

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS

February 20, 1969

The meeting was held at the home of Mrs. John Weiman, 132 S. Delmar, with Mrs. Merlin Barber presiding.

PRESENT: Mesdames Barber, Schade, Johnson, Dippler, Protzman, Weiman, Dakin, Miller, Dumas, Weikert, Beck and Mrs. Mee.

ABSENT: Mesdames Westenhaver, Crow, Butler, Homan.

MINUTES: Approved as corrected. Under the school study report on the first page, the words "committee on community integration" should be transposed to read "Community Commission on integration." Approved as corrected.

TREASURER'S REPORT: Cash on hand, 2-1-69, \$105.30. receipts, \$249.50. expenditures, \$71.21. Cash on hand, 2-20-69, \$263.59.

Mrs. Johnson would like to know of any bills or income of any size to be included in her annual report.

She also explained that the present mutual home and savings account will be closed out, with the money put in the William checking account. A new account will be opened at mutual home and savings for the 50th Anniversary Finance Drive money only.

WATER RESOURCES: Mrs. Protzman recommended several publications to be read for further information on water resources.

FINANCE: Mrs. Mee announced that membership contributions to the anniversary Fund Drive started coming in faster after Board members began follow-up calls to the explanatory letter sent previously to the membership.

ANNOUNCEMENTS: 1) Mrs. Barber read a letter from Convention chairman Mrs. Robert M. Biers asking for volunteers to work during the State convention. Fees would be paid for those volunteering. 2) A letter from State was read informing us that LAV will not support any constitutional amendments this session of the general assembly because of the upcoming Constitutional Convention. 3) Mrs. Barber passed around a letter to the Decatur Tribune written by Mrs. Westenhaver protesting that paper's interpretation of a League statement supporting the Decatur board of education. 4) Mrs. Barber explained that she was not allowed time to read a League statement to the Decatur City Council concerning equality of opportunity for education, employment and housing. The statement had been contributed to Board members. She will read it at next week's meeting during the 15 minute period allotted to citizen participation. 5) The outgoing board is invited to a Sherry at the home of Janet Westenhaver March 18, from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.

LOCAL PROGRAM: Mrs. Dippler read the proposed local program for 1969-70. It is attached to these minutes. Mrs. Janet Beck moved we accept the Local Program as proposed. Seconded and passed.

FOREIGN POLICY: Mrs. Miller announced that the Foreign Policy report meetings will be held March 25 and 26. They will focus on the U.S., China and Asia. Discussion highlights will include mainland China's foreign policy goals, China's relations with her neighbors, Communism vs. Democracy in Asia, and the role of the U.S. in Asia.

BUDGET: Mrs. Mann presented the proposed budget for 1969-70, giving each board member a copy. Mrs. Mann moved that we accept the proposed budget with an amendment under section 2: the addition of a sentence reading, "After our fiscal obligations have been met, and if it is possible, we will send an additional gift to the State League." Seconded and passed.

NOMINATING COMMITTEE: Mrs. Dumas read the following nominating Committee report for Chairman Elise Hurst:

Report of the 1969 Nominating Committee

We are very happy to present the following slate of officers and directors for vote of the membership at the annual meeting. We feel very fortunate to have these enthusiastic and dedicated members accept these nominations. We were most grateful and inspired by the response we received as we carried out our assignment.

President (1969-71)	Mrs. Robert G. Schade	
First Vice President (1969-71)	Mrs. Edward Beck	(*indicates the
Second Vice President (1968-70)	Mrs. David B. Mann*	second year of
Third Vice President (1968-1970)	Mrs. William H. Neilman*	a two year term)
Secretary (1969-71)	Mrs. J. William Oberly	
Director (1969-71)	Mrs. Robert J. Bowers	
Director (1969-71)	Mrs. H. W. Dakin	
Director (1969-71)	Mrs. Robert A. Ohlsen	
Director (1968-70)	Mrs. Frank Verbanec*	

Nominating Committee Chairman for 1970	Mrs. Robert M. Butler
Nominating Committee member	Mrs. Charles E. Hippler
Nominating Committee member	Mrs. Austin H. Young

Respectfully submitted,

Mrs. Thomas L. Hurst, Chairman
 Mrs. Gordon L. Axon
 Mrs. Robert M. Butler
 Mrs. Robert H. Dumas
 Mrs. Daniel M. Moore, Jr.

FINANCE: Mrs. Kee announced that the letter to non-member contributors to the Finance Drive will be sent February 26. Those helping with that portion of the Drive can pick up their cards at the home of Mrs. William Johnson, 444 Hackberry Drive Monday, March 10 at 10 a.m.

Next meeting: A combined meeting of the ^{coming} ~~incoming~~ and outgoing boards at the home of Mrs. Merlin Barber, 954 W. William at 12:45 March 31.

adjournment, 5:45 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,
 May Jane Hippler

STATE CONSENSUS QUESTIONS ON SCHOOLS

The purpose of the League study is to examine structure and financing of the Illinois public school system, to see what changes may be needed to ensure equal opportunity for all children in Illinois to obtain quality education.

1. Do you think the present structure and financing of schools in Illinois provides equal opportunity for a quality education for all children?

No.

2. Do you regard the present structure* of elementary and secondary education at the state, county and local levels as satisfactory? If not, please specify the changes you would recommend.

*Structure includes state, county, and local supervision and administration, as well as unit and dual districts, local school boards, etc.

No.

It was felt that the supervision and administration would be improved by the creation of a State Board of Education, appointed by the Governor or elected on a non-partisan basis.

Qualifications should be specified for candidates for the office of State Superintendent of Schools, and such office filled by appointment by the Governor with approval of the State Board of Education, or appointment by the State Board.

Local School board elections should take place every other year in the fall of the year. Minority opinion felt the new board should take office in January after the fall election.

Patronage prerogatives should be eliminated from the administration of the state school system.

Consensus was reached to establish regional districts.

One of the three units discussed and recommended that the county school boards of trustees and the county superintendents be eliminated. Instead there would be a regional superintendent appointed by the State Board of Education. The local districts would remain under local control and these districts would be represented on a regional council.

Two of the three units discussed and recommended mandatory establishment of Junior Colleges to meet quality levels with more state aid. At one of the two units there was a minority opinion that opposed the mandatory establishment of Junior Colleges.

3. Should there be changes in the present districting of local districts? If so, please be specific. (Consider factors such as broader geographical areas, density or sparsity of population, industrial enclaves, tax havens, consolidation of present districts, etc.)

Yes.

What state action should be recommended to implement your suggestions?

A master plan for reorganization be developed by the recommended appointed State Superintendent. Such a plan would be approved by the recommended State Board of Education. After public hearings the plan would then be implemented by the office of State Superintendent of Public Instruction.

redistricting is desirable in order to enable schools in sparsely populated areas to improve the scope and quality of education offered to their students.

State action would require constitutional change for method of selecting State Superintendent of Public Instruction and bonding limitations. Present laws on school district formation would have to be changed to create a Master Plan. Constitutional change is necessary in the revenue article.

4. Do you regard the present financing of schools as satisfactory? If not, what are your recommendations?

No.

Recommendations: more state aid should be available to the schools. The revenue needed for increased aid should be raised by a more equitable source and distribution of the tax burden. One unit discussed and felt that a tax referendum should not be necessary when it is clear that a district needs money.

a) Would you support a plan that would equalize financial resources throughout the state or areas of the state?

It was felt that equalization was not really possible.

b) Other?

The foundation level should be raised. Beyond that, it was felt that the criterion for further aid should be improving the quality of the educational program offered.

In place of the separate funds, an operational fund and a capital outlay fund for new buildings and major repairs for bringing up to safety code be established. State aid should be given to both funds.

5. Should there be special consideration given to solve special problems?

Yes.

a) To inner city schools, (e.g. East St. Louis, Chicago, etc.) and to areas with disadvantaged children?

The chief difficulty discussed was in finding and keeping adequate teachers for inner city schools. Suggestions to attract teachers to such areas included the following: incentive pay, better working conditions, smaller classes, more and better materials, persons to assist as teacher's aides, and improved school buildings. Decentralization of school administration was mentioned as was the value of parental training especially to reinforce the teaching of young children. It was suggested that this parental training might be coordinated with other existing programs in the city.

b) To desegregation of schools? Explain your answer with specific recommendations.

There was some discussion of desegregation versus integration, and a belief that a sudden shift to a completely new program of integration might cause some disorientation. In general terms, we felt that specific programs to accomplish racial and socio-economic integration with the ideal of giving each child an education of equal value, with the proper balancing of innovation and sound and proved methods.

c) Other special problems?

We could reach no consensus on non-public schools. Some felt that if state aid were given such schools, teachers should be certified as are public school teachers. Others felt that this would force these schools out of business with no assurance of increased money to take care of the large influx of such non-public students into the public schools.

Rural school districts present a special problem. When consolidation is not possible because an area is too big and too sparsely settled, the state should allow extra funds to improve such schools.

d) Do you recommend extra state funds, if needed, to meet special problems?

Extra state funds should compensate districts when the state insists on increased programs, such as those for special education, or for safety.