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

**Board Meeting – August 7, 2023**

**Zoom Video and Phone Conference**

The forty fourth 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 Metro) on August 7, 2023, at 10:30 a.m.

**Board members attending the meeting in addition to the Chair:**  Gretchen Sabel (MN-ABC), Kay Slama (MN Willmar), Lee Ekstrom (IL McHenry County), Paula Ekstrom (IL McHenry County), Catherine Franczyk (IL Wheaton), Nancy Porter (IA Iowa City), Sue Wilson (IA Dubuque), E. J. Gallagher (IA Blackhawk-Bremmer)Tamara Prenosil (IA Dubuque),

**Guest:** Rosemary Heilmann (IL Deerfield)

**Approval of Minutes**

The minutes from the 4-3-2023 UMRR-ILO Board meeting were included in the documents sent prior to this meeting. K. Slama moved nd P. Ekstrom seconded that the minutes be approved. Motion carried..

**Financial Report**

C. Franczyk, treasurer, sent the Treasurer’s Report for July 2023 and August 2023 as well as the Revenues & Expenses with Budget vs Actuals (July 2023 – June 2024) as well as (July 2022 – June 2023) to Board members prior to this meeting.

Revenues: June 2023/July 2023: $1,444.02

* Renewals $450
* 1 Donation $195.53 from Michael Anderson 1 Mississippi
* Interest $2.66
* In Kind Contributions $795.83

Expenses: $1634.44

* Board retreat Sunday Dinner $$551.04
* Exhibit Materials $108.39
* Supplies & Copying Renewal Letters $175.22
* Pay Pal Fees $3.96
* Donated Travel Supplies $795.83

Net Operating Revenue $190

Bank Balance as of July 31, 2023: $12,029.86

* Includes Judy Beck Memorial Fund of $100 and ERC Restricted Grant II balance $166.82)

Total Liabilities and Equity: $12,527.82

The financial report was accepted for future audit.

Bank signatories now include Cathrine Franczyk, Gretchen Sabel, and Tamara Prenosil. Tamara Prenosil has started loading Secretary files into Google Docs.

**Action Committee Update**

K. Slama moved and E. J. Gallagher seconded that the UMRR-ILO Board proceed with advocacy actions without LWVUS written approval as long as our positions are in line with LWVUS positions as stated in the LWV Impact on Issues: A Guide to Public Policy Positions of the League f Women Voters. Motion carried.

Discussion: Rosemary Heilmann suggested it has been helpful for committees on which she has served to check with Jessica Capparell with the LWVUS. From the LWVUS website:

Jessica Jones Capparell is the Director of Government Affairs at the League of Women Voters of the United States. Jessica manages relationships and strategic planning for federal legislation and lobbying that benefit the organization. Additionally, she advises and assists with aligning advocacy and legislative priorities at all levels of the organization. Jessica builds strategic campaigns to impact areas of public policy, generate public support for relevant issues, lobby for policy changes through appropriate channels, and maintain current knowledge of government changes and actions. She also manages the day-to-day operations of the League's volunteer Lobby Corps.

**Other Action Committee Items**

Pipeline discussion – North Dakota stopped the pipeline from depositing the CO2 in that state. Iowa has a hearing this summer. Advocacy groups are fighting against the pipeline ending in that state.

**Annual Meeting Follow-Up**

G. Sabel received no responses from individuals to volunteer for membership on the Action Committee or other Committees. The following non-board members were approved to be on the Action Committee: Lynn Markus (MN), Paul Schultz (IA), Micky Coyle (MO). All UMRR-ILO Board Members are on the Action Committee.

T. Prenosil will confirm that the people who previously agreed to serve on the nominating committee continue to be willing to do so.

**Planning Retreat Follow-up**

N. Porter will chair the Bylaws committee. Other members are – E. J. Gallagher, T. Prenosil, K. Slama, M. Miller. There needs to be a difference between policy and programing needs. These documents will help succession planning. We will consider adding a third delegate from each state. We will investigate adding Missouri as part of the UMRR-ILO. States need to reappoint delegates, and terms for delegates need to be established. Time frames in current Bylaws are not always reasonable so they need revision (especially the time frame for the Notice of Programming Recommendations request to states).

An audit of the financial records is needed. We need to include a written annual report to all supporting Leagues.

**2023 – 2024 Program Schedule**

* August 7 - Duane Hvorka, National Wildlife Federation, 2023 Farm Bill Process
* October 2 – Gretchen Sabel is exploring speakers regarding the disconnected wetlands (2023 Supreme Court case - Sacket V EPA) and collaboration with Lake Michigan ILO
* December 2 – Lee Ekstrom planning a program about the CO2 pipeline
* February 5 – Gretchen Sabel is researching speakers regarding ‘the circular economy’
* April 1 – Mississippi River Compact?
* May 25 - ?? UMRR-ILO Annual Meeting (virtual)
* June ??? – Board Retreat (in person)

**Other**

Future Exhibit Opportunities include all state conventions and the LWVUS 2024 convention in Washington DC. The 100th anniversary of the Upper Mississippi River Wildlife and Fish Refuge is in 2025 and volunteers to help plan this event are being solicited.

The Upper Mississippi River National Wildlife and Fish Refuge is a 240,000-acre, 261-mile long National Wildlife Refuge located in and along the Upper Mississippi River. It runs from Wabasha, Minnesota in the north to Rock Island, Illinois in the south. [*Wikipedia*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Upper_Mississippi_River_National_Wildlife_and_Fish_Refuge)

S. Wilson moved and N. Porter seconded that we rename the Judy Beck Memorial Fund to the Action Fund. Motion carried. A founding member of the UMRR-ILO and Chair of the Action Committee for several years, Lonnie McCauley, recently died and the Board wanted a vehicle to accept donations in her name.

**Afternoon Educational Program 12:00 noon (virtual)**

**Duane Hvorka, National Wildlife Federation**

Duane Hovorka is Senior Policy Specialist at the National Wildlife Federation and lobbyist working on the Farm Bill. He shared an update on what is included in the Farm Bill, where the Farm Bill is now, and what the prognosis is for the Bill.

Video Recording is on the Upper Mississippi River Region Inter-League Organization website.