majority of our league members.

The letter of testimony and the letter sent to our legislators are included in the following pages for your review. If you would like to learn more about this particular issue, you can view the bill here:

<https://www.revisor.mn.gov/bills/text.php?number=SF3055&session=ls92&versio>

or watch the committee meeting which took place on February 28th, here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?app=desktop&v=mp6b5Y4aIMU>

Constituent voices are powerful tools, so, sending a message to your legislator, if you are so moved would be advantageous.

To keep up with other legislation that the state league is paying attention to, make sure that you are subscribed to and read **The Capitol Letter** which will come to your email weekly. To subscribe, go here:

<https://www.lwvmn.org/subscribe> .

From Lori Delahunt, Action Co-chair



Minnesota Center for Environmental Advocacy

February 28, 2022

TO: Senate Environment and Natural Resources Policy and Legacy Finance Committee
FROM: Andrea Lovoll, Legislative Coordinator, Minnesota Center for Environmental Advocacy
RE: SF 3055 - White Bear Lake groundwater appropriation permits

Chair Ruud and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for your service to the people of Minnesota and thank you for the opportunity to testify on SF 3055 (Housley). Minnesota Center for Environmental Advocacy (MCEA) is a nonprofit organization with almost 50 years of experience using law and science to protect Minnesota's environment and the health of its people.

MCEA supports section 7 of this bill, which states that the Minnesota Department of Health, the Metropolitan Council, and representatives of east metro municipalities must explore options that both protect the natural water resources and also provide safe drinking water to east metro citizens.

However, the remaining 6 sections of the bill present a host of conflicts with the Minnesota Environmental Rights Act (MERA), and MCEA cannot support these initiatives. MERA is one of Minnesota's bedrock environmental laws. By providing citizens the power to hold polluters accountable, MERA gives each of us the opportunity and responsibility to protect our treasured environment and resources. MERA allows citizens to file lawsuits to protect Minnesota's clean water, air, land, and other natural resources from pollution. It is an important and powerful law because it gives every person the right to protect the environment in court.

MERA is significant in part because of its breadth. It can apply to any kind of conduct by any person or entity, including the government. If someone acts without a permit or authorization and pollutes or destroys our natural resources, they can be sued under MERA and the court can halt the conduct. Similarly, if a state agency issues a permit or rule that is inadequate to protect our natural resources, Minnesotans can challenge the state agency under MERA and courts can require more protective permits and rules.

This bill wholly undermines MERA's purpose to give citizens the ability to prevent or stop pollution impairment or destruction of the environment. This sets a dangerous example for natural resources and protecting public waters across the state. White Bear Lake gives a clear example of why DNR must be held accountable for providing permits that protect the resource, or else the consequences, as evidenced today, can be dire. Undermining MERA eliminates one such possibility to hold responsible entities accountable.

MCEA recognizes the difficult situation surrounding White Bear Lake. However, carving out an exception for MERA is neither a solution to the resource problem, nor in the best interest of any Minnesotan. This bill would not protect White Bear Lake, nor its citizens' ability to sustainably use its waters. Other solutions must be explored to address this problem, and it is not as simple as simply guaranteeing permits from a dwindling resource. Additionally, this would affect all water appropriation permits across the state, and is not something we can afford to risk.

In closing, MCEA encourages the author and lawmakers in the East Metro to continue exploring solutions, but SF 3055 is not the answer.

Sincerely,

Andrea Lovoll, Legislative Coordinator, Minnesota Center for Environmental Advocacy

Minnesota Center for Environmental Advocacy

1919 University Ave W, Suite 515 | Saint Paul, MN 55104
(651) 223-5969



Co-President
Liz Lauder
651-357-8519
lizlauder@gmail.com

March 9, 2022

Dear Senator Housley,

Co-President
Becky Siekmeier
651-900-5666
becky.siekmeier@q.com

In regards to SF 3066 and HF 3880 concerning White Bear Lake groundwater appropriations permits, the League of Women Voters White Bear Lake Area is in agreement with the testimony presented on 2/28/2022 by the Minnesota Center for Environmental Advocacy (MCEA) to the Senate Environment and Natural Resources Policy and Legacy Finance Committee.

Membership
Barbara Memory
651-493-9607
memoryb@ecu.edu

Many of the provisions of the bill, as the MCEA explains, conflict with the Minnesota Environmental Rights Act (MERA) which provides citizens the power to hold polluters accountable and to protect Minnesota's clean water, air, land and other natural resources.

Counties Served
Northern Ramsey
Northern Washington

We believe, as the MCEA contends, that "this bill wholly undermines MERA's purpose to give citizens the ability to prevent . . . destruction of the environment." We do not support bills that jeopardize our state's resources. In concurrence with the MCEA, LWV-WBLA urges legislators in the East Metro to search for a different solution to the problems faced in White Bear Lake and surrounding suburbs, one that does not weaken the provisions in the MERA that give citizens the right to bring suit to protect land, water or any natural resources.

Communities Served

Birchwood Village
Afton
Arlon Hills
Bayport
Baytown Township
Denmark Township
Dellwood
Forest Lake
Gem Lake
Grant
Hugo
Lake Elmo
Lake St. Croix Beach
Lakeland
Lakeland Shores
Mahtomedi
Marine on St. Croix
May Township
North Oaks
Oak Park Heights
Pine Springs
Scandia
Shoreview
St. Mary's Point
Stillwater
Stillwater Township
Vadnais Heights
West Lakeland Township
White Bear Lake
White Bear Township

Sincerely,

White Bear Lake Area League of Women Voters Board of Directors.

OPPORTUNITIES TO LEARN

Women of Influence: How Democracy Can Survive Misinformation in a Digital World

Wednesday, April 6, 2022 | 7 PM – 8:30 PM (Online)

Sponsor: LWV Duluth & Duluth Branch of AAUW

Guest speaker Sharon McMahon has a mission to “curate facts, fun, and inspiration by educating Americans about democracy, politics, and history.” After years of serving as a high school government and law teacher, Sharon took her passion for education to Instagram with a mission to combat political misinformation with non-partisan facts on matters of national importance. She has 711k followers on Instagram and is the host of the top-rated SHARON SAYS SO Podcast. Sharon has appeared on CNN, The Daily Show with Trevor Noah, and Good Morning America. To register:

https://lwvmn-org.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZMrdO6gpz4tEtGT5tVqHikmLpb_RIIRZlf-

Unpacking the Middle

Thursday, April 07, 2022 | 3:30 pm

Online & Northrop, Best Buy Theater

Free and Open to the Public (Registration Requested)

Sponsors: University of Minnesota and Minnesota Humanities Center

Despite consistent and widespread interest in third-party politics, recent, record-low ratings for the U.S. Congress, and the ever-widening political chasm between the left and the right, America remains as firmly ensconced in the two-party system as ever. Often left out of the political fray are the voices, experiences, and aims of the so-called moderate middle. Who comprises this group? How do they influence American politics at levels from local to national? And what does the future portend for the role of the middle in healing our divide and possibly escaping the persistent oversimplifications that a binary system presents to U.S. voters? Politicians and academics join the conversation sparked by these timely questions. [REGISTER HERE](#)

How Elections Work in Washington County

Monday, April 18, 2022 | 7:00 – 9:00 PM (Online)

Sponsor: LWV Woodbury Cottage Grove Area

The program features Christie Piskura, Washington County Taxpayer Services and Election Manager and Jacob Probst, Washington County Elections Coordinator. Topics will include:

Different ways you can vote in Washington County this year;

How our votes are counted and the ways the county ensures the results can be trusted by voters;

Schedules for elections in 2022;

How redistricting will affect how you vote this year

We have all heard conversations about elections and election security since the 2020 election. This will be an opportunity both to get to know Christie and Jacob and to hear from them as non-partisan election professionals directly about how our elections work. This program will be open to the public so please share this information with family, friends, and neighbors. If more voters know who administers our elections, understand how our elections work, and why the results can be trusted, the greater will be voter participation and the strength of our democracy. Pre-registration required ([link](#)).

Homelessness - A Crisis in Our Own Community

Tuesday, April 26, 2022 | 6:00 – 7:30 PM
Community Resource Center at St. Andrew’s Lutheran Church
900 Stillwater Road, Mahtomedi
Sponsor: Many Faces. Mahtomedi Continuing Education.

Join us for an evening of learning what homelessness looks like in our community, what resources are available for those struggling to have stable housing, and hear real life experiences of what homelessness looks and feels like. By attending you will gain ideas of how you can assist and learn how your actions can make an impact in your own backyard. Goodwill donation preferred to help support CRC and HOST programs.

White Bear Beach’s Sophie Wirth Camp

Monday, May 2, 2022 | 6:00 – 7:00 PM (online)
Sponsor: Many Faces: White Bear Lake Area Historical Society

Sophie Wirth Camp was the first Jewish camp in Minnesota, open from 1911 to 1943, and sponsored by the St. Paul Council of Jewish Women. Children were sent to Sophie Wirth for learning the Jewish faith, but also for fun and recreation. Register: <https://whitebearhistory.org/participate/calendar> .

AHHA: Healing the Breach

Tuesday, May 17, 2022 | 6:30 – 8:30 PM
White Bear Center for the Arts
Sponsor: Many Faces. White Bear Center for the Arts and Rotary Club of WBL

Nationally known Black Twin Cities artists, Beverly Tipton-Hammond, Kennedy Simpson, Drew Hammond and Donald Walker, invite you to see firsthand the art inspired by their lived experience. Join us to view and reflect on their work and to engage in transformative conversations and activities. Their incredible works of art will move you and inspire a deeper connection of community. Exhibition Dates: April 25 - June 9, 2022

WANT TO DO IT AGAIN?

We have been invited to march/ride in the June 17, 2022, White Bear Lake Manitou Days Parade! Members who participated last summer had a wonderful experience. Our theme last year was our 101-year history, from then to now.



A new theme could be Register and Vote or whatever your creativity produces. We could wear whatever we want or all the same color tops, or specially printed tee-shirts...you name it. The parade route is an easy one mile walk on mostly shaded streets. The parade takes place rain or shine, but we could stay home in a heavy rain.

If you think you would be available June 17 and would like to participate, please drop me an e-mail. An entry fee and application will need to be board-approved and submitted next month.

I'm game, how about you? Carol Bergeson cjbergeson@comcast.net

CONTACT INFORMATION LWV WBLA

- Email: lwwwbla@lwwmn.org
- Website: <https://lww-wbla.org/>
- Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/LWVWBLA>
- Twitter: <https://twitter.com/lwwwbl?lang=en>
- You Tube: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCDAYMf5Slgb0EcYiWd-X3YQ/videos>

CONTACT INFORMATION LWV MN

- Website: <https://www.lwwmn.org/>

WBL BEAR FACTS

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