**LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS UPPER MISSISSIPPI RIVER REGION INTER-LEAGUE ORGANIZATION**

**Board Meeting – February 7, 2022**

**Zoom Video and Phone Conference**

The thirty sixth board meeting of the Upper Mississippi River Region Inter-League Organization (UMRR-ILO) was called to order by Chair Mary Ellen Miller (IA Des Moines) on February 7, 2022, at 10:00 a.m.

**Board members attending the meeting in addition to the Chair:**  Gretchen Sabel (MN-ABC), Carolyn Mahlum-Jenkins (WI La Crosse), Mary Ploeser (WI Madison), Steve Ploeser (WI Madison), Lonnie McCauley (MN Coon Rapids), Jeri McGinley (WI Stevens Point), Kay Slama (MN Willmar), Nancy Porter (IA Iowa City), Sue Wilson (IA Dubuque), Paul Schultz (IA Dubuque), Paula Ekstrom (IL McHenry County),, Lee Ekstrom (IL McHenry County), Tamara Prenosil (IA Dubuque)

Guest: Dee Ann Christensen (MN Coon Rapids)

**Minutes from December 6, 2021:**

T. Prenosil’s minutes from the 12-6-2021 UMRR-ILO Board Meeting were included in the information sent to Board members prior to this meeting. L. McCauley moved and G. Sabel seconded that the minutes be approved. Motion carried.

**Financial Report:**

J. McGinley, treasurer, sent the Treasurer’s Report for December 2001 - January 2022 as well as the Revenues & Expenses with Budget to Board members prior to this meeting.

Revenues: December –January

* $0.20 Interest -
* $50.00 – 2021-2022 Membership dues

Expenses: December – January $200

* $200.00 -Educational event (A. Guebert honorarium)
* $10.00 – Annual Nonstock Corporate Report
* $3.96 – PayPal fees

Bank Balance as of January 31, 2022: $11,087.75 and Judy Beck Memorial Fund of $300. Includes ERC Restricted Grant II balance $166.82 ($100 for A. Guebert honorarium)

Currently 57 local chapters and state chapters have paid dues. J. McGinley provided a list of chapters that have not yet paid dues and Board members will contact them to encourage payment. J.McGinley will send the link to the Google spreadsheet of chapters that have paid and members will contact the chapters in their state that have not paid.

Most checks are sent directly to the treasurer, however the P.O. Box in Madison needs to be checked once in a while. The UMRR-ILO is charted in Wisconsin and official documents (IRS ex.) give the P.O. Box as the official address and changing would be an involved undertaking. Mary Ploeser has a key.

J. McGinley will organize a budget committee (T. Prenosil, K. Slama, C. Mahlum-Jenkins, L. Ekstrom) to review the proposed budget for 2022-2023.

J. McGinley reported she is resigning as treasurer at the end of the fiscal year. L. McCauley is resigning from chair of the Action Committee. T. Prenosil will contact Rosemary Heilemann and form a nominating committee (K. Slama, C. Mahlum-Jenkins, L. McCauley)

Bonnie Cox from the Jo Daviess County LWV Chapter in Illinois inquired whether the UMRR-ILO might temporally take over the role of fiscal agent for the remaining $7,000 of a federal grant it received for water quality educational purposes since the LWVIL no longer wants to do this. She said the commitment would be modest - perhaps five checks a year. T. Prenosil moved and N. Porter seconded that the UMRR-ILO was not able to do this. Motion carried.

**Action Committee Update:**

The next Action Committee will be February 28 at 5:00 pm.

Discussion will review how often this committee should meet, what format members bring information to the group, how to keep track of what is happening with other advocacy groups and in our state legislatures, record what this group is doing to promote water issues. The entire UMRR-ILO is encouraged to attend Action Committee meetings.

Another topic is ‘authority to act’. The LWVUS wants chapters to adhere to a ‘one voice policy’. The LWVUS is slow to act which means opportunity to sign on to advocacy letters is missed. If the issues are state issues, then the LWV of each state can sign letters of support. If the UMRR-ILO can not take official action, then individuals can write support letters.

The Action Committee is the place to discuss issues in depth and make recommendations to the UMRR-ILO Board for official action.

**Updates from the four states:**

All states have either an annual meeting or council meeting each year. Board members should secure a place on the agenda to promote the UMRR-ILO. Minnesota has a Climate Change task force and encourages local LWV chapters to have Climate Change task force also. Iowa has an environment task force (currently focused on promoting an improved bottle recycling bill). UMRR-ILO members should continue to get articles in state newsletters, UMRR-ILO events on state and local LWV calendars and websites.

A possible project is to develop a standard PowerPoint presentation that all UMRR-ILO members can use for presentations.

**Mississippi River Network (MRN) Update:**

The advocacy group includes the ten states bordering the river. N. Porter is a member of the Engagement Committee which meets the first Thursday of the month via zoom. The group is promoting MRRRI (Mississippi River Restoration and Resilience Initiative – H.R. 4202 Act was introduced 6/28/2-21) which will provide grants to communities along the river. This year the MRN is again sponsoring Celebrate the Mississippi events in communities the week of June 7 through 12.

**Educational Programs:**

February 7, 2022: En-Roads Climate Change Workshop by Jackie Armstrong at 7:00 pm. She will demonstrate a software program that will simulate various actions that can impact climate change. (This program will also be given in March to Iowa LWV members since the caucuses are also 2-7-2022.)

April 4, 2022: Minnesota and Wisconsin speakers about the sustainability of withdrawing ground water and the impact on both ground water and surface water.

May 21, 2022 Annual Meeting: Keynote will be Bonnie Cox from the Jo Daviess LWV in Illinois will give a 15 minute presentation about that chapter’s efforts to protect ground water. Presentations about the Great Lakes Compact and whether this can be applied to the Mississippi River. Perhaps MRRRI can include Compact goals. (C. Mahlum-Jenkins, N. Porter, L. Ekstrom, G. Sabel will collaborate to develop this program.

Other future program topics might include the towns and cities initiative and Land Stewardship groups.

**LWVUS Convention in Denver, CO June 23 through June 26, 2022:**

N. Porter will be the UMRR-ILO delegate. Some of the expenses will be budgeted in the 2022-2023 budget. T. Prenosil will check details for expenses. L. Ekstrom will help develop an exhibit if the group decides on a table. M. Ploeser has a classroom version of the Watershed Game for display.

**Next meeting:** April 4, 2022, at 10:00 am via zoom

Submitted by Tamara Prenosil