

**SEVENTH ANNUAL MEETING  
OF  
THE UPPER MISSISSIPPI RIVER REGION  
INTER LEAGUE ORGANIZATION**

**May 21, 2022 Virtual Meeting via Zoom**

The seventh annual meeting of the Upper Mississippi River Region Inter-League Organization (UMRR-ILO) was called to order at 10:00 a.m. via Zoom this year due to the COVID 19 Pandemic, by chair Mary Ellen Miller (Metro Des Moines, IA). In attendance and eligible to vote were 14 Board members and 16 additional attendees

**VIRTUAL MEETING GUIDELINES**

Lynn Theurer (LWV Winona – MN) was parliamentarian.

**KEYNOTE TALK**

‘Using LWV Principles to Guide Water Work’ by Bonnie Cox and Beth Baranski from the Jo Daviess, Illinois League of Women Voters. This video presentation gives the history of advocacy regarding water quality in Jo Daviess County as well as the beginning of the Upper Mississippi River Region Inter-League Organization.

**QUALIFICATIONS OF DELEGATES**

Gretchen Sabel (MN) reported a quorum was present after she admitted all participants into the Zoom meeting.

**BUSINESS MEETING**

**INTRODUCTION OF OFFICERS AND BOARD MEMBERS**

Some officers and board members gave land acknowledgements to recognize we are on land that is the traditional territory of indigenous people who called this land home before the arrival of settlers.

**SECRETARY’S REPORT:**

Minutes of the Sixth Annual Meeting held on May22, 2021 via Zoom were included in program materials which were on the UMRR-ILO website prior to this meeting. Tamara Prenosil (IA) moved, and Lee Ekstom (IL) seconded that the minutes be approved. Motion carried.

**TREASURER’S REPORT AND ADOPTION OF PROPOSED BUDGET:**

The treasurer’s report was submitted by Jeri McGinley (WI) and included in program materials which were on the UMRR-ILO website prior to this meeting. The UMRR-ILO fiscal year is from

July 1 through June 30. Ending cash as of 3-31-2022 was \$11,119.84 which included the ERC restricted Grant II of \$166.82 and the Judy Beck Memorial Fund of \$300. There were a possible 72 members for 2021-22 with 61 paid memberships. The UMRR-ILO had fewer expenses than would have been incurred except for the travel limitations of the pandemic.

Comments regarding the proposed budget for next year included stating the goal of spending more money on educational activities. It was also noted a new line item to help defray the expenses of the UMRR-ILO delegate to the LWVUS national convention in June 2022 in Denver, Colorado. The UMRR-ILO will have an informational display table there.

Kay Slama (MN) moved, and Mary Ploeser (MN) seconded that the treasurer's report be accepted. Motion carried.

### **NOMINATING COMMITTEE:**

Rosemary Heileman (IL) chair of the nominating committee reported the committee included following members: Carolyn-Mahlum-Jenkins (WI), Lee Ekstrom (IL), Tamara Prenosil (IA), and Lonnie McCauley (MN). Rosemary Heilemann's report was included in program materials which were on the UMRR-ILO website prior to this meeting.

The nominating committee nominates:

1. To fill the remainder of the term of Treasurer, 2022 – 2023 Catherine Franczyk, LWV Wheaton, IL
2. To serve as Secretary for a 2-year term, 2022 – 2024 Tamara Prenosil, LWV Dubuque, IA
3. To serve as Nominating Committee Chair, 2023 Bonnie Cox, LWVJ Daviss, County IL

There were no nominations from the floor. Lee Ekstrom (IL) moved, and Lonnie McCauley seconded the nominations. Motion carried.

The board of directors authorizes Catherine Franczyk, Treasurer, to be a signer on the bank account held at Home Savings Bank (Dupaco Credit Union) and also authorizes her to hold a debit card tied to the same account. Jeri McGinley is therefore being removed as an authorized signer.

### **ACTION COMMITTEE AND PROGRAM FOR ACTION 2022 – 2023**

Lonnie McCauley (MN) submitted a summary of actions that the UMRR-ILO took this past year and it is available on the UMRR-ILO website.

Lonnie McCauley reported Action Committee discussed the need to respond quickly to opportunities to endorse or sign letters of support for issues that arise quickly (sometimes only two days' notice). The following statement is presented for discussion and approval.

If action is needed before a regularly scheduled Board or Action Committee meeting on an issue involving only one state, the Board authorizes the Chair of the Action Committee to send the motion by email to all Action Committee members. On approval by a majority of a quorum of the Action Committee, the Action Committee may take action on behalf of UMRR. The Action Committee's quorum shall be the number of members voting on an issue within the deadline set

by email and text notification of all Action Committee members. Action Committee members of the relevant state may need to consult their state LWV board for approval of their vote.

Lonnie McCauley (MN) moved, and Carolyn Mahlun-Jenkins seconded the procedure be approved. Motion carried.

The Action Committee also proposed that it be come a Standing Committee which would require a written report at the Annual Meeting. Lonnie McCauley (MN) moved, and Kay Slama (MN) seconded that this change be made. Motion carried.

The UMRR-ILO Board unanimously approved the following Program for Action statements at the April Board meeting and recommended it be proposed at the annual meeting.

### **LWV UMRR Program for Action 2022-23**

LWV UMRR is uniquely positioned - we are a multi-state League focused on protecting and enhancing the Mississippi River. The people in our League are active, engaged and passionate, and are also involved in other organizations, giving us a broad base of knowledge about what's happening around us.

Now it's time to take advantage of our unique position to lead our Leagues in advocating for the Mississippi as big federal bills like the Farm Bill, MRRRI and SMRT boil through Congress. This draft program for action takes the work we've done together and points us toward our work for the future.

To do this, LWV UMRR proposes to:

Build upon the affiliations LWV UMRR members have in other LWV's and other organizations focused on the Mississippi to seek opportunities to advocate for the river in a broad, national context.

Lead LWV in supporting federal legislation to protect the Mississippi River's quality and quantity:

- Mississippi River Restoration and Resilience Initiative – introduced, but stalled
- Safeguarding our Mississippi River Together – introduced, but stalled · 2023 Farm Bill (reauthorized every five years)

Work with our member state Leagues and LWV US to build effective advocacy based on LWV positions, and partner with organizations actively working on these bills.

Research and assess the possibility of an Upper Midwest Compact to protect the Mississippi from water diversion.

Gretchen Sabel (MN) moved, Carolyn-Mahlum Jenkins seconded that this Program Acton statement be approved. Motion carried.

#### **ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

Nancy Porter (IA) reported the Mississippi River Network is sponsoring another Mississippi River Days of Action. LWV will be visiting the National Mississippi River Museum in Dubuque on June 10, 2022. We will meet at the museum at 10:30 for a tour given by Jarod McGovern and for those who want – lunch afterwards at a venue to be decided.

The Upper Mississippi River Inter-League Organization wishes to thank Jeri McGinley for her years of knowledgeable recommendations, organization, and support as Treasurer.

Meeting adjourned at 10:15

Submitted by Tamara Prenosil

#### **Public Educational Presentation at 10:30 – Does it take an Act of Congress to Protect the Mississippi?**

Presentation was recorded and will be available on the UMRR-ILO website in a few days.

Presenters:

Alicia Vasto, Water Program Associate Director, Iowa Environmental Council - MRRRI Update

Brandt Thorington, Policy Director, Mississippi River Cities and Town Initiative – SMRT Update

Lara Bryant, Deputy Director, Water and Agriculture, Natural Resources Defence Council – Farm Bill Update

Kirsten Wallace, Executive Director, Upper Mississippi River Basin Association – Upper Midwest Charter