



Lighthouse

A PUBLICATION OF THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF HILTON HEAD ISLAND/ BLUFFTON AREA

April 13 Membership Meeting

The April membership meeting has changed time, location, and focus. It will be held at 9:45 AM (note the earlier time) at the HH PSD Community Room, 21 Oak Park Dr., Hilton Head Island.

Topic: Education matters in South Carolina, including the legislative response to the S.C. Supreme Court's decision in "Abbeville, et al v. the State of South Carolina" to mandate that the legislature must take steps to ensure that children in poor school districts receive a minimally adequate education.

Speaker: Jane Pulling, LWVSC Director, Education

Note: The April 13 meeting replaces the April 6 evening meeting at the New River Palmetto Electric Community Room, which had to be cancelled.

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Town Managers Address Present and Future of Bluffton and Hilton Head Island

Steve Riley, Town Manager of the Town of Hilton Head Island, and Scott Marshall, Deputy Town Manager of the Town of Bluffton provided perspectives on their respective towns and fielded questions on a range of issues from League members and guests at our March 9 meeting.

According to Marshall, the Town of Bluffton has grown 1000 percent since its incorporation in 1852 as a summer coastal retreat to its present vibrant community. As a result of the annexation of a number of large pieces of property since 2000, what was once a one-square mile town is now a town of 17,000 people residing on the fifth largest municipal land mass in South Carolina. Because residents of unincorporated areas must petition to be annexed into the Town, there are "donut holes" and outlying communities of about 23,000 additional people who benefit from Town services but do not reside in the Town and, therefore, cannot vote for Town officials.

Bluffton has received many accolades—including "one of the top cities for retirement" per *Forbes Magazine* and recognition of its Wharf Street Redevelopment Project as an outstanding example of revitalization.

Marshall cited many of the Town's current initiatives to protect and enhance the Town and its natural assets, including protection of the May River, expansion of Oyster Factory Park, and the creation of pathways, enhanced streetscapes, and additional parking. The Town is also planning to redevelop and enhance the Town Hall, which has a long history in the community but is not adequate to house Town operations.

The Town welcomes more "citizen leaders" to sit on its twenty boards and commissions and help realize the Town's vision of "appreciating the past, focusing on today, and planning together for a greater future."

Hilton Head Town Manager Steve Riley posed the question "Where do we go from here?" According to Riley, although the Hilton Head Island is a great place to live, it can always be better. Its current comprehensive plan consists of 187 good ideas but has no focus. Riley identified what he views as the Town's five core values-- beauty, enrichment, amenities, cosmopolitan, and hardy - and what needs to be done to advance them.

Beauty - The beach is Hilton Head's core asset, which the Town needs to preserve through renourishment. Hilton Head is the only local government that does so with its own funding source. It also needs to complete the provision of sewer service to all and help those who can't afford to connect.

Message from the President



The end of our League year is fast approaching, but our League is still very busy with a variety of activities and can still look forward to two very important meetings. The first will be a meeting on education on Wednesday, April 13 at 9:45 a.m. (a bit earlier than usual). Details about the meeting are on Page 1 of this newsletter.

The second meeting will be our Annual Meeting/Luncheon starting at 11:15 on May 11 at Colleton River. It will be a festive occasion complete with time to socialize in a beautiful place and to enjoy good food and maybe a glass of wine or ice tea. We will also have the opportunity to learn more about the election process thanks to our guest speaker Ron Clifford, Chairman of the Beaufort County Board of Elections and Registration. .

The Annual Meeting portion of the program will be very important in determining the future of our League. We will be asked to decide if we agree that "Making Democracy Work" should be our primary focus. We will also be asked for our input on recommended longterm interests and positions and on the proposed budget. Finally, we will vote on the recommendations of the nominating committee for four board members and the chairman of the Nominating Committee. Additional board members and offboard office holders will be appointed following the luncheon.

PLEASE MAKE LUNCH RESERVATIONS FOR YOURSELF AND YOUR GUESTS (SEE Page 3) and PLAN ON BRINGING A PRINTED COPY OF THIS LIGHTHOUSE TO THE ANNUAL MEETING. IT CONTAINS MANY OF THE DOCUMENTS THAT WILL BE REFERRED TO AT THE MEETING.

Although we do slow down in the summer, we do not hibernate! That will be especially true in this busy election year.

Fran Holt

Candidate Forum for Election for Hilton Head Island Town Council

LWVHHI/BA will conduct a forum for the four candidates running to replace Ward 3 Councilman Lee Edwards, who is resigning from his position due a move. The candidates are David Ames, Ryan McAvoy, Brendan Reilley and Palmer Simmons. The forum will be held at Town Hall at 7 PM on Thursday, April 28.

Joan KinneShulman will be the moderator. It is hoped that many members of the League and the public will attend.

An Invitation from AAUW

The Hilton Head Island/Bluffton Area AAUW will be showing the movie "Suffragette" on Saturday, May 7, at 1:00 PM at the Bluffton Public Library. The movie is free. Complimentary popcorn and lemonade will be served. AAUW invites League of Women Voters members to join us in viewing the movie and a follow-up discussion.

Please join your
League of Women Voter Friends
For our Annual Meeting and Luncheon
Featuring

Ron Clifford, Chairman
Board of Voter Registration and Elections of Beaufort County
Wednesday, May 11, 2016
Colleton River Plantation, Nicklaus Clubhouse
Social Time:: 11:15 Meeting: 11:45 Lunch: 12:15



MENU CHOICES

SEARED BONELESS CHICKEN GRECQUE
Sun-dried Tomatoes, Herbs, Olives, Feta, Arugula and Seasonal Vegetables

CORIANDER DUSTED SALMON
Ratatouille, Tomato-Fennel Broth

LOWCOUNTRY COBB SALAD
Crisp Greens, Garden Vegetables, Grilled Chicken, Egg, Avocado, Bacon,
Blue Cheese, and Apple Cider Vinaigrette

*WITHOUT CHICKEN AND BACON FOR VEGETARIAN ENTRÉE

Tiramisu
Iced and hot tea, coffee
Cash Bar

RSVP by sending a check for \$30.00** payable to LWVHHI/BA
and this form by May 4, 2016 to
Mary Jo Happle
3 Pine Sky Court
Hilton Head Island, SC 29926
A PASS WILL BE WAITING FOR YOU AT THE GATE

I plan to attend the May 11, luncheon_____

I will be accompanied by these guests_____

Number of Meals 30.00_____

Number of Vegetarian Meals*_____

**Meal charge includes luncheon, and a minimal amount
to help defray expenses for 2015-2016

Visit our Web Site
www.lwvghi.org

Land Use/Natural Resources Committee



Our March 16 meeting began with the report that the major roads bill expected in this session of the Legislature had passed the Senate late the night of March 2nd. Dana Beach of the Coastal Conservation League emailed us that they were encouraged that the bill would make the State Infrastructure Bank accountable to the Dept. of Transportation Commission, thus helping ensure that its funds are used for statewide priorities and that there will be greater coordination between the DOT and the Infrastructure Bank. One Senator was quoted on the radio, however, as saying that the bill is "a fraud and a sham" because the \$400 million earmarked for the highway fund will come from the general fund, not from a fee or tax dedicated to roads and bridges. Thus education and all other state government functions will be slighted.

Coastal oil drilling, a major concern of all of South Carolina's coastal counties, provided our next news. The very day of our meeting, the U.S. Dept. of the Interior announced that drilling for oil and gas would henceforth be banned on the U.S. Atlantic coast. On March 7, representatives of our coastal counties, led by the Charleston Area League, had participated by telephone in a conference call to hammer out language which we could all use to protest oil and gas drilling and seismic testing on our coast. Our resolution said in part, "We believe that whatever benefits might be realized from those activities are far outweighed by the potential for great damage to South Carolina's environment, economy, health, and quality of life." Our wishes were granted before we had a chance to forward the resolution to the appropriate governmental and legislative bodies. However, we have it in our toolbox if it should be needed in the future.

Other topics discussed were the upcoming Beach Renourishment Plan for the Island and a proposed Corridor Improvements Study for the portion of U.S. 278 from Moss Creek Plantation to Squire Pope Road. They will be revisited at our next meeting which is scheduled for Wed., April 20, at 2:00 p.m. at Coastal States Bank on Main Street.

Sally McGarry, Chair

Town Managers Address March 9 Meeting - Cont. from page 1

Enrichment - Hilton Head has an abundance of arts, culture, history, volunteers, churches, NPO's, and ethnic groups that enrich the Town. Riley feels the Arts Center should be recognized as the asset it is and that the Town should work to eliminate its debt. The impact of the arts is not just on tourists but residents and future residents. He also feels the USC-B hospitality campus will benefit the Town as well as students.

Amenities - These include parks, pathways, the Heritage, Concours d'Elegance, ecotourism, and children's activities. The Coligny area needs to be more than a parking lot but the "downtown" of Hilton Head.

Cosmopolitan - Hilton Head is not an isolated island but part of a newly designated metropolitan area that includes Bluffton, Beaufort, Port Royal, and Hardeeville and that will encompass Savannah in the future. Town elected officials need to think regionally, rather than competing with other municipalities. The Town's biggest traffic problem is getting people on and off the Island, not from circle to circle. The Town needs to reassert regional leadership and begin discussion of widening I-95, a project which will take 20 years but which no one, including DOT, is talking about.

Hardy - The Town needs to be out in front on things that make the Island resilient—e.g. infrastructure, energy conservation, and flood reduction. The South end now has the lowest rents on the Island. What happens to old buildings when tenants move north? No plan exists to address aging condominiums and to consider possible options such as workforce housing and open space.

During the question and answer session, Marshall and Riley fielded questions pertaining to the Chamber of Commerce contract vis a vis freedom of information, the Jasper Port, USC-B/traffic, and the fall referendum for capital projects. Likely Hilton Head capital projects include the Pinckney Island intersection, paving of dirt roads, arts center concept, and planning to replace the bridge to the mainland. Bluffton projects include improvements to Dr. Mellichamp Drive area and Oyster Factory Park.

**On the Following Pages are Items League Members
Will be voting on at the Annual Meeting on May 11**

REPORT FROM THE 2016 NOMINATING COMMITTEE

The 2016 Nominating Committee, consisting of Loretta Warden, Chair, Nancy Williams, Katie Miller, Gloria Statham and Sue Feutz, recommends the following slate of officers.

Vice President: Joan Kinne Shulman (May 2016-May 2018)

Treasurer: Mary Jo Hapley (July 2016-May 2018)

Voter Services Co-chairs: Ruth Wilwerding/Oleta Harden (May 2016-2018)

Local Government/Observer Corps: Sally McGarry

2017 Nominating Committee: Nancy Williams, Chair, Dot Law, Pat Goodman

Loretta Warden, Chair
2016 Nominating Committee



League of Women Voters HHI/BA 2016 - 2017 Proposed Budget

Income.	Proposed, \$
Contributions	1000
Grants.	0
Events.	3,000
Membership Dues.	7200
Total Income	11,200
Expenses	
Administrations/ Supplies.	300
Conference and Travel.	1200
Education Committee	0
Events	3000
Forums/ Programs.	500
Lighthouse.	50
Membership Recruitment	200
PMPSC.	1561
PMPUS.	3568
Voter Service.	500
Website.	239
Miscellaneous	82
Total	11,200

Proposed LWVHHI/BA Program Plan 2016-2017

Focus for Action

Making Democracy Work

Informing and Engaging the Electorate

Prepare and publish Voter's Guide to Candidates via LWVHHI/BA website or in collaboration with *Island Packet/Beaufort Gazette and/or Bluffton Sun, Hilton Head Sun*

Proposed LWVHHI/BA Program Plan 2016-2017 - Continued



Hold candidate forums for key local races

Hold issue forum/s for likely Beaufort County School District and Beaufort County capital projects/sales tax referenda

Review and consider taking a position on sales tax referenda

Partner with other organizations regarding elected positions likely to become available/ deadlines for filing and the longer-term possibility of developing a database to match government positions with women seeking appointed or elective office

Utilize a variety of media to share information/communicate messages, with more emphasis on electronic media

Protecting Voters and Voting Rights

Support LWVUS/LWVSC positions on Money in Politics and Voter Rights/Protection

Expand voter registration activities/locations, with particular attention to underserved communities and youth and to partnership opportunities

Maintain relationship with Board of Voter Registration and Elections

Advocate for greater number of voter registration places and adequate number, location, and resources for polling places. Publicize on-line registration.

Protecting our Natural Resources

Study local and area-wide transportation issues as they relate to land use and natural resources, with a view to educating our members and recommending action, if warranted.

Develop Off-Shore Drilling position in concert with other South Carolina Leagues.

Monitor the expenditures and purposes of land purchases made with public funds approved by the voters by referendum.

Monitor other LWVHHI/BA natural resources positions with a view to recommending action as appropriate.

League of Women Voters of Hilton Head Island/Bluffton Area
Long-Term Areas of Interest and Local Positions
Adopted May 13, 2015 with Proposed Revisions for May 11, 2016



EDUCATION

1. Monitor Beaufort School District Board Meetings to gain a better understanding of local concerns
2. Monitor the school budget process and its relationship to County Council decisions.
3. Investigate the possibility and advisability of changing the requirement for collecting signatures for school board candidates.
4. Increase knowledge base about state funding and the needed response for poor rural districts.
5. Maintain and strengthen relations with local legislative delegation to assure their support for Act 388 changes and other state funding issues.

NATURAL RESOURCES

1. Support the preservation and protection of wetlands, area beaches and local waterways, including but not limited to Calibogue Sound, the May River, the Colleton River and the Okatie River.
2. Support the conservation and preservation of available drinking water and monitor availability of sewer service.
3. Support the preservation of sensitive and historic land areas and tree cover.
4. Develop Off-Shore Drilling position in concert with other South Carolina Leagues.
5. Monitor the expenditures and purposes of land purchases with public funds approved by the voters by referendum.
6. Monitor decision making process of Planning Commissions, and Town and County Councils on land use issues.
7. Monitor Comprehensive Plan Reviews.

STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

1. Provide Voter Information, Candidate Forums, Voter Registration Opportunities
2. Advocate for transparency in local government decisions.
3. Protect Home Rule for local governments
4. Maintain relationship with Beaufort County Board of Registration and Elections to assure voter access and accountability
5. Support LWVSC initiatives to assure open and thorough study, evaluation and selection of new voting machines.

Continued on next page.

Long-Term Areas of Interest and Local Positions - Continued



STATE AND LOCAL TAXATION

1. Monitor and provide information on state and local taxation recommendations with special attention to concerns for natural resources, infrastructure and education.
2. Monitor Tax Increment Financing (TIF) revenue and use (the newly extended TIF, Town of Hilton Head Island).
3. Monitor use of revenue from the recent Rural and Critical Lands Referendum (note #5, Natural Resources)
4. Support comprehensive tax reform for SC; monitor local revenue and taxation.
(Note Education #5)

TRANSPORTATION

1. Investigate Accommodation Tax (A-Tax) as an appropriate source of funding for public transportation.

**LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF
HILTON HEAD ISLAND/
BLUFFTON AREA**



www.LWVHHI.org

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Monthly
Calendar of Events

Officers and Board 2015 - 2016

BOARD MEETINGS

Board meetings are held at 10:00 AM at the Palmetto Electric building on Matthews Drive on HHI, unless otherwise noted.

2016: April 7, May 5

All members are welcome at Board meetings.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

April 13 - Membership Meeting, 9:45 AM, HH PSD, 21 Oak Park Dr., HHI. Topic: Education matters in South Carolina. Speaker: Jane Pulling, LWVSC Director, Education.

April 20 - Natural Resources/Land Use Committee meeting. 2:00 PM at the Coastal States Bank, Main Street, HHI

April 28 - Candidate Forum for HHI Ward 3 Town Council seat. 7:00 PM HHI Town Hall

May 3 - Election for HHI Town Council Ward 3

May 4 - Deadline for reservations for the Annual Meeting and Luncheon. See the form on page 3.

May 7 - AAUW showing of movie "Suffragette" followed by a discussion. 1:00 PM Bluffton Public Library.

May 11 - Annual Meeting and Luncheon, Colleton River Plantation Clubhouse. 11:15 AM Social Hour, 11:45 AM Annual Meeting, followed by lunch and the speaker, Ron Clifford, Chairman of the Board of Voter Registration and Elections of Beaufort County.

May 18 - Natural Resources/Land Use Committee meeting. 2:00 PM at the Coastal States Bank, Main Street, HHI

OFFICERS

President:
Fran Holt 843-837-3436
Vice-President, Program Chair:
Nancy Williams 843-681-4212
Treasurer:
Jan Billingslea 843-815-3743
Secretary:
Ellen Dahl 843-785-2115

BOARD

Communications:
Sandy Stern 843-342-4834
Education:
Kathy Quirk 843-836-2892
Membership:
Ellie Dixon 843-705-3973
Diane Neal 843-757-0622
Natural Resources/Land Use:
Sally McGarry 843-342-9254
Newsletter:
Joan Kinne-Shulman 843-842-9246
State Issues/Advocacy:
Patricia Montgomery 843-707-1036
Voters Services:
Oleta Harden 843-815-6294
Katie Miller 843-681-6448

Off-Board Positions

Healthcare:	Alison Burke
Hospitality:	Mary Jo Happle
Observer Corps:	Joan Kinne-Shulman
Webmaster:	David Rice
Archivist:	Connie Voight
Nominating Committee Chair:	Loretta Warden