



BULLETIN
lwva.com

February 2021

LWV and Town Election Calendar

2/2	Tuesday 7 p.m.	LWVA Board Meeting via Zoom teleconference. The meeting URL will be sent to attendees; email one of the Co-Presidents if you would like to attend.
2/12	Friday 12 noon	Last day for incumbent Town Meeting Members to file notice of re-election.
2/17	Wednesday 5 p.m.	Last day for obtaining nomination papers for the Town election.
2/19	Friday 5 p.m.	Last day for filing nomination papers for the Town election.
3/2	Tuesday 7 p.m.	LWVA Board Meeting via Zoom teleconference. The meeting URL will be sent to attendees; email one of the Co-Presidents if you would like to attend.
3/7	Sunday 2 to 3:30 p.m.	Legislators' Brunch, via Zoom teleconference. All members will receive the meeting URL; family and friends welcome. See page 3 for details.
3/19	Friday 8 p.m.	Last day to register to vote in the Town election.
	Wednesday 3/31	Virtual Candidates Night for the Town Election. Details will appear in the March Bulletin.
4/10	Saturday 8 a.m. to 8 p.m.	Annual Town election.
4/26	Monday 8 p.m.	Town Meeting begins.

Carolyn Parsons and Angela Olszewski: Co-Presidents
 CarolynMParsons@msn.com, amolszewski@gmail.com
Ann FitzGerald: Membership AnnFitz@rcn.com

Kim Haase: Bulletin Editor c.haase@comcast.net
Margaret Reiners: Bulletin Mailing mlreiners@gmail.com

Co-President's Message

I think we can all say that this wasn't exactly the way we thought 2021 would start. On January 6th there was a violent insurrection attempt on the US Capitol. Our democracy was threatened. I remember being terrified that there could be an active shooter and/or hostage situation involving our representatives and senators. I also thought about the importance of our right to vote and the work we do in the League to help encourage and maintain that right. I will never again take it or our democracy for granted.

On a brighter note, there are virtual events upcoming that will help to engage our community and bring it together. The League will be hosting Legislators Brunch on March 7th and Candidates Night for the town wide offices on March 31st. I hope you can join us virtually.

The annual MLK celebration was held on Monday, January 18th. It featured Crystal Haynes, journalist for Boston 25 News interviewing playwright Kirsten Greenidge. There was also a musical performance by the Brotherhood Chorus from the Concord Baptist Church in Milton. If you did not attend that evening, you can watch it from ACMI's website at <https://acmi.tv/>.

I am looking forward to the rollout of the vaccine and an end on the horizon for the pandemic. Then we can all be together in person. I hope you and your families are staying safe and healthy.

Angela Olszewski

LWVA LEADERSHIP 2020–2021

Carolyn Parsons, Co-President	781-646-9309
Angela Olszewski, Co-President	781-648-8649
Meredith Zona, Organization VP	781-648-2753
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Anne Linn, Secretary	781-643-0356
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Katharine Fennelly, Voters' Guide	781-648-1794
Susan Born, Candidates Night	617-448-4179
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The BULLETIN is published monthly except during the summer and December by the League of Women Voters of Arlington, PO Box 461, Arlington, MA 02476.



MARK YOUR CALENDARS FOR:

**LWV ARLINGTON'S LEGISLATORS'
BRUNCH/NO BRUNCH!**

**AND INVITE A FRIEND OR NEIGHBOR
TO JOIN VIA ZOOM**

Sunday, March 7, 2021 @ 2:00 – 3:30 PM

Yes – after a year's hiatus, the Legislators' Brunch is back, but sadly, this year the brunch aspect will be absent due to the pandemic. Still, it promises to be a great opportunity to "meet" our State Legislators – Senator Cindy Friedman and Representatives Sean Garballey and Dave Rogers – and learn about the latest state-level impacts regarding the pandemic, and what's ahead with recent state and federal leadership changes. Of course, there will also be time for questions and answers.

Friends and family members are welcome to participate via Zoom.

Please watch for an email from League member Janice Bakey in late February that will include a Zoom link and password, and instructions about installing and using Zoom on your computer if you don't have it already – there is no cost to download it.

Looking forward to "seeing" you on Sunday, March 7 on Zoom!

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Editor's Note: The following article appeared in the *Arlington Advocate* and on the YourArlington.com website in January.

LWVA Supports Tenants' Rights in Arlington Housing Authority Properties

By Carolyn Parsons and Angela Olszewski, Co-Presidents

Over the course of a few years, volunteers from the League of Women Voters of Arlington (LWVA) conducted a study of the Arlington Housing Authority (AHA). This study was undertaken in response to various queries. Our goal was to determine to what extent tenants are able to exercise their rights under Massachusetts and federal law to participate in management and the setting of policy and procedures in governing their living space.

The AHA board has a total of five members: three are elected, one is appointed by the Arlington Select Board, and one is appointed by the governor. There is an executive director and a staff who manage a number of building complexes for the elderly/disabled, a housing complex for families, and a number of Section Eight Housing Choice Vouchers for subsidized housing in Arlington. The buildings for both elderly/disabled and families have some handicapped accessible apartments.

For this study, representatives of the LWVA attended AHA Board Meetings, reviewed the minutes and their notes from those meetings, and gathered comments from tenants. They also interviewed the town manager, a representative from the Mass. Union of Public Housing Tenants, the chief of police, the executive director of the Housing Corporation of Arlington, two social workers of the Council on Aging, the head of Fair and Affordable Housing, the director of the Council on Aging, a social worker from Minuteman Senior Services, and the chair of the AHA Board, who was accompanied by the board counsel.

Each person was asked the same general questions, and follow-up questions were directed at each organization's role in tenant rights. Meeting and interview notes were transcribed and distributed to members of the LWVA AHA study committee and were used to describe what we heard and observed. In addition, through the last ten or more years, LWVA volunteers have overseen tenant elections in several buildings in Arlington as well as Cambridge and helped write tenant bylaws for several tenant organizations. Our findings also reflect the conversations and interactions of these longer relationships.

The following recommendations were made to the LWVA membership and adopted at our Annual Meeting in June of 2019. The conclusion of the membership was to support:

- Documentation of AHA policies and procedures, including state regulations, to define a formal process for tenant concerns to be communicated, addressed, and resolved.
- Adherence to the Massachusetts Open Meeting Law.
- Regular professional training on how best to interact with people with challenges including but not limited to hearing, sight, language, cultural, financial, religious and physical and mental abilities. Communication should be responsive, prompt and courteous.
- Tenant handbooks which are explicitly clear regarding whom to call in housing emergencies as well as the numbers for police, fire, or regular building maintenance. The handbooks should be reviewed/revised every few years as necessary and dated for easy reference.
- An adequate number of social workers to meet the needs of the tenants.
- Regulations outlining the procedure for the election/appointment of tenant representation on the AHA's board to be codified by the state.

Within the last few days of the 2020 legislative session at the State House, legislation was passed that one person on the Housing Authority board must be a tenant who will be appointed by the Select Board for a five-year term. To fill a vacancy, Fiorella Badilla, who happens to be a tenant of the AHA, was recently appointed to the AHA board. This appointment is good until the local election in April and that

(Continued on page 7)



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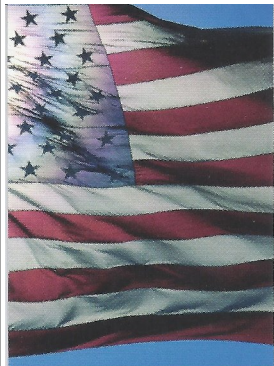
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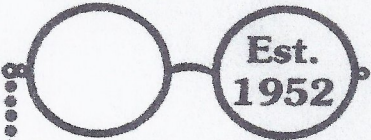


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LWVA Supports Tenants' Rights in AHA Properties (Continued)

seat (term expiring in 2022) will always now be filled by the Select Board appointing a tenant. The Select Board will need to appoint a tenant for the remaining year of this term. There is also one five-year term open for the town-wide election in April.

If you are interested in public housing in Arlington, you can go to the Arlington Housing Authority website (<https://www.arlingtonhousing.org/>), where there is information on how to view board meetings remotely.

While the League takes no position on candidates for public office, the League is hopeful that a few citizens in Arlington will be interested in running for the Housing Authority board. The League also hopes that those running for the AHA board will consider the support positions mentioned above.

League of Women Voters of the United States Calls for Immediate Removal of President Donald Trump

1/8/2021

WASHINGTON – Thursday night, the League of Women Voters board of directors met and voted unanimously to call for the immediate removal of Donald J. Trump from the office of the President of the United States of America via any legal means, including and in order of preference: impeachment with disqualification, the invocation of the 25th amendment, or resignation. Today, the League of Women Voters board of directors issued the following statement:

“Donald Trump must be immediately removed as President of the United States of America and banned from running for federal office ever again.

“The sitting president was the instigator of Wednesday’s domestic terrorist attack on the U.S. Capitol that left five Americans dead and many more injured. He commanded an army of insurrectionists to forcefully overturn our free and fair elections in an effort to maintain power. These are the actions of a tyrannical despot, and they are in direct opposition to American democracy. President Trump continues to present a clear threat to national security as well as the safety and security of the American public.

“For violating his oath to preserve, protect, and defend the Constitution of the United States, Donald Trump must immediately resign or be removed from office by any measure possible in accordance with the law. Removing President Trump from the office of the president and swearing in Vice President Mike Pence to fulfill the duration of this presidential term will ensure our Constitution is maintained and upheld.

“The League of Women Voters calls on both the U.S. House of Representatives and the U.S. Senate to immediately impeach President Trump with disqualification and remove him from office. Should Congress fail to impeach him, we call on Vice President Mike Pence and the Cabinet to invoke the 25th Amendment and remove President Trump from office immediately.”





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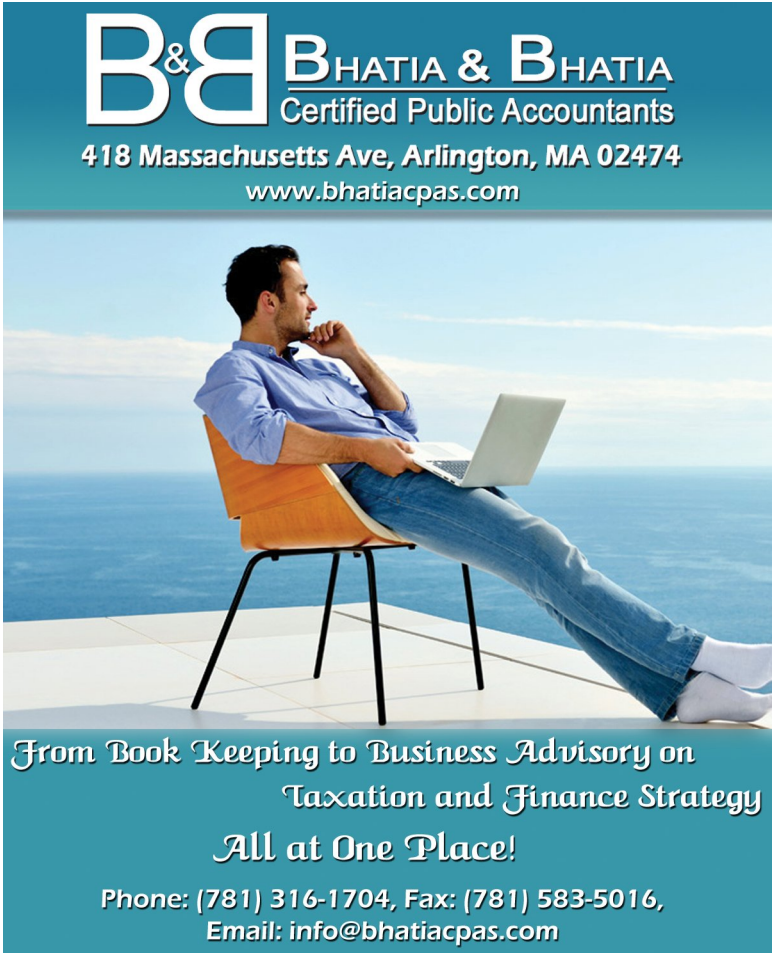
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Fiscal Year runs from April 1 to March 31

Name, Address, Telephone, Zip, Precinct, Occupation, Date, Email

Please indicate if you do NOT want your contact information sent to Arlington League members

Basic Membership Dues \$60, 2nd member in household \$23, Student (full-time) \$20, Contribution to help the LWV in Arlington, add \$, TOTAL ENCLOSED \$

If \$60 is a hardship, please pay what you can and let us know that this is your dues payment.

MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO: League of Women Voters of Arlington MAIL TO: Ann FitzGerald, 162 Summer St., Unit 1, Arlington, MA 02474

Please check areas of interest and activity even if you can't be actively involved THIS year.

SPECIAL LEAGUE ACTIVITIES

- Join the Board. Position: Action: phone calls letters Bulletin: mailing soliciting ads Membership Nominating Committee Publicity Writer Voter Service: Rides to the polls Candidates Night Voters' Guide Attend State League's Phonathon Be a discussion leader at local meetings Fundraising activities Offer meeting refreshments Post fliers and deliver brochures Host a meeting in my home Monitor elections for nonprofit organizations

FOLLOW ISSUES, KEEP LEAGUE AND COMMUNITY INFORMED

- Congress/Presidency/Election Process Discrimination/Equal Employment/Civil Rights Education/Child Care Environment/Recycling Health Care Justice/Courts/Prisons Land Use Taxation/Budgets/Deficits Transportation/Urban Policy Voting Rights Warrant Articles Review Welfare Policies/Basic Human Needs Women's Issues Zoning/Community Development/Land Use

OBSERVE AT

TOWN BOARD MEETINGS*

- Selectmen (Mondays) Redevelopment Board (Mondays) School Committee (2nd & 4th Thursdays) Conservation Commission (1st & 3rd Thurs.) Housing Authority

SKILLS LEAGUE COULD DRAW ON

- Computer database Fundraising Graphic design Writing articles Desktop publishing Other Web site maintenance Membership development Moderating meetings

BEST TIME TO CALL YOU:

(for phone tree reminders) Call before o'clock

*Some of these can be seen on cable TV

February 2021

League of Women Voters of Arlington
Post Office Box 461
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