



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF FALMOUTH

P. O. Box 450, Falmouth, MA 02541

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email: league@lwvf.org

Bulletin – October 2011

Member Events Calendar

October 2011

- 20 7:30 pm Environmental Updates (Dinner at Peking Palace at 6:00 p.m.)
- 24 7:30 p.m. Board Meeting (Board Room, Falmouth Hospital)
- 27 10:00 a.m. Wastewater Plant Tour, West Falmouth Plant

November 2011

- 17 7:30 pm Meeting: LWVUS National Education Study
(Dinner at Peking Palace at 6:00 p.m.)
- 22 7:30 pm Board Meeting at Falmouth Hospital (Board Room)

LWVF BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2011-2012

STEERING COMMITTEE

First Vice-President	Betsy Fontes
Second Vice-President	Barbara Kanellopoulos
Secretary	Sylvia Szulkin
Voter Service	Alice Carey
Development	Kathy Mortenson



Treasurer	Joanne Voorhis	Natural Resources	Pam Polloni
Bulletin/Web	Joan Boyer	Observer Corps	Deborah Siegal
Legislative	Meg Borden	Outreach	Landi Landrau
Local Study	Doris Epstein	Publicity	Marcia Easterling
Membership	Maureen Sullivan		

If you wish to join the League, membership dues are \$50.00 for an individual membership and \$25.00 for an additional household member.

Send your check made out to *LWV of Falmouth* to the address shown above.

Please include your name, address and phone number.

You do not have to be a resident of Falmouth to join

STEERING COMMITTEE REPORT

Kathy Mortenson

The Steering Committee meets once a month to organize and plan. Betsy Fontes, Sylvia Szulkin, Barbara Kanellopoulos, Alice Carey and I are passionate about the League and making democracy work. We are a social worker, a lawyer, a writer, a teacher and a librarian by profession and we are very busy people who manage to find time in our schedules to meet. We enjoy working together and we are always amazed that we never knew each other before taking a League Board position.

Joan Boyer left the Steering Committee this summer but she will remain very active on the Board as the Bulletin editor and our League's web page coordinator. Joan was elected the Treasurer of the LWV of Massachusetts at the state meeting in May. We are so proud that one of our own League members is a leader in the LWVMA. Dedicated leaders like Joan will make the LWVMA a much stronger and more efficient organization.

The League Board meets once a month on the 4th Tuesday at 7:30pm at the Falmouth Hospital Board room. We are grateful that access to the Hospital is so easy and the Hospital is always open. There are usually about 12 of us at Board meetings. The Board is a lively, thoughtful and dedicated group of women. Board members plan meetings, lead studies and encourage informed and active participation in government.

Our local study group working on "The Effectiveness of Local Government" is currently focusing on strengthening Falmouth precincts and also on doing an overview of the Falmouth Town Charter and then reporting their findings to the recently organized Charter Review Committee.

On Thursday, October 20th at 7:30pm at the Town Hall Civil Defense Room Pam Polloni, Natural Resources chair, has organized an informative natural resources meeting. League members will present updates on pressing environmental issues in Falmouth. Ruth Brazier and Ginny Gregg will talk about solid waste and recycling; Pam Polloni will share her vast knowledge of invasive plants. She will explain what is an invasive plant and why we should be concerned about invasives. Invasive plants can cause economic and environmental harm. There will be plant specimens for viewing. We will have the latest status of *An Act Updating the Bottle Bill* still in Committee. Join other Leaguers at Peking Palace before the meeting.

About 17 years ago the League and the Falmouth DPW sponsored tours of the Wastewater Treatment plant. It was a memorable experience for me and I learned a great deal about wastewater. On Thursday, October 27th from 10am to noon Jerry Potamis, Falmouth's Wastewater Superintendent and Charlie Pires, chief operator and staff will offer tours to League members and friends of Falmouth's main Wastewater Treatment plant. I hope to see you there.



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OCTOBER MEETING: NATURAL RESOURCES

Pamela Polloni

Natural Resources meeting of the League of Women Voters of Falmouth, 20 October 2011
The October 2011 monthly meeting of the Falmouth LWV will be held at 7:30 in the Civil Defense Room at Town Hall. Natural Resource protection and wise management (conservation) will be the topic. League members and guests with special expertise in aspects of natural resource protection will present information for the membership and the general public pertaining especially to Falmouth's land and

water resource protection and wildlife habitat restoration, waste management, and energy conservation. This year, the International Year of the Forest, is an especially appropriate time for learning the value of Falmouth's woodlands. We'll celebrate the recent achievements of open space protection and consider the potential for stewardship of Falmouth's conservation lands.

Members interested in participating are invited to contact Pam Polloni.

SEPTEMBER MEETING REPORT

Barbara Kanellopoulos

About thirty people were on hand for Brian Currie's talk on Smart Growth. Our Town Planner began by suggesting, in deference to our not unintelligent forebears, a name change for the concept: *Smarter Growth*. He listed some of its main principles – mixed-use neighborhoods, compact building design, walkable communities with a sense of place, redevelopment, open space - and cited examples of projects in Falmouth that reflect those principles. He fielded sharp questions from the audience about sidewalks, traffic on Main Street, transportation, climate change, population growth, and other

concerns. He discussed the many conflicting needs inherent in these issues and said that it may be more useful to think of the inevitability of change instead of focusing on growth. Finding a solution to certain intractable problems can be likened, he suggested, to turning a battleship: a measured pace not only to move in the right direction but also to change course when in the wrong direction. It seems to me that Brian Currie's metaphor is a take-home reminder of the work of the League. Isn't turning around battleships what we do?

OBSERVER CORPS REPORT

Deborah Siegal, Chairman

As a new season begins, it seems like an appropriate time to give you an update on the Observer Corps and to acknowledge and thank the observers for their time and dedication. Current observers are:

Conservation Commission	Maureen Sullivan
Finance Committee	Jacqueline Webster
Board of Health	Stephanie Miele
Planning Board	Barbara Kanellopoulos
Board of Selectmen	Kathleen Murray
Zoning Board of Appeals	Yolanda Landrau

An Observer Corps is something that is encouraged for all Leagues, and up until now we've always had a particularly active one. Observers attend meetings of a Town board or committee and are primarily concerned with three questions:

- Is the Board functioning in accordance with their charge from the Town?
- Are the meetings conducted in a respectful and efficient manner?
- Is the Board adhering to the Open Meeting Law of the State of Massachusetts?

Observers listen but never participate in board business. Year-end reports to the League may result in action or study, or have an otherwise positive impact on the Town. Although the presence of an attentive, warm body is the most effective technique, no-one is expected to attend every meeting.

We have far too many openings and would be very happy to see observers on the following boards:

Affordable Housing
Agricultural Commission
Board of Health
Historical Commission
Human Services
School Committee

This is a great way to learn more about our Town and to contribute to government transparency. If you are curious about becoming an Observer, please call or email me.

LWVF FRIENDS FOR 2011-2012

Dorothy and Duncan Aspinwall
Frank Egloff
Sally Fritz
Avery Funkhouser
Christina Jacobi
Winnie and Bill Mackey
Polly Montgomery
Dorothy Ryder
Robert Schneider
Deborah G. Senft
Andrew Szent-Gyorgyi
John and Freddy Valois
Helen Wilson

OBSERVER CORPS REPORT CONSERVATION COMMISSION 2010 – 2011 Maureen Sullivan

Conservation Commissioners are Chairman Courtney Bird, Vice-Chairman Elizabeth Gadfelter, Members Edward Schmitt, Ted Dierker, Tom Corriveau, Michelle West, Mary Schumacher. Alternates are: Maureen Harlow-Hawkes, Arthur Aldrich 111

The mission of the Falmouth Conservation Commission is to implement both the Massachusetts Wetlands Protections Act and the Falmouth Wetlands Bylaw. The Commission protects and conserves the natural communities that are dependent upon the wetland resources of the Town of Falmouth. This is accomplished by regulating any activities within its jurisdiction that have an effect upon these resource areas. Additionally, the Commission manages all Town conservation lands.

The Commission is supported in its goals by the Town Conservation Department, which also provides guidance to those applying for permits from the Conservation Commission. Town of Falmouth Conservation Department Staff are: Conservation Commission Administrator Jennifer L. McKay, Conservation Commission Agent Mark Kasprzyk, Administrative Assistant Tariesa Reine and Official Recording Secretary Susan Cronin.

The Commission holds meetings regularly on Wednesday evening in the Selectman's Meeting Room on the first floor of Town Hall. The meeting start at 7 p.m. and this year usually last 2-3 hr.. At each meeting, a written agenda is provided and followed and written minutes are taken. The meetings are recorded live-on Falmouth Community Television.

All requests for hearings are advertised in the Falmouth Enterprise five calendar days prior to the hearing date. Hearings include: determination of applicability; notice of intent for alter, or enforcement for unauthorized alteration, of wetland resources. After the Commission decides on a request, it then votes on orders of conditions (developed by Staff) that must be fulfilled by the applicant in order to carry out the proposed work. The order of conditions is issued within 21 days of closing of a hearing. If the request is denied, reasons for denial are issued.

Each Commissioner spends many volunteer hours of preparatory reading of request applications and of visiting sites for which a hearing has been requested.

As well, the Commissioners take the initiative on the updating of documentation on regulations and information for the public. This year on December 8, 2010 a revision on Coastal Banks was voted. Later on a small revision to Resource Area Buffers were voted on February 2, 2011. Both these actions were posted on the web site.

The Conservation Commission acted upon 522 permits and requests in fiscal 2010. It has held 35 public hearings and 6 public meetings. Of the 91 Notice of Intent applications processed, six projects were issued a denial for failure to meet the Wetland Protection Act regulation and /or the Falmouth Wetland Regulation.

In addition to their regulatory duties several Commissioners participate on other Town boards as liaisons for the Conservation Commission. Elizabeth Gladfelter is a member of the Coastal Ponds Management Committee whose mission is to evaluate each coastal pond in Falmouth and develop management plans that balance preservation of these ponds with public use. Edward Schmitt is the appointed liaison to the Community Preservation Committee, which reviews applications for the preservation of open space, affordable housing, historic preservation, and recreational opportunities.

All the members are now more experienced in the regulations being enforced. They continue to respect each other's views and discussions are generally relevant and decision -making is done effectively. A quorum is almost always present with no unexpected absences. Twice the board was not in compliance with the new open meeting law, which is not likely to happen again. The role of the Conservation Staff continues to be strong and that helps in the efficiency of the Commission.

The Commission is handling minutes on a more routine basis at this time. In addition the public hearing notices are reliably posted on the web site. We are pleased to see this attention to an important citizen communication method.

Action Alert - Casino Gambling – H 3697 (now H3702)

To all LWVMA Members, it's not too late to contact your Reps and Senators but time is running out.

Also see Boston Globe Editorial of Sept 8, "[Casino bill is deeply flawed; rank and file should kill it.](#)"

In the very near future the Massachusetts Legislature will be considering a new bill which would, if passed allow Class three gambling, casinos and slot parlors, in Massachusetts. This bill is very similar to one that was narrowly rejected a year ago and differs only in that it will also allow for a slot parlor at a race track and it reserves one of the three casino licenses for a recognized Native American tribe.

While the bill does attempt to address some of the many issues which have been raised in connection with casinos, it remains a highly questionable enterprise. Existing casinos in nearby states are losing money and laying off workers. We have no reliable data as to how many casinos the population can support and there is a real possibility that they will be overbuilt.

While the state undoubtedly stands to make money from the large licensing fees which are required in the bill, the amount of ongoing revenue should the casinos be built is very questionable.. The League has long called for an independent analysis of the costs and benefits of casinos but that has not been done and it is unlikely that it will be. It is true that casinos, if they are built, will supply many much needed jobs and that those jobs cannot all be sent overseas. Massachusetts certainly has

many people who are seeking work but are the workforces near where the casinos are likely to be built?

There are two federally recognized Native American tribes in Massachusetts and more who might seek recognition. As sovereign nations a tribe may do anything on its own land that is legal in the rest of state. At the moment tribes are restricted by a recent Supreme Court decision as to the amount of land that they can claim as tribal unless it was already under their control but that may change. If only one tribe has a license, it does not mean that other tribes might eventually be able to open casinos without needing to make any arrangements with the state.

The social problems of addictive gambling also remain and while the bill attempts to set aside funds for dealing with them that again depends on having enough money to do so. The ethical question of whether the state should seek to sponsor a business which has proved to be harmful to many people and which shows no sign of offsetting benefits remains.


While acknowledging that this bill does contain some improvements over previous ones, the League continues to oppose it. We urge members to contact their reps and senators. It is not yet too late to turn the tide.



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MEMBERSHIP NEWS

Maureen Sullivan

The 2011 - 2012 League Membership directories (salmon cover) were mailed out last week to all members. Please discard all old directories that you may still have and just keep this salmon directory. This directory has the most current mailing addresses and emails addresses for all our

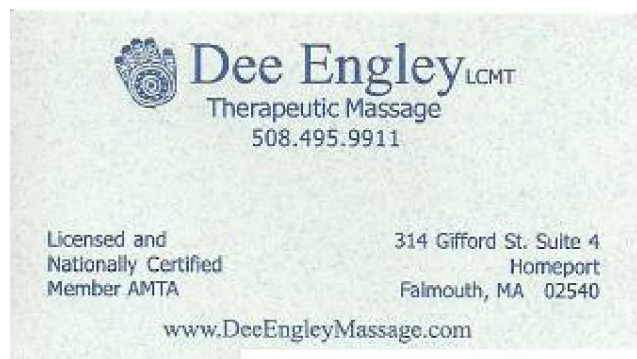
members. If you have not received the new salmon directory, please call Maureen Sullivan at 508-457-4913 or email me at membership@lwvf.org. I am happy to report that the League of Women Voters of Falmouth has 88 members.


THANK YOU

Kathy Mortenson

The Board would like to thank Judy Fenwick and Joan Boyer for their expert publishing talents. Judy Fenwick proofed, edited and formatted the new League Membership directory. Joan Boyer edited the State and National Positions sections.

The Board would like to thank Howie and his wife at Falmouth Printing for always printing the League Bulletins and the Membership directory in a timely manner.



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