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# THE CAPE COD VOTER

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VOLUME 53 ISSUE 6  
2013

FEBRUARY

## CALENDAR

Tuesday, February 5  
9:30 am

Board Meeting  
Cape Cod 5, Dennis

Tuesday, February 12  
1:30 pm

County Committee  
Cape Cod 5, Dennis

Tuesday, February 19  
10:00 am

Sandwich Unit  
To Be Announced

### What's Inside:

President's Message	P. 2
Board Notes	P. 3
Program Planning	P. 4
Environment Committee	P. 5
County Committee	P. 6
Legislative Breakfast	P. 7

### **LOOKING AHEAD:**

Day on the Hill	March 13
Legislative Breakfast	March 22

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

### **Dear Members:**

My greeting this February is all about ways that our members can influence our organization and our elected representatives. Three such efforts are discussed below.

**Program Planning:** Thank you to the six additional members who attended our January Board Meeting to discuss input for the LWVMA Program Planning for 2013 – 2015 and input for our local program planning for LWVCCA for 2013 – 2014. We had an energetic discussion and decided to submit the priorities that I have described in the article on Program Planning. Please review the results of our discussion and if you would like to provide further input to our local program planning discussion, please call or send me an e-mail regarding your specific interest. Our program is due to be approved at our annual meeting in May.

**Legislative Breakfast:** Judy Thomas, Legislative Liaison, has arranged the date for our annual spring Legislative Breakfast with our Cape representatives to the State House. The date is the morning of **March 22** and the event will be held at the Cape Cod Community College. Please plan to attend this important opportunity to hear our legislators and also let them hear from us.

**Board Participation:** This is the time of year that we activate the Nominating Committee to begin recruiting new Board Members for the new year commencing in June. Several members who have served for many years would like to step down from their roles and give new folks a chance to participate. Service on the Board is a great way to understand more about the League, and become more involved. I have found that as a relative newcomer to full time residence on the Cape I have become much more knowledgeable about Cape issues because of my involvement on the Board. If you feel that this is the time for you to become more involved, please let the nominating committee know of your interest. To simplify communication I suggest you contact one of the members, Elizabeth Levy, at [mejlevy@comcast.net](mailto:mejlevy@comcast.net).

Thank you for your ongoing participation in the League of Women Voters of the Cape Cod Area.

Sincerely,

Karen Mazza



## **BOARD NOTES - JANUARY 8, 2012**

**Nominating committee** to be activated. Two Board members to be appointed. Karen will seek volunteers for the committee.

Planning continues for the **Money in Politics Forum**.

**Our annual meeting** has been rescheduled to **Thursday, May 9, 5:00 to 7:00 P.M.** to avoid conflict with LWVMA convention taking place on May 18<sup>th</sup>.

**County Government Committee:** co-chair Jari Rapaport presented a proposed **statement to the County Commissioners** stressing the importance of transparency in their decision making process in response to recent incidents, and was approved by the Board.

**Environment Committee:** co-chair Judy Thomas reported on the planned Environment Committee January meeting with **Rob O'Leary** on the plans of the **Chamber of Commerce task force** on wastewater and opportunities for collaboration.

**Legislation Committee:**

Chairman Judy Thomas proposed that we attend the State **Day on the Hill on March 13<sup>th</sup>**, but reserve our advocacy efforts with our legislators for our Legislative breakfast on March 22. This was approved.

Judy also presented plans for the **Directory of Elected Officials**. The Board approved suggestions for a more attention- getting format.

**Youth Outreach Committee:** Chairman Karen Mazza announced that there will be a presentation of **The Strategic Plan to Support Youth**, produced through the Cape Cod Foundation, to Cape Cod School Superintendents on February 1, inviting their participation in implementation.

**Program Planning:** Karen said that the Committee has been planning for a presentation of a **highly rated documentary," Chasing Ice"** at a general meeting. The film focuses on global warming. Karen is also working with member Kathy Cockcroft on other potential selections.

**Membership:** Joan Grant reported that Chair Betsy Bray has **proposed ending**

**the \$35 introductory rate** and questioned its value in attracting and keeping members in view of our need for more League income. After preliminary discussion, it was agreed to place in on the agenda for additional discussion in February.

## **PROGRAM PLANNING DISCUSSION RESULTS**

### **Input to LWVMA:**

**The ideas listed below have been sent to the League of Women Voters of Massachusetts office in Boston representing our input to their program suggestions.**

**New Study - highest priority:** “What is the status of mental health services, especially for young people? What mental health services are covered under Massachusetts health insurance and what services are not covered? How can we improve access to mental health services?”

Additional issues supported for new study:  
Balancing work and family issues  
Use of modern technologies in the voting process  
Human trafficking

### **Restudies: Support for Healthy Aging**

#### **Action – Three Highest Priority Issues:**

Advocate for a comprehensive approach to water management issues with an emphasis on wastewater management.

Advocate with the LWVUS for national gun legislation. This should include a review of Massachusetts gun laws for deficiencies and support for improvements in Massachusetts law and federal law.

Campaign Finance Reform: Advocate for a constitutional amendment that addresses the Citizens United Court Decision and also advocate for legislative remedies for campaign finance reform at the state and national level.

### **Input regarding Program Priorities for LWVCCA:**

Voters Service: voter registration, voter & civic education	Action
County Government: regionalization opportunities, responsiveness and transparency, strategic planning and consideration of commission recommendations	Action/Monitor
Water Management	Monitor/Action
Renewable Energy: support wind and local green energy initiatives	Support

Health Care Issues: Mental health care services on the Cape	Study
Promoting a Positive Future for Cape Cod Youth	Action
Immigration Policy – support LWVUS policy position	Support

## **ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE**

In County news, nothing is in the news more than the issue of wastewater. So much has been and is happening. Last fall, following a summit called by the Association to Preserve Cape Cod, 31 of 35 organizations who share a concern for the environment (but perhaps not to the exclusion of all else) reviewed and adopted a statement in which wastewater was declared to be the #1 environmental priority.

In January, the Cape Cod Commission and the Cape Cod Water Protection Collaborative issued their final report and recommendations. The numerous pages of the Regional Wastewater Management Plan (RWMP) is now available on the CC Commission's website: HYPERLINK "http://www.capecodcommission.org" [www.capecodcommission.org](http://www.capecodcommission.org) . Because this is a "living" document, meaning it will be updated as needed, it is not available in print form.

And in January, the League's environment committee met with Rob O'Leary to learn about the major action project of the Cape Cod Chamber of Commerce in which he and other Cape business/organizational leaders are involved. With 13 LWVCCA members attending Rob explained that the Chamber is in the process of establishing a new organization called "Cape Coddors for Action on Wastewater." The subgroup/taskforce of the Chamber is chaired by Rich Delaney of the Provincetown Center for Coastal Studies. As a 501 (c) (3), the plan is to raise money to be able to create an effective ad campaign for education and the necessary action taking which ultimately must happen at the Town Meeting level. Rob indicated the group would welcome the support of the LWVCCA – something our President Karen Mazza assured Rob would be considered at the February board meeting. One meaningful way we might lend support would be through sponsoring or co-sponsoring an educational forum.

The Committee plans to meet again in late February. In the meantime, all members are encouraged to follow the issue in the Cape Cod Times and in their local weekly newspapers and by watching selectmen meetings as towns grapple with the wastewater issue. Encouraging towns to move forward now that the Cape Cod Commission's Multi-variant Planner is nearly ready for use (April at the latest) is also something League members can do.

Judy Thomas, Co-Chair

**SANDWICH UNIT:**

The Sandwich Unit will meet on Tuesday, February 19<sup>th</sup> at 10:00 am for a planning session. Place to be determined. Please notify me at HYPERLINK "mailto:rhsands@comcast.net" [rhsands@comcast.net](mailto:rhsands@comcast.net) if you can attend.

## COUNTY GOVERNMENT COMMITTEE

County structure continues to be a hot topic. However, it looks like little is moving very fast and the process is drawn-out. But both the Assembly and the Commissioners are moving ahead and our committee is keeping track of very interesting developments.

First is the work on the strategic plan undertaken by the Commissioners with the help of a facilitator, Carole Ridley, a very experienced and knowledgeable cape resident. One session has been held and stimulated comment on a wide front of issues. They are looking at internal administrative aspects, focusing on how to build a structure in which all administrative departments are working collaboratively with a task oriented approach, goal directed from the top down. To date each department has developed program as issues arise and community needs surface. One result is that many departmental functions overlap and there is no formal structure for intercommunication, working together.

Related to this is the apparent decision to develop the new county website to provide clear communication between county agencies as well as the public so that information is easily accessible within one website, with links as appropriate. To make the possible benefits of this approach clear, take the time to call up the current county website, and compare it with the website developed by the Town of Barnstable, a good example of a user-friendly website. The new County website is to be developed by the County department of Information Technology, rather than an outside company.

The strategic planning process is tentatively scheduled to take until mid-May for a final report. The planning is supposed to also deal with the Special Commission recommendations for governance at some point. Action on that aspect continues to be put off. In progress, however are incremental steps to separate the position of Finance Director from County Administrator. We have included a copy of a Barnstable Patriot article with more specific information. The article also covers some of the Assembly actions.

Leo Cakounes, Harwich representative to the Assembly of Delegates, has put forward a resolution for discussion on his proposal to reinvent county government. It includes enlarging the Board of Commissioners and the scope of the assembly's powers. He has several other proposals in the works. Our committee will follow closely.

While the Strategic Planning process holds open meetings, there are no minutes or videos. Fortunately our member Paula Bacon was able to attend and report on the first meeting.

During the month of January our committee made 2 presentations to the Commissioners emphasizing the need for transparency in County Government. We will continue to work on transparency in decision-making and also for the availability of documents and materials included in public meetings, and adequate listing of items in the action agenda presented by the County Administrator.

Jari Rapaport, Co-chair.

See the related Barnstable Patriot article at end of Voter

You are warmly invited to attend the  
League of Women Voters of the Cape Cod Area  
**ANNUAL LEGISLATIVE BREAKFAST**

FRIDAY, MARCH 22, 2012

7:30 AM

CAPE COD COMMUNITY COLLEGE  
LORUSSO APPLIED TECHNOLOGY BUILDING, ROOM 213

Get to know the legislators who represent you on Beacon Hill.

Get to know the issues important to the League at the state and local levels.

Get to know the issues important to your Senators and Reps.

Get to know our League members in your town.

The breakfast, including tax and gratuity, is \$15.00 per person.

Please make check payable to LWVCCA and

return the coupon below with your check,

no later than March 13<sup>th</sup>, to:

Debbie Aikman 78 Water St. Chatham, MA02633

*For additional information, contact Judy Thomas 508-432-2775*

**DIRECTIONS:** Take exit 6 off Route 6. Go north on Route 132. Take first right into Cape Cod Community College and enter the one way circular road, **drive right to 10 parking lot** directly across from **Lorusso Applied Technology Building**, (overflow parking in lot 11). Crossing the one-way drive, Lorusso is directly in front of you. Walk the uphill path, to the back of the building. Enter the double doors and take the stairs or the elevator to the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor lounge.

For HANDICAP PARKING, take a left into the handicap parking entrance directly across from Parking Lot 9.

For additional information, go to HYPERLINK "<http://www.capecod.edu>" [www.capecod.edu](http://www.capecod.edu) and search for maps. This will give you the layout of the college, and by clicking on building #10, you can view the Lorusso Applied Technology Building

Please Print, tear off and send with your check

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YES! I'll be there.

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YES! I'm

bringing a friend.

Unfortunately, I'm unable to attend, but I wish to contribute to the breakfast.

Enclosed is my check in the amount of \$\_\_\_\_\_ payable to LWVCCA.

<p><b>The Barnstable Patriot – Jan.24 2013 Double duty may end for county administrator</b></p>	<p>HYPERLINK "http:// www.barnstablepatriot.com /home2/index2.php? option=com_content&amp;do_p df=1&amp;id=31875" \o "PDF"  \t "_blank"</p>	<p>HYPERLINK "http:// www.barnstablepatriot.com /home2/index2.php? option=com_content&amp;task =emailform&amp;id=31875&amp;it emid=30" \o "E-mail" \t  "_blank"</p>
<p><b>Written by David Still II</b></p>		

### **Commissioners seek changes through budget**

Change seems afoot for the county administration on a couple of fronts, including the anticipated budget for the county commissioners and possible action through the Assembly.

When the commissioners review their own budget Jan. 30, it's expected to reflect separate full-time positions for the county administrator and finance director.

Referencing the recommendations of the Special Commission on County Governance, commissioners' chair Mary Pat Flynn of Falmouth asked that the budget separate the positions. The county administrator and finance director's positions have been filled by Mark Zielinski since 1997, first on an interim basis, then permanently.

Dividing the positions was among the 19 recommendations of the special commission as well as a separate contracted review of the county's administrative setup completed by the MMA Consulting Group in 2011.

Beyond that, the Assembly of Delegates approved an ordinance that requires the positions be held by different individuals. That Assembly unanimously overrode the commissioners' disapproval of the ordinance.

In addition, Flynn asked that the duties of the assistant county administrator be separated from the Cape Light Compact. The MMA consulting study estimated that 75 percent of the work done

by the assistant administrator was connected to her role as administrator of the Compact. That move was also among the recommendations of both studies.

From a budgeting perspective, Zielinski's roughly \$145,000 salary is divided equally between the commissioners' budget and that of the finance department. The assistant administrator's position is fully funded through the commissioners' budget, which receives no administrative funds from the Compact according to the county's final 2013 operating budget.

Commissioner Bill Doherty of Harwich said that in separating and making new positions, attention should be given to the workload to ensure that enough work remains. Doherty is the commissioners' representative to the Cape Light Compact and serves as its chair.

Flynn said that the budget proposal should reflect these changes as of July 1.

"If we accept those recommendations, we would be able to see what that looks like," Flynn said of the budget request.

#### Changes Through the Assembly

Harwich Assembly Delegate Leo Cakounes is looking at a possible charter change to revamp the county's executive branch, including two more commissioners and a strong county executive.

In a proposal introduced last week, Cakounes calls for expanding the board of commissioners from three to five, elected from five evenly-divided districts, and a strong county executive. He would maintain the present 15-member Assembly, the county's legislature, with town representation and weighted votes.

"That's the biggest change," Cakounes said, later adding, "the commissioners have unnecessary oversight over that position."

He believes that the county executive should have powers to enter into contracts and make personnel decisions, among other duties, "without having to seek approval from the county commissioners."

The commissioners recently delegated some of their authority to do those things to the county administrator, but Cakounes would like to see that as an affixed part of the charter.

He sees advantages in expanding the board of commissioners to five members in terms of representation and making it easier for Open Meeting Law compliance. The additional members would allow two members to discuss a matter outside of a public meeting without violating the Open Meeting Law. Presently, two of the three commissioners constitute a quorum, meaning no substantive discussions of county matters can be held outside of public meetings.

The path for an Assembly-initiated charter change goes from the Assembly to the

commissioners, perhaps back to the Assembly for an override should the commissioners disapprove, to the Secretary of the Commonwealth for review and then to the November 2014 ballot. While that's a long process, Cakounes said he'd like to get it moving in the event there are language changes that are required.

He sees the resolution as a way to gauge whether the Assembly is ready to move, rather than get into a formal process if there's no support.

Assembly Speaker Ron Bergstrom does not anticipate placing the proposal on the Feb 6 agenda. In a Jan. 23 phone interview, Bergstrom said that the executive directors of the Cape Cod Commission and Water Protection Collaborative are scheduled for a presentation on that date.

"I suspect we're going to want to take some time on this," Bergstrom said, adding that the Assembly committees will be moving into their budget review sessions.

Cakounes said he has not conferred with his Assembly colleagues on his specific proposal, but believes as a body it has talked about forms it would and would not like to see. The Assembly spent a good portion of its meetings last spring reviewing developments and recommendations of the Special Commission. Bergstrom and Falmouth Delegate Julia Taylor served on the special commission and provided reports as it progressed.

"I want the people on the Cape to follow this," Cakounes said, adding that he wants to hear the opinion of Cape residents on the matter.

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