**LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS UPPER MISSISSIPPI RIVER REGION INTER-LEAGUE ORGANIZATION**

**Board Meeting --- February 1, 2021**

**Zoom Video and Phone Conference**

The thirtieth board meeting of the Upper Mississippi River Region Inter-League Organization (UMRR-ILO) was called to order by Vice-Chair Mary Ellen Miller (IA Des Moines) on February 1, 2021 at 10:00 a.m.

**Board members attending the meeting in addition to the Vice Chair were:**  Tamara Prenosil (IA-Dubuque), Gretchen Sabel (MN-ABC), Carolyn Mahlum-Jenkin (WI La Crosse), Sue Wilson (IA Dubuque), Lee Ekstrom (IL McHenry County), Paula Ekstrom (IL McHenry County), Mary Ploeser & Steve Ploeser (WI-Dane County), Nancy Porter (IA Iowa City), Nancy Hill (WI La Crosse), John Howard (MN Winona), Lonnie McCauley (MN Coon Rapids)

**Secretary’s Report:** T. Prenosil’s minutes from the 12-7-2020 UMRR-ILO Board Meeting were included in the information sent to Board members prior to this meeting. L. Ekstrom moved and S. Ploesser seconded that the minutes be approved. Motion carried.

**Treasurer’s Report:** J. McGinley, treasurer, sent the treasurer’s report as well as the BUDGET VS ACTUALS for July 1, 2020 through January 31,2021 to Board members prior to this meeting.

Revenues – December/January $200.09 (Memberships: $200, Interest $.09).

There are 66 LWV chapters that have paid dues. The highest number in UMRR-ILO history. J. Mc Ginley included a list of non-renewing chapters. M. Ploesser will contact Wisconsin chapters, G. Sabel will contact the Minnesota chapter and L. Ekstrom will contact the Illinois chapter.

Expenses - $.85 PayPal fee

Bank Balance as of January 31, 2021: $10,253.37. (includes ERC II Grant of $326.82 and Judy Beck Memorial Fund of $300).

Finance Committee: The following Board members volunteered to be on the finance committee: L. Ekstrom, C. Mahlum-Jenkins, G. Sabel, and T. Prenosil. One non-board member is still needed to serve on this committee. J. McGinley will schedule this meeting.

Treasurer’s report was accepted and will be filed.

**Action Committee Report:**

L. McCauley sent an updated Activity chart with the materials for this Board meeting. She requested information on the resolution of some activities if possible. For example, our states wrote the Wisconsin DNR regarding the disposal of PFAS chemicals into waterways. She also included a chart of the different organizations to which UMRR-ILO Board belong and attend meetings (even if virtually)

L. Ekstrom will forward an article he recently read about firefighters having health issues because of the PFAS in the fire extinguishing process they use.

P. Ekstrom reported on an organization called ‘Oil and Water Don’t Mix.org’ which is located in Michigan and opposes the Enbridge 5 pipeline. The Enbridge 5 is pipeline is owned by a Canadian company and these pipelines in the Straits of Mackinac are under an ecologically sensitive area and affects Wisconsin and Minnesota.

G. Sabel reported the Enbridge Line 3 would cross the headwaters of the Mississippi at Lake Itasca and ‘The Friends of the Headwaters’ is a grassroots organization opposed to this line. She will put information about these lines on the UMRR-ILO website.

Iowa has proposed legislation to limit new Confined Animal Feeding Operations (CAFOs). The organization Iowa Citizens for Community Improvement is organizing regional informational Zoom gatherings to promote a large advocacy network to contact legislators in favor of this legislation. There is considerable opposition to this legislation by other groups.

G. Sabel will research developing a Google calendar on the UMRR-ILO website to publicize the many Zoom webinars, or advocacy meetings in our four states so individuals can have a resource of timely information. Board members need to forward this information including links to her so she can include it.

**Partner Organizations:**

Mississippi River Network (MRN) – Nancy Porter (IA)

Mississippi River Restoration and Resilience Initiative (MRRRI) – Carolyn Mahlum-Jenkins (WI)

Upper Mississippi River Basin Association (UMBRA) – Sue Wilson (IA), Carolyn Mahlum-Jenkins (WI), Bonnie Cox (IL), John Howard (MN)

**Upcoming UMRR-ILO Board Meetings:**

April 5, 2021: How to keep highway pollution out of stormwater.

June: Annual Meeting probably first Saturday - One hour business meeting and program TBA (ideas included – transportation industry, agricultural columnist, art used to promote environmental advocacy, climate and carbon, battery disposal as more electric cars come on the market)

August 2, 2021: Dubuque initiatives to mitigate flooding and improve water quality.

October 4, 2021: PFAS

**Website Updates:**

Discussed ways to publicize the programs of advocacy groups. Because of the corona virus more organizations are developing and giving virtual programs.

Discussed strategies to disseminate environmental information to state Leagues and therefore to individual members in the states. Generally, newsletter editors are looking for content. The UMRR-ILO sends newsletters.

M. Miller encouraged Board members to submit brief biographies for the website.

**Nominating Committee:**

Only two members can be UMRR-ILO Board Members.

* Nominating Committee Chair: T. Prenosil will contact Bonnie Cox to learn if she will continue as Chair.
* Iowa: Nancy Porter (IA)
* Carolyn Mahlum-Jenkins (WI)

Need non-board members for Illinois and Minnesota.

Officers for the 2020-2021 year include:

* Co-chairs: Mary and Steve Ploeser (Dane Co. WI) terms end 2021
* Treasurer: Jeri McGinley (Stevens Point WI) term ends 2021
* Vice-chair: Mary Ellen Miller (Metro Des Moines, IA) term ends 2022
* Secretary: Tamara Prenosil (Dubuque, IA) term ends 2022
* Chair of Nominating Committee: (non-board member: Bonnie Cox, Jo Daviess Co, IL)
* Director of Communications: Gretchen Sabel (Andover, MN) term ends 2021
* Immediate Past President: Gretchen Sabel (Andover, MN) term ends 2021

State Representatives and Alternates (appointed by their respective state LWVs)

* Illinois: Lee Ekstrom (McHenry Co. IL) Alternate: Paula Ekstrom (McHenry Co. IL)
* Iowa: Sue Wilson (Dubuque, IA) Alternate: Nancy Porter (Iowa City, IA)
* Minnesota: John Howard (Winona, MN) Alternate: Lonni McCauley (Coon Rapids, MN)
* Wisconsin: Carolyn Mahlum-Jenkins (La Crosse, WI) Alternate: Nancy Hill (La Crosse, WI)

Action Committee Chair: Lonnie McCauley (Coon Rapids, MN)

Jeri McGinley agreed to continue as treasurer. Gretchen Sabel will continue as Communications Chair. State Representatives and Alternates will continue. Mary Ellen Miller agreed to become Chair. Therefore, we need to nominate a Vice Chair at the Annual Meeting in June 2021.

**Next Board Meeting:** April 5,2021 at 10:00 am via Zoom

Submitted by Tamara Prenosil

**Education Program 1:00 to 3:00 pm:**

**Watershed-scale work to improve soil and water quality.**

**Presenters:**

Heidi Keuler – Fishers and Farmers in Wisconsin

Clark Porter- Blackhawk Creek Watershed in Iowa

Faith Luce – Watershed Coordinator for Blackhawk Creek in Iowa