



# Voter

## Inside

Calendar of Events..... pg 1  
 President’s Message ..... pg 2  
 December Board ..... pg 2  
 Worth Noting ..... pg 3  
 Unit Meeting Information... pg 4  
 LWVUS Highlight..... pg 5  
 LWVMN Highlights ..... pg 6  
 LWVMN Caucus Resolutions pg 8  
 Observer Reports.....pg 11  
 Hennepin Co. Election..... pg 12  
 Electronic Voting.....pg 13



## February Calendar

### Upcoming Events

**\* February 14 – 94<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of League of Women Voters**

**February 4, 2014 Precinct Caucuses**

**February 6, 2014 - 7 pm**

\* LWV SLP Board Meeting at Barb’s home

**February 12, 2014 – 12:30 pm**

\* Unit 2 Meeting

Topic: Pay Equity – Has This Issue Been Solved?

Location: ParkShore Senior Center

**February 15, 2014 – 10 am**

\* Legislative Interviews with District 46 legislators

### Upcoming Events

**March 6, 2014 7 pm**

\* LWV SLP Board Meeting location TBD

**March 12, 2014 – 12:30 pm**

\* Unit 2 Meeting

Topic: Katie Rodriguez Metropolitan Council

Location: ParkShore Senior Center Card Room

**March 20, 2014 – 7 pm**

\* Unit 3 Meeting

Topic: Katie Rodriguez Metropolitan Council

Location: City Hall Westwood Room

**March 22, 2014 – 9:30 am**

\* West Metro

Topic: LWVUS Study on Agriculture

Location: St. Louis Park City Hall Council Chambers

**February 14, 1920**  
 The League of Women Voters was officially founded as "a mighty experiment," at the "Victory Convention" of the National American Woman Suffrage Association in Chicago, Illinois. By then 33 states had ratified the suffrage amendment, but final victory was still three states away.

## President's Message February 2014

Winter, winter, winter. What a hot topic for the coldest month of the year. I hope you are not feeling cabin fever like I am. I am thankful the League keeps me busy doing good work – it is a wonderful and welcome distraction.

Sue Dosal is a new member and joined us for the Unit 3 Lively Issues discussion. We started the meeting with personal introductions. Sue brought great energy, and asked many great questions. Barb provided background on many of our League processes. I think we all learned a little about each other, the League and the League processes.

The LWV Minnesota encourages us to support online voter registration, disclosure of campaign finance, and the Impartial Justice Act. Supporting these important issues is crucial to ensuring Minnesota's processes continue to evolve with the issues. Please participate in the Action Alerts if you have the capacity.

Looking ahead, we have legislative interviews and chili lunch scheduled in February. I hope you will be able to join us.

The West Metro meeting on How a Law is made and rulemaking was enlightening. Here's the link to Judge Eric Lipman's talk about Rulemaking and Administrative Law in Minnesota recorded last Saturday. Additional comments by Lynn Gitelis of the League of Women Voters Golden Valley and Kim Kang of the League of Women Voters Wayzata/Plymouth. [http://youtu.be/POVT\\_yc-gBk](http://youtu.be/POVT_yc-gBk)

I had a conversation with Kim Kang after the presentation. She credits the League and participation with the Action Committee for her current career success. Wow. I would be interested to know how participation in the League has benefitted you.

*Deb Brinkman, President*

*LWV SLP*

### Highlights from the January 2014 LWV SLP Board Meeting:

\*We earned \$114 at the Barnes and Noble gift wrapping. We may try a different location next year.

\*We confirmed we had all the information we needed for the Lively Issues discussions at the Unit meetings.

\*We worked on a letter of recognition for Reg Dunlap in appreciation of his service for all the League events.

\*We signed up to bring items to the February Legislative Interviews Chili lunch. We talked about topics we would like to see them discuss: What will be done with the extra money, online voter registration, felon voting, are we moving to a primary state instead of caucus.

\*We also started talking about the Annual meeting. Our top choice for venue is McCoys. We also discussed which committees we will need. We would also like to increase our numbers at the meeting and may extend invitations to old League members.



## Worth Noting

### Minnesota Precinct Caucus Night is February 4

### See proposed LWV Resolutions on Page 7

To find your location, visit the Secretary of State's Precinct Caucus Location Finder at:

<http://caucusfinder.sos.state.mn.us/>

### Who can attend a caucus?

Precinct caucuses are open to the public. But in order to vote, offer resolutions, or become a delegate, you must:

- Be eligible to vote in the fall election.
- Live in the precinct.
- Be in general agreement with the principles of the political party.

### What happens at the caucus?

1. Elect precinct officers who work to organize political activities in the precinct. This could include maintaining contact lists, convening political meetings and helping with campaign efforts.
2. Discuss issues and ideas for the party to support. People may bring ideas, called resolutions, to be voted on. People usually bring a typed or handwritten copy of their resolution.
3. Vote for the person you want the party to support for governor or president. This is called the straw poll, which is an informal poll to learn how much support each candidate has. Candidates are officially chosen at future meetings, called conventions.
4. Elect delegates to represent your precinct at upcoming political conventions that are held during an election year. The first are the political party's county or district conventions. At these conventions, delegates endorse candidates to represent the county or district, and then choose a smaller number of delegates for the party's congressional and state conventions. These delegates will endorse candidates to represent the congressional district or statewide offices such as governor or U.S. Senator.

### Important Links

<http://www.lwvmn.org/page.aspx>

League of Women Voters Minnesota

<http://www.lwv.org/>

League of Women Voters United States

<http://www.lwvslp.org>

League of Women Voters St. Louis Park

*The best education that I ever received was at the "University of LWV."*

1. When you read this, what comes to mind?
2. How does this relate to your League experience?
3. How does this quote relate to the League's study process?
4. How could this be a "selling point" for potential new members?

### Children First Asset #13

#### Neighborhood Boundaries

Did you know 49% of St. Louis Park young people say their neighbors take responsibility for monitoring young people's behavior?

Neighborhood boundaries can be achieved by developing relationships with neighbors. When a young person needs to be told she/he is out of line, doing so respectfully will help maintain that relationship. Teens are more likely to obey rules, such as speed limits, when they see you doing the same. Praise young people when they do something right!

## February Unit Meetings

**Unit 2 February meeting**  
**February 12, 2013 – 12:30 pm**  
 Location: ParkShore Card Room  
 Topic: Pay Equity – Has This Issue  
 Been Solved?  
 Speaker: Patty Tanji

Patty Tanji is an award winning advocate focused on achieving equal pay for women in the workplace. She co-leads the Pay Equity Coalition that will be gearing up for the new session. Come hear what she has to say about this issue.

For over 10 years, Patty has co-lead the Pay Equity Coalition of Minnesota, an organization focused on ensuring strong gender pay equity laws in Minnesota and throughout the United States. And, as founder of How to Ask for a Pay Raise and Get It!, Patty focuses on coaching women through the negotiation process, ensuring they are confident when asking for the pay they deserve.

Because of her devotion and advocacy, Patty won the 2011 Century College Women of Distinction Award for her work on gender pay equity. In 2010, Patty and the Pay Equity Coalition of Minnesota were named Champion Coalition from the Minnesota Women's Consortium for outstanding work toward fair pay and economic justice.

**General Membership Meeting**  
**February 15, 2013 10:00 am**

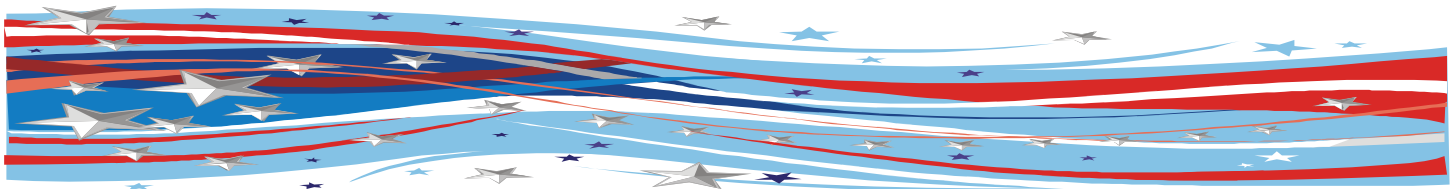
Location: Union Congregational Church  
 3700 Alabama Ave S, SLP  
 Topic: Interview with District 46 Legislators followed by the LWVSLP Annual Chili Lunch

All members are welcome to attend the annual discussion with our local legislators. We'll ask questions about the upcoming legislative session, their interests and legislative goals, and find out how their agenda fits with the policy positions of the LWV.

The interview starts at 10 followed by a potluck chili luncheon.

Members are encouraged to bring a guest.

For more information, contact Deb Brinkman, 612- 803- 6142  
[Deb.brinkman@gmail.com](mailto:Deb.brinkman@gmail.com)



## LWV United States

### LEAGUE COMMENDS ADMINISTRATION'S LATEST STEP AGAINST CLIMATE CHANGE

**Washington, DC** - The Obama Administration published a new proposal limiting the amount of carbon pollution for new power plants in the Federal Register. This is an important step in the fight against climate change.

"We are quite pleased that today the President has kept his commitment to confront the greatest challenge of our lifetime: climate change," said Elisabeth MacNamara, president of the League of Women Voters of the United States.

"Power plants are the largest emitter of life-threatening carbon pollution in our country. Reducing the amount of carbon pollution, which is the leading cause of climate change, is a life-saving measure that will protect our children, our nation and the world from the devastating effects of climate change," MacNamara said.

"The League has been proud to be a part of the push to garner support and collect comments to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in support of regulations to cut carbon pollution from power plants," added MacNamara. "Thousands of League members from around the country have already vocally expressed their support for this life saving proposal. These same League members will continue to lead the way by expressing their support for the finalization of this historic regulation that will reduce the deadly effects that carbon pollution has on the health of our children and our environment," MacNamara stated.

"Carbon pollution comes at a high cost to all of us, contributing to more frequent and deadly weather that results in billions of dollars of recovery for communities and the federal government each year," said MacNamara. "Today's announcement is another important step in the fight to beat back climate change."

"The League is proud to continue to stand in support of the President's plan to cut carbon pollution from new power plants and fulfill his commitment to people, not polluters," concluded MacNamara. "We look forward to continuing to work with him to implement this proposal, as well as a future proposal on existing coal fired power plants. Together, these regulations will create life-saving measures to protect our children, our nation and our world from the damaging effects of climate change."

## LWV Minnesota

### **Sulfide Mining in Minnesota's Arrowhead?** **Take Action to Protect Minnesota's Clean Water** **Comment on the "Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement"**

**Action:** Submit written comments to the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources about the Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement (SDEIS), stating that the SDEIS is inadequate.

**Comments are due March 13, 2014, by 4:30 p.m.**

Direct comments to: Lisa Fay, EIS Project Manager; MDNR Division of Ecological and Water Resources; Environmental Review Unit; 500 Lafayette Road, Box 25; St. Paul, MN 55155

Comments may also be e-mailed to the DNR at [NorthMetSDEIS.dnr@state.mn.us](mailto:NorthMetSDEIS.dnr@state.mn.us) All e-mails should include a full name and legal mailing address.

#### **Issue**

Minnesota's water is our crown jewel and Minnesota's water is in danger. A new type of mining is proposed for northeastern Minnesota which will be very different from our familiar iron mines. PolyMet Mining Corp. has proposed large open-pit mines on 67,000 acres of Superior National Forest. The new mines would extract copper, nickel and other metals from rock, but leave behind sulfide-bearing waste rock that could result in sulfuric acid mine drainage and will require treatment of polluted water for at least 500 years, according to the SDEIS.

LWV Minnesota's position on this proposal is that we do not oppose sulfide mining, *per se*, but it must be done without polluting our environment. The SDEIS is inadequate; it does not provide any reassurance that this mining will not result in irreparable harm to the watery environment in our Arrowhead.

**PolyMet issues** as noted in the SDEIS: The PolyMet SDEIS describes significant environmental issues associated with this proposed mine. The short list below is not intended to be definitive. For further information, see the [Mining Truth](#) website.

- The company proposes to excavate three enormous pits up to 696 feet deep and transport the ore by railcar to a dormant taconite processing plant eight miles away.
- Excavated material not desired (waste rock) would be stored next to the pits in large, 20-story high piles.
- Processing waste from the plant (tailings) would be added to an existing tailings basin that is currently leaking polluted water.
- The mine has a projected lifespan of 20 years; polluted water must be treated for 500 years.
- Leaking polluted water will flow into tributaries of the St. Louis River and finally into Lake Superior.
- Sulfate releases will exceed the state standard for wild rice and will likely eliminate wild rice in the St. Louis River and its tributaries.

For further information: [Friends of the Boundary Waters](#) [Sierra Club](#)



Educate. Advocate. Reform.™

### LWV Democracy Issues - 2014 Legislative Session

These are the democracy reform and protection issues LWV Minnesota will be working on in 2014:

- Voting: Online Voter Registration (support); Restoration of vote to felons living in the community (support); Protecting vouching for election day registration; expected proposal for electronic roster pilot project (monitor)
- Campaign Finance: Disclosure of "electioneering communications" (support)
- Impartial Justice Act: reform of the manner judges are selected (support)

*Action Alerts:* members may opt-in to receive action alerts from LWV Minnesota. Alerts are used primarily to ask members to contact their legislators by phone or email to support or oppose certain legislation. *Hearing from constituents is very important to legislators and helps move democracy reform forward.* If you would like to receive action alerts, email Sherri Knuth, [sknuth@lwvmn.org](mailto:sknuth@lwvmn.org)

### **Campaign Finance Reform: Working Together for Reform**

Many citizens are concerned about the impact of wealthy special interests on our elections but don't know what to do about it. LWV MEMBERS CAN HELP CHANGE THAT. You may:

- Write a letter to the editor urging campaign finance reform.
- Hold a local forum on campaign finance reform.
- Attend a forum at the Humphrey School of Public Affairs on Feb. 19, 2013.

In December 2013, LWV Minnesota published a [new report on campaign finance](#): The Tip of the Iceberg: How Minnesota's Campaign Finance Laws Limit Transparency. The report provides a framework for understanding campaign finance practices and highlights the need for improved disclosure as a necessary reform in our state. We also assess the impact of Citizens United. The four-year anniversary of that decision was January 21, 2014.

Humphrey Forum: **Wed., Feb. 19, 9 am – 12 pm.** "[Shining the Light on Money](#): Campaign Finance and the Need for More Disclosure." This forum will bring together key MN lawmakers from both parties and Trevor Potter - a national expert on campaign finance, former lawyer for the John McCain and George H.W. Bush presidential campaigns, and a Colbert Report regular. The event is free and open to the public but [pre-registration](#) is recommended.

## LWVMN Proposed 2014 Caucus Resolutions

(Editor's note: You are encouraged to submit one or more of the following resolutions at your Precinct Caucus on February 4)

### Campaign Finance: Disclosure of Electioneering Communications

Whereas, the United States Supreme Court decision in *Citizens United* opened the door to increased election spending independent of the candidates, resulting in the influx of millions of dollars into Minnesota campaigns;

Whereas, under Minnesota law, political action committees and other groups not associated with candidates need to disclose their spending on election advertisements only when certain "magic words" are used, such as "vote for" or "defeat" and need not disclose "electioneering communications" that do not use the magic words;

Whereas, the National Institute on Money in State Politics has given Minnesota's campaign finance laws an "F" because Minnesota does not require disclosure of electioneering communications;

Whereas, the federal government and 25 states require disclosure of electioneering communications, and the United States Supreme Court has approved of disclosure as a means of providing transparency for the electorate; and

Whereas, disclosure of electioneering communications is in the public interest and gives voters the information they need to cast an informed vote;

Therefore, be it resolved that the \_\_\_\_\_ Party supports requiring disclosure of electioneering communications.

### Judicial Selection

WHEREAS: Minnesotans are at risk of losing their courts to the tidal wave of special interest money and multi-million dollar races that are sweeping across the country, including neighboring states like Michigan, Illinois, and Wisconsin; and

WHEREAS: Minnesotans have little to no information about how our judges perform and no access to an objective review of their job; and

WHEREAS: 90% of our judges run unopposed. When judges run unopposed voters don't have a choice. Minnesotans, therefore, have lost the ability to hold judges accountable 100% of the time; and

WHEREAS: Judges should be chosen based on their qualifications – not partisan politics or their ability to fundraise; and

WHEREAS: The Impartial Justice Act will ensure no special interest can buy a seat on our courts by expanding the Minnesota tradition of merit selection to ALL judges; and

WHEREAS: The Impartial Justice Act will empower voters by giving them non-partisan information about the performance of judges through public performance evaluations; and

WHEREAS: The Impartial Justice Act will restore accountability through retention elections, ensuring Minnesota voters have a meaningful choice every single time they enter the ballot box; and



WHEREAS: In order for these critical reforms, put forth in the Impartial Justice Act, to be enacted, the Minnesota constitution must be amended; now therefore be it

RESOLVED: That we as a party support as a legislative priority, and if passed by the legislature endorse a yes vote on, the Impartial Justice Act.

### **Restore the Right to Vote**

Whereas, approximately 63,000 Minnesotans are denied the right to vote under Minnesota law due to a past felony conviction and 75% of those individuals are living in the community;

Whereas, since 1974, the percentage of voting age Minnesotans disenfranchised as a result of a criminal conviction has increased over 400%;

Whereas, as a result of disproportionate conviction rates, disenfranchisement overwhelmingly affects communities of color – African-Americans make up roughly 5% of the Minnesota population and represent over a quarter of the total number of those disenfranchised and American Indians, less than two percent of the population, account for more than 6% of those individuals who are disenfranchised;

Whereas, involvement in civic life logically results in stronger ties to the community, and research has shown that person with past criminal convictions are less likely to be arrested again in states that restore voting rights after release from incarceration;

Whereas, a policy that permits all individuals who have served their time in jail or prison to vote reduces confusion among voters and election officials about who can vote, thereby easing election administration and reducing government costs; and

Whereas, 13 states already disenfranchise only those persons who are currently incarcerated for a felony conviction, not those on probation or parole.

Therefore, be it resolved that the \_\_\_\_\_ Party supports restoring voting rights to Minnesotans convicted of a felony while they are on probation or parole.

### **Sulfide (copper/nickel) Mining Resolution**

WHEREAS: The proposed sulfide-ore mining in our Arrowhead is predicted to result in polluted run-off from mine pits and mine wastes for at least 500 years, if not forever;

WHEREAS: Sulfide-ore mining has never been done in a water-rich environment without polluting surface and/or groundwater;

WHEREAS: Sulfide-ore mining is significantly different from taconite mining in its waste products, as sulfides mixed with oxygen and water produces sulfuric acid.

WHEREAS: Sulfide-ore mining has created taxpayer liabilities across the country when mining companies go bankrupt, leaving massive pollution behind; and

WHEREAS: The Supplemental Draft Environment Impact Statement, dated Dec. 13, 2013, is inadequate and includes statements admitting long-term pollution in violation of the Clean Water Act;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the \_\_\_\_\_ party finds that sulfide-ore mining has unacceptable environmental impacts and should not be allowed in the sulfide-bearing Duluth Complex from the Boundary Waters to beyond Lake Superior.

**Transit Resolution #1**

WHEREAS: Minnesota's current transportation system adversely affects our economic competitiveness and quality of life.

WHEREAS: Minnesota's population and job growth is outpacing our current infrastructure, making it harder to move people, goods and services to their next destination.

WHEREAS: By 2020, Minnesota is expected to add more than 350,000 new jobs and by 2030, the population of Minnesota is expected to grow by nearly 1 million.

WHEREAS: We must plan now for this expected growth to create job and efficiently move commerce and people.

WHEREAS: Export of manufactured goods, services, and agricultural commodities account for more than \$31 billion in annual revenue and tens of thousands of jobs statewide.

WHEREAS: Businesses need a reliable, efficient transportation and expanding exports and trade with other countries requires updating our infrastructure.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the \_\_\_\_\_ party believes it is essential for the Minnesota Legislature to pass a comprehensive transportation funding package in 2014 that will generate new economic development opportunities throughout the state, help Minnesota retain and attract a talented workforce, create immediate jobs, and keep Minnesota economically competitive.

**Transit Resolution #2**

WHEREAS: Minnesota's current transportation system adversely affects our economic competitiveness and quality of life.

WHEREAS: Transportation is one of the greatest costs in household budgets – more than education and health care-- and not all Minnesotans have the opportunity to succeed.

WHEREAS: Minnesota's population and job growth is outpacing our current infrastructure and we must plan now for this expected growth.

WHEREAS: Nearly half of Minnesota's roads and bridges are in poor condition and are over 50 years old, making it harder to move people, goods and services to their next destination.

WHEREAS: Only 10% of jobs in the metro are easy to get to by transit and transit service is very limited in communities across the state.

WHEREAS: Bike and pedestrian routes provide healthy, affordable options for getting around, including for kids getting to school.

WHEREAS: Minnesota's aging population and persons with disabilities need adequate transit service throughout the state so people can live independently.

WHEREAS: We need transportation investments to put people to work, expand our economy, and attract new businesses to our region.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the \_\_\_\_\_ party believes it is essential for the Minnesota Legislature to pass a comprehensive transportation funding package in 2014 that will generate new economic development opportunities throughout the state, help Minnesota retain and attract a talented workforce, create immediate jobs, and keep Minnesota economically competitive.

# Observer Reports

## **City Council January 6, 2014 Aggie Leitheiser, Observer**

Meeting was called to order at 7:30. All members present. Judge Allen Oleisky performed the swearing-in ceremony for:

Councilmember Ward 1 - Sue Sanger    Councilmember Ward 3 - Gregg Lindberg  
Councilmember Ward 2 - Anne Mavity      Councilmember Ward 4 - Tim Brausen

Study Session Minutes of December 9, 2013 and City Council Meeting Minutes December 16, 2013 were approved. Consent items were approved with the exception of 4c, which was discussed as a resolution. Commissioners who were interested in continuing were re-appointed as City representatives to their respective commissions.

Susan Sanger was appointed to the Office of Mayor Pro Tem.

A minor amendment to the approved Planned Unit Development to allow construction to begin at 7am Monday through Friday, instead of the approved start time of 8am. Meeting adjourned at 7:50.

At the Economic Development Authority meeting immediately following positions were filled: Anne Mavity as President, Steve Hallfin as Vice-President, and Jake Spano as Treasurer to the Economic Development Authority for the 2014 term.

## **School Board January 27, 2014 Deb Brinkman, Observer**

Observer, Deb Brinkman

The meeting started at 7:05 pm with recognition for Larry Shapiro. He served on the school board for 8 years. He graduated from SLP, his three kids graduated from SLP. With a financial background, his special gift is the ability to translate financial matters to any audience.

The Board meeting was called to order at 7:10 pm. All members present with Joe Tatalovich absent. The agenda was approved, 6 aye, 0 nay. During Open Forum, the spokespersons for the teachers spoke regarding their concern about working for many months without a contract. With enrollment and revenues up, they hoped contract negotiations would be over months ago. There were many in the audience with orange t-shirts supporting the discussion.

Rob Metz spoke for the Superintendent's report regarding the cold. They will have 2 days to make up. Feedback he has received indicates that parents appreciate 24 hours' notice. The risk is that this notice is dependent upon forecasts. This summer they will be working on a school closing policy.

Discussion Items

School Board Listening Sessions are scheduled for February 3, one in March, one in April. If you have a concern, please come to one of the Listening Sessions.

All Day Kindergarten information has been sent to all potential kindergarten parents. The information sent includes options for full day and half day.

World’s Best Workforce is a new initiative originating from the Minnesota Department of Education. This mandate requires state accountability for College or career readiness, school readiness, the education gap, and all kids graduation. The budget will also be aligned. Rob Metz presented this new initiative as an umbrella to encompass all we do. This mandate will ultimately drive the strategic plan, which is in year 5 of 5. The plan will begin October 2014.

The Peter Hobart addition is on schedule to be complete the first week of February. There were pictures presented to show the progress. There have been a few days affected by the frigid weather.

The Budget Amendment presented \$1.4 million in additional revenue, largely due to increased enrollment. Utility expenses are up, but other expenses are lower than forecast.

The bond sale indicates favorable results. Taxpayers will be saving \$800,000 due to positive bond rating factors. Any negative factors are out of the district’s control. We have a current rating of AA2, which is very high.

The Consent Agenda was approved

The Action Agenda included the approval of the budget amendments, which was approved 6-0, and the approval of the sale of the School building for \$14.9 million.

Communication included a notice of Middle School Math team winning season, reminder of the February 3 listening session, recognition for Ann Thomas who recently passed away. Ann started SLP Day One. The meeting closed with a poem written by a student.

The meeting adjourned at 8:17 pm.

\*\*\*\*\*

***Hennepin County Commissioner Special Election***

*Primary April 29      General Election May 13*

*Candidates:*

Marion Greene [www.mariongreene.org](http://www.mariongreene.org)      Katie Hatt [www.katiehatt.org](http://www.katiehatt.org)

Ken Kelash [www.kenkelash.com](http://www.kenkelash.com)      Anne Mavity [www.AnneMavity.org](http://www.AnneMavity.org)

Ben Schweigert [www.benforhennepin.org](http://www.benforhennepin.org)

### Electronic voter registration proffered

*Published 1/28/2014 (From the Minnesota House of Representatives Public Information Service)*

Regardless of the outcome of a pending lawsuit, it could still take just a few mouse clicks to be registered to vote. Sponsored by Rep. Steve Simon (DFL-Hopkins), [HF2096](#) would allow someone to register to vote and/or request to receive a federal, state or county election absentee ballot online, using a website maintained by the Office of the Secretary of State.

The House Elections Committee, which Simon chairs, held an informational hearing on the bill Tuesday but took no action. There is no Senate companion.

"It really is time in Minnesota to harness technology ... and to make voting and registering to vote more accessible for everyday people," Simon said, adding that 19 states have online voter registration — 13 where it is fully implemented and six where it is on the way.

"In an era where we all transact so much business online from buying gifts to booking airline flights, government should seek to add the same convenience, and we already do," he said. "You can buy stamps online, you can apply or re-apply for your license tabs online and now I think we should do the same for voting."

Believing his office had the authority to do so, Secretary of State Mark Ritchie implemented an online voter registration system last fall, but two advocacy groups and four Republican legislators sued the office to stop the online registrations. They contend Ritchie exceeded his legal power by setting up the system without legislative authorization. The case is pending in Ramsey County District Court. Deputy Secretary of State Beth Fraser said about 2,600 Minnesotans have already registered online. Fraser also said that in Arizona it costs about 83 cents to process a paper registration versus 3 cents for an online application.

#### **Convenience for the voter**

In addition to the monetary savings, supporters spoke of voter convenience, encouraging more people to register ahead of time rather than on Election Day at their polling place and the expected reduction in human error when elections personnel enter information of a voter registration card.

"Counties have been asking for this for a number of years," said Randy Schreifels, Stearns County auditor/treasurer. "Counties have been doing a lot more business online, and it's gotten to the point where this is a thing of why aren't we doing this?"

A person using the website would need to provide an email address, driver's license or state identification number or the last four digits of their Social Security number to use the website. People would not be permitted to submit an application on behalf of another individual.

While not saying if they opposed the legislation, some Republicans wanted assurances that voter information would be safe from cyber threats, unlike the recent breaches at Target, Nieman Marcus and Michael's.

"I think everybody wants to increase access or decrease barriers to voting for people, but we want to make sure that we protect the integrity of our voting system," said House Minority Leader Kurt Daudt (R-Crown). "If we don't do that then everybody's vote is worth less."

State Elections Director Gary Poser said the secretary of state's office has securely maintained voter registration data by deploying intrusion prevention systems, among other protections. "Online registration does not change our mission of securely storing voter registration data."

Schreifels noted that with online registration the sensitive voter information filled out on paper registration cards done by get-out-the-vote and other groups would not be at risk for falling into the wrong hands before the cards are turned over to elections officials. "In some ways you are increasing security there," he said. - *Mike Cook*



**LWV SLP OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS FOR 2013-14**

**OFFICERS:**

President: Deb Brinkman  
 Vice President: Judith Cook  
 Secretary: Vacant  
 Treasurer/W. Metro: Barb Person  
 Observer: Dorothy Karlson

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS:**

Voter Service: Eilseen Knisley  
 Voter Service: Carlota Medus  
 Membership: Judy Cook  
 CMAL: Debbie Blake  
 Voter Editor: Aggie Leitheiser

**YES! I WOULD LIKE TO JOIN THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF ST. LOUIS PARK**

Name (Family Member #1): \_\_\_\_\_

Name (Family Member #2): \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

**Membership Dues** (Dues and subscriptions are not tax deductible.)

- First Year Introduction Special \$25.00**
- Voter Subscription Only \$10.00
- Single Active Attending Member \$45.00
- Supporting/Member-at-Large \$50.00
- Family Membership (household) \$70.00
- Add me to The Voter eMail Distribution List (free)

**Make checks payable to LWV SLP**

**Send your check and this form to:**  
 Judy Cook  
 4010 Highwood Road  
 St. Louis Park, MN 55416  
[Jcook422@comcast.net](mailto:Jcook422@comcast.net)  
 (952-928-9846)



Deb Brinkman, President  
 (612) 803-6142  
[deb.brinkman@gmail.com](mailto:deb.brinkman@gmail.com)

Judy Cook, Membership  
 (952) 928-9846  
[Jcook42@comcast.net](mailto:Jcook42@comcast.net)

Aggie Leitheiser, Editor  
 (952) 938-6255  
 7614 Edgebrook Drive  
 St. Louis Park, MN 55426  
[aggieleit@comcast.net](mailto:aggieleit@comcast.net)

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED