**Upper Mississippi River Region Inter-League Organization**

**Action Committee Video Conference 2-12-2024 at 4:30 pm**

**Present:** Gretchen Sabel (MN), Kay Slama (MN), Coleen Werdien (MN), Mary Ellen Miller (IA), Sue Wilson (IA), Mickey Croyle (MO), Lynne Markus (MN), Sheryl Eufinger (MO), Catherine Franczyk (IL), Lee Ekstrom (IL), Paula Ekstrom (IL), Megan Benage (MN) Tamara Prenosil (IA)

**A. Old Business**

1. *Introductions* if new members are present: No new members

2. *Approve* January meeting minutes: Lynne Markus noted her first name was misspelled. C. Franczyk moved and S. Eufinger seconded that the minutes be approved as corrected. Motion carried.

3. UMRR *Farm Bill action*: On hold in Congress.

4. *MO EPA letter* sent by Croyle.

5. Action Committee policies and procedures were approved by the Board 2/5/24.

6. The Board asked that we report our actions/time spent only on UMRR business

with other organizations involving water, reporting liaison actions, or of which we are

members.

Easy form: https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1wrTShp8aTMy5ZJj-ecoaLhn9MEpAU38qNUhQ0fVaEqk/edit?usp=sharing

7. Board voted to send updated MRRRI letters, M. Miller sent to each state LWV president to forward to each local League chapter. The bill number was just released this week.

8. *Further pop-up display opportunities*: the National Mississippi River Museum in Dubuque declined our request to display the traveling exhibit. Continue to send possible sites to Mary Ellen Miller. The venue needs a roof over the display and needs electricity to inflate the “pop can”. The artist is developing an artist’s statement and specifications for floor space for the exhibit. LWV-UMRR ILO has a partner at the state fair in Iowa so we will not need to pay for the space. The display will go to the LWVUS national convention in D.C. and to Maryland for the Izaak Walton national convention. Labor Day weekend is the end of the grant for the exhibit. The LWV-UMRR ILO has a picture of the exhibit on the Blog.

9. *Other*:

**B. New Business**

1.*Other Organizations in which we hold memberships*: Is this committee the place to discuss how to determine which organizations UMRR should join as a member? Only MRN at present. This should be a Board decision. There are no dues for MRN (Mississippi River Network) or CWFA (Clean Water for All). Should these groups be multi- state organizations, or can they be single state organizations?

2. *Other*: Signatures on other advocacy groups’ letters should be approved by the Board or Action Committee rather than by individual members who are involved in such advocacy groups. Last year we were able to get agreements within three days. It is done by email first, followed by a text message and replies returned by email. Advocacy letters are saved in Google.docs.

**C. Activity reports:**

1. Affiliate Group Reports

a) Mississippi River Network (MRN): M. Miller reported Iowa has no one going to D.C. for the Fly In. The group discussed talking points for the Fly In and she will share the final document when she has it. It will have good information about conservation needs to protect water and soil health. So far, probably no action on the Farm Bill until after the November Election.

b) Upper Mississippi River Basin, Iowa Izaak Walton League: Miller reported working with groups on the Upper Mississippi River Wildlife and Fish Refuge 100-year anniversary.

c) Clean Water for All: No report

d) 100 Grannies: T. Prenosil reported they are emphasizing plastic pollution. Frequently part of the meeting is devoted to how individuals can live in an environmentally friendly way. (ex. Who Gives A Crap eco-friendly toilet paper).

e) MN Environmental Partnership Water Cluster: L. Markus reported strategizing ways to use government funding for prevention of water pollution rather all of it going toward clean up. This group had several letters the LWV-UMRR ILO signed last year and probably will again this year.

f) LWV-US Climate Interest Group: M. Croyle will advocate for adding climate change to the national program planning. She has filled out the forms to LWVUS for the convention in June.

g)  MN Sierra Club North Star chapter: K. Slama reported that state legislative priorities include the Lowland Carbon and Habitat Preserve is working to protect fens and wetlands (Minnesota has more than any state but Alaska.) from logging. Fens and wetlands sequester carbon. Proposing clean energy plans for fossil gas in homes and businesses.

h) The Land Stewardship Project See their legislative agenda at <https://landstewardshipproject.org/lsps-2024-minnesota-legislative-platform/>.

i) CURE (Clean Up the River Environment) Several dairies want to get together to develop a large- scale manure digester to trap and transport methane, with methane pipelines between them. CURE is working against the first short Summit CO2 pipeline segment.

j) Lake Michigan ILO: No report

k) IL Prairie Rivers Network, American Farmland Trust: C. Franczyk reported the IL Prairie Rivers Network group will present at the LWV-UMRR ILO April webinar.

l) IA Sierra Club, United Nations Association, IA division: Written report submitted.

m) Missouri Sierra Club: M. Croyle works with the Clean Energy Coalition in Missouri. It is focusing on renewable energy and limiting coal plants. Coalition for the Environment is working on the CAFO Action Network. Working to redefine the Waters of the State. Hoping to reactivate efforts to increase public participation in committees and commissions.

n) Other

2. Reports on other actions by members in their states

a) Illinois –LWVIL Issues briefing on 2-24-2024. G. Sabel with speak at the Du Page LWV Chapter meeting also on 2-24-2024. LWV-UMRR ILO banner and brochures will be at both meetings.

b) Iowa – No report

c) Minnesota – Advocacy groups working to identify polluters. Kudos to organizers of the Feb 7 LWV-UMRR ILO webinar on St. Cloud’s Circular Economy. L. Markus reported her League chapter will have a program on “Regulatory Capture”. She has organized programs about local water districts. Her community is planning additional sustainability projects. Woodbury Cottage Grove LWV website has recording about water districts.

d) Wisconsin – No report

e) Missouri – S. Eufinger working with a newly formed League and promoting interest in the LWV-UMRR ILO with them. M. Croyle served on the metropolitan sewer district which now must test to assure the city is not adding to the nutrients and other potential carcinogens going into the Mississippi River. The EPA has updated requirements.

3. Put all our activities in Google spreadsheet, with time devoted to each action.

Link: see item A.6 above.

**D. Announcements/Other Discussion Items**

1. Possible new Action Committee members: None yet.

G. Sabel sent the Board and Action Committee members a link to the National Caucus of Environmental Legislators. This group has a bill tracking map that you can click on your state to learn what environmental legislation has been proposed.

https://ci3.googleusercontent.com/meips/ADKq\_NZdLPP8JtjASKuPPV-MDF47E6WtHzmPrT1aJ-YEfaRMETrIFqqzsaWi0t-c\_iJ9e1yw3t0NMpk5ZkNqCRJacG2VFVoXJuopgO7UNhEIUrztn5qwar99i2qzPmGc4EPB44N4Oa42ZqGpDZoFe2pXQVx8rkso\_40jkJU=s0-d-e1-ft#https://mcusercontent.com/28550b4e71e1cdc7a3afa07b4/images/3a605fc4-1b8f-8023-60a1-14056d17f3d9.png

**E. Adjourn**

1. *Next meeting time- (Gretchen’s survey, with these results)*: Second Monday at 4:00

**Monday, March 11, 2024 at 4:00 pm**

2. Put on your schedule with same Zoom link: https://lwvmn-

org.zoom.us/j/87576279567?pwd=WTJWZ2VkbzNGMTk5VlZWNEh2cFovUT09

Dial to join by phone audio only:  312 626 6799, meeting number 87576279567