

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

May 22, 2023, Virtual Meeting via Zoom

The eighth annual meeting of the Upper Mississippi River Region Inter-League Organization (UMRR-ILO) was called to order at 6:00 p.m. via Zoom this year by chair Mary Ellen Miller (IA Metro Des Moines). In attendance and eligible to vote were 11 Board members, 31 delegates from local chapters. There were 13 additional attendees.

VIRTUAL MEETING GUIDELINES

Lynn Theurer (MN Winona) was the parliamentarian.

OPEN MEETING, SOCIAL TIME (5:30 p.m.)

Gretchen Sabel (MN ABC) shared the Quizzes on her League's website that are used as ice breakers while attendees at zoom meetings were checking in. She invited the UMRR-ILO participants to use them if they wished.

QUALIFICATIONS OF DELEGATES

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

BUSINESS MEETING

INTRODUCTION OF BOARD MEMBERS AND OFFICERS

Each Board member present gave a brief summary about their home League and past involvement with the UMRR-ILO. Absent Board members were mentioned by Chair Mary Ellen Miller.

SECRETARY'S REPORT

Minutes of the Seventh Annual Meeting held on May 21, 2022, via Zoom were included in program materials which were on the UMRR-ILO website prior to this meeting. Carolyn Mahlum-Jenkins (WI La Crosse) moved, and Lee Ekstrom (IL McHenry CO) seconded that the minutes be approved. Motion Carried.

TREASURER'S REPORT AND ADOPTION OF ANNUAL BUDGET

The treasurer's report was submitted by Catherine Franczyk (IL Wheaton) and was included in the 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. As of 3-31-2023 there was \$7,192.94 in our checking account and \$5,334.88 in our savings account for a total of \$12,527.82. This total includes \$100 remaining from the Judy Beck Memorial Fund and \$166.82 remaining from a grant from the Environmental Resource Council. (The ERC grant is administered by Lonnie McCauley, UMRR-ILO Board member).

At the time the written report was posted on the website, the UMRR-ILO had 59 members. Since that time the number is now 64. In addition to the dues that local and state leagues pay each year, \$1,538.11 was donated to the UMRR-ILO.

Catherine Franczyk reported continued growth in our finances. Meeting by Zoom saves money, but plans are to include some in-person meetings now that the numbers for the COVID pandemic are decreasing. We also plan to purchase stand-up banners and display materials for each state to use at conferences and League functions to promote the work of the UMRR-ILO. We anticipate some additional fees for educational events.

Catherine Franczyk moved Lynn Theurer seconded that the treasurer's report be filed for audit. Motion carried.

NOMINATING COMMITTEE REPORT

The nominating committee report was submitted by Bonnie Cox (IA Jo Davies CO) and Tamara Prenosil (IA Dubuque) and was included in the program materials which were on the UMRR-ILO website prior to this meeting.

For 2023-25, the following candidates will stand for election:

- Chair: Mary Ellen Miller (IA Metro Des Moines)
- Vice Chair: Nancy Porter (IA Iowa City)
- Treasurer: Catherine Franczyk (IL Wheaton)
- Director of Communications: Gretchen Sabel (MN ABC)

Chair of the Nominating Committee: (non-Board member – one year position) Bonnie Cox has agreed to be chair of the Nominating Committee again for 2024 as she was in 2023.

No nominations were put forth from the meeting participants. All candidates were elected.

ACTION COMMITTEE REPORT AND PROGRAM FOR ACTION

The Action Committee report was submitted by Kay Slama (MN Willmar), Chair of the Action Committee, and was included in the program materials which were on the UMRR-ILO website prior to this meeting. Kay Slama reported that the procedure adopted at the last UMRR-ILO

annual meeting was very helpful in allowing the board and action committee to address advocacy issues in a timely manner.

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.

The Action Committee report included the following areas:

- Operations
- Issues that were worked on during the year
- Affiliations with other organizations
- Events at which the UMRR-ILO tabled
- Issues that the UMRR-ILO signed onto in organizational letters
- Issues reported on by members impacting their states

LWV UMRR PROGRAM FOR ACTION 2023-24

The UMRR-ILO will once again follow the Program for Action that was adopted at the 2022 UMRR-ILO 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.

MISSISSIPPI RIVER NETWORK (MRN)

The Mississippi River Network report was submitted by Nancy Porter (IA Iowa City) and was included in the program materials which were on the UMRR-ILO website prior to this meeting. The MRN is a coalition of 58 organizations from the Headwaters to the Gulf of Mexico. It has our central tenets – People, Land, Water, Wildlife. States along the Mississippi can participate in River Days of Action. In 2022 people visited the National Mississippi River Museum with a UNITED presentation from the Curator of Conservation Programs. There is a 2023 event planned to coincide with the LWVIA State Convention in Dubuque, Iowa, and Galena, Illinois. The group continues to advocate for the Mississippi River Restoration and Resilience Initiative (MRRRI) as Junewell as increased laws and funding for conservation in the Farm Bill which is reauthorized every five years and 2023 it will be voted upon.

OTHER/ANNOUNCEMENTS

The UMRR-ILO Board will hold an in-person retreat in La Crosse, Wisconsin on Sunday and Monday June 12 & 13. We plan to discuss a new Board member orientation process, a succession strategy, as well as plan actions for 2023-2024. LWVIA needs to appoint an alternate to the UMRR-ILO Board.

Meeting adjourned at 6:50 p.m.

Submitted by Tamara Prenosil

PUBLIC EDUCATIONAL PRESENTATION AT 7:00 P.M.

United We Stand Stronger

Jessica Rolhoff, Midwest Regional Organizer for LWV US. Jessica will give an update (and answer questions) about the LWV US transformation plan, introducing this new LWV US initiative (regional reps) to our members.

Elizabeth “Joy” Guscott-Mueller serves as President of the LWV Lake Michigan Region, a four state, fifty-nine chapter, Inter League Organization, with a mission to protect and enhance Lake Michigan and its associated watershed. She will inform us about the LWV US Climate Interest Group. She chairs its Water Team.