



**BULLETIN**  
*lwva.com*

**November/December 2023**

**Calendar**

Tuesday November 7 7 a.m. to 8 p.m.	Election Day, to consider two ballot questions.
Tuesday November 14 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.
Thursday November 16 4 p.m.	Second of three seminars on offshore wind, co-sponsored by the League of Women Voters of Massachusetts (LWVMA). Details on page 7.
Monday December 11 6 p.m.	Annual LWVA Holiday Party, at Kathy and Paul Fennelly's home, 97 Gray St. Friends and family welcome! Details on page 3.

**Carolyn Parsons and Angela Olszewski:** Co-Presidents  
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**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

Dear League Members,

As I write this, Arlington is in the midst of some important civic activities. Special Town Meeting is in session, preparing to debate and vote on the warrant article related to the MBTA Communities Act. The League hosted a conversation about the plan in September. You can read a recap of the event in this bulletin if you missed the in-person meeting.

Arlington will be going to the polls on November 7<sup>th</sup> to vote on two questions: an override of Proposition 2½, and an expansion of property tax relief for low-income seniors (with conditions). Please remember to vote. Encourage your friends and neighbors to do the same.

I am looking forward to our annual holiday party, which will be hosted this year at the home of Kathy and Paul Fennelly. Christine Bongiorno, our new deputy town manager-operations, has agreed to speak. Christine is a long-time town employee who recently assumed this role. I hope you can join us for a great conversation and a delicious pot-luck! Details are available in this bulletin.

I wish you all a happy, healthy holiday season!

*Angela Olszewski*



**LWVA LEADERSHIP 2023–2024**

Carolyn Parsons, Co-President	781-646-9309
Angela Olszewski, Co-President	781-648-8649
Meredith Zona, Organization VP	781-648-2753
Patricia Muldoon, Action VP	339-223-3300
Joan Martin, Treasurer	617-966-4521
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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.

## You're Invited to LWVA's Annual Holiday Party!

**Monday, December 11, 2023**

**6:00 - 9:00 PM**

**Kathy & Paul Fennelly's Home – 97 Gray St., Arlington**

Mark your calendars now for the Arlington League's Annual Holiday Potluck Party, in person!

Appetizers and drinks will be served at 6:00.  
Main course will start at 6:30.

Our featured guest speaker this year will be  
**Arlington Deputy Town Manager-Operations Christine Bongiorno!**

Christine Bongiorno became Deputy Town Manager-Operations September 11, 2023, after serving the Town as Director of Health and Human Services (HHS) for nearly two decades. The Deputy Town Manager-Operations assists the Town Manager in the operation of the Town. As Director of HHS, Bongiorno led a team working toward improving public health and meeting the human services needs of the community through the Health Department, Council on Aging, Veterans Services, Arlington Youth Counseling Center and the Diversity Equity and Inclusion Divisions. Source: [Bongiorno Named Arlington's Deputy Town Manager-Operations](#)

LWVA members, friends and family are most welcome to come and hear Christine speak about her priorities for Arlington, and to provide comments and ask questions.

*Directions:* 97 Gray St. is at the intersection of Gray St. and Churchill Ave., which is the 4th right after you turn onto Gray St. from Pleasant St. (Route 60). If you're traveling on Gray St. from Arlington Heights, Churchill Ave. is the 4th left after the lights at Highland Ave. The house is a large gray home on the right side if you're traveling up from Pleasant Street. There is plenty of on-street parking.



Please let Meredith Zona know by **Thursday, December 7**, if you can attend and what dish you would like to bring. If you need a ride, please tell Meredith and we'll make arrangements. Call her at 781-648-2753 or e-mail [meredith.zona@stantec.com](mailto:meredith.zona@stantec.com). Looking forward to seeing you there!


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## MBTA COMMUNITIES LAW MEETING

*By Carolyn Parsons*

On September 26, 2023, LWVA held a meeting at Kathy and Paul Fennelly's home to review the MBTA Communities Law and its impact on Arlington. About 15 – 20 people attended the event. Jennifer Susse, member of LWVA and Equitable Arlington, an organization that promotes, among other things, additional housing near public transportation, gave a presentation about the law. The law requires cities and towns served by the MBTA to increase the supply and type of housing to address high regional housing costs by creating a district of reasonable size where multifamily housing is allowed by right. A seven-member MBTA Working Group studied how Arlington might implement this law and provided recommendations to the Arlington Redevelopment Board (ARB). Arlington Town Meeting Members were scheduled to vote on the ARB's final proposal, with or without amendments, at the Special Town Meeting that started on October 17, 2023.

The meeting included a lively question-and-answer session where Jennifer fielded questions on housing, setbacks, open space requirements, school capacities, economic impacts, and preservation of historical properties. The event was very educational, and it was clear that Town Meeting members will have a lot to digest in considering how Arlington will implement the MBTA Communities Law.

On October 26, the Town reported in its notices, "On October 25, 2023, Special Town Meeting voted to adopt Article 12: MBTA Communities Overlay District, with the Revised Anderson Amendment. As with all changes to the bylaw, Article 12 must be reviewed by the Attorney General to ensure that it is compliant with state law. It must also be reviewed by the Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities (EOHLC) to ensure that it is compliant with the MBTA Communities legislation (MGL Ch. 40A, Section 3A). The AG's Office will respond within the next 90 days, and we expect a response from EOHLC by early February, so that the Town can participate in the Fossil Fuel-Free Demonstration Program, also adopted at this Special Town Meeting."

*Note:* You can access the Revised Anderson Amendment at the Town of Arlington website ([arlingtonma.gov](http://arlingtonma.gov)) by clicking on the Special Town Meeting Warrant under Town Governance, clicking on Article 12, and then scrolling to the end of the article to find all of the proposed amendments, letters, etc.



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*Initial consultation is free for LWVA members*



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## Second Webinar in LWVMA Offshore Wind Series Airs November 16

*By Launa Zimmaro, LWVMA Environment Specialist*

Massachusetts and other New England states are planning on offshore wind as a major factor in meeting renewable energy generation and emissions reduction goals as we transition off fossil fuels. Join us as we take a deep dive into the Northeast's offshore wind industry and learn about the value of critical offshore wind projects and threats to their timely deployment.

Each session has a separate Zoom registration. Sign up for one, two, or all three! See full descriptions and registration links for each session on the League of Women Voters of Massachusetts (LWVMA) website (<https://lwvma.org/whats-up-with-offshore-wind/>). This series is co-hosted by the LWVMA and New England for Offshore Wind (NE4OSW).

The title of the series is "What's Up with Offshore Wind? Current Status - Future Plans - Getting It Done."

Webinars are from 4 to 5 p.m. Eastern Time.

Webinar II, on Thursday, Nov. 16, is "Opportunities and Obstacles: Costs and Benefits of Offshore Wind."

The deployment of offshore wind projects in federal waters off the US East Coast is central to the Northeast states' near-term climate and energy goals, but reaching those goals cannot come at the expense of people, wildlife, and the environment.

In this second of a three-part webinar series on offshore wind, you will learn about the costs and benefits of offshore wind projects in the development pipeline and how project developers plan to protect people, wildlife, and the environment; and how stakeholders are working to ensure those plans rely on best practices founded in sound science and data, respect marginalized and overburdened communities, and drive economic justice for all.

Webinar III, on Jan. 18, is "Conflicts and Solutions: Overcoming Offshore Wind Opposition."

The first webinar, "Collaboration and Ambition: Where Offshore Wind Stands Now," took place September 14.

## Day on the Hill: Act for the Future

*From the State League*

Thank you to everyone who joined us for a successful Day on the Hill lobby day, “Act for the Future,” on Wednesday, October 11.

Many thanks to Senate Majority Leader Cindy Creem for serving as our keynote speaker. Senator Creem is the lead sponsor of our top priority elections and voting bill, the ACCESS Act. Special thanks to Rashelle Centeio from Senator Liz Miranda’s office for briefing us on S.1415, An Act relative to birthing justice.

League members enjoyed productive meetings with their legislators to ask for support for bills in four priority areas:

- Elections and Voting: S.410 (<https://malegislature.gov/Bills/193/S410>), An Act making voting administrative changes to create equitable systemic solutions (ACCESS Act)
  - H.688 (<https://malegislature.gov/Bills/193/H688>), An Act establishing same day registration of voters
  - H.707 (<https://malegislature.gov/Bills/193/H707>), An Act decoupling the municipal census from voter registration
  - H.701 (<https://malegislature.gov/Bills/193/H701>), An Act enforcing accessibility for voters with disabilities
  - H.656 (<https://malegislature.gov/Bills/193/H656>), An Act providing uniform mail voting forms
- Maternal Health: S.1415 (<https://malegislature.gov/Bills/193/S1415>), An Act relative to birthing justice
- Firearms: (H4135, An Act modernizing firearm laws, Senate bill to be filed) (<https://malegislature.gov/Bills/193/H4135>)
- PFAS (forever chemicals): H.2197 /S.1356, An Act to protect Massachusetts public health from PFAS (<https://malegislature.gov/Bills/193/H2197>, <https://malegislature.gov/Bills/193/S1356>)

ICYMI: There is still time to contact your legislators in support of our priority legislation. View the information packet for Day on the Hill at <https://lwvma.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/DOTH-member-packet-2023-2.pdf>. If you reference the firearms legislation, the House has now passed a bill, so you just need to urge your Senator to support a strong firearms bill this session.

See you at our next Day on the Hill in October 2025.



We welcome new members at all times. Thank you!

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF ARLINGTON Membership Application/Renewal Form

\*\*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

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

SPECIAL LEAGUE ACTIVITIES

- Action: phone calls letters, Bulletin: mailing soliciting ads, Membership, Nominating Committee, Publicity, Voter Service: Rides to the polls, Candidates Night, Voters' Guide, Host a meeting in my home

FOLLOW ISSUES, KEEP LEAGUE AND COMMUNITY INFORMED

- Congress/Presidency/Election Process, Discrimination/Equal Employment/Civil Rights, Education, Environment/Climate Change, Health Care, Justice/Courts/Prisons, Housing/Zoning/Community Development, Taxation/Budgets/Deficits, Transportation/Urban Policy, Voting Rights, Basic Human Needs, Women's Issues/Gender Issues, Housing/Zoning/Community Development, Other

OBSERVE AT TOWN BOARD MEETINGS\*

- Select Board (Mondays), Redevelopment Board (Mondays), School Committee (2nd & 4th Thursdays), Conservation Commission, Housing Authority

SKILLS LEAGUE COULD DRAW ON

- Writing articles, Computer spreadsheet, Desktop publishing, Website management, Moderating meetings, Membership development

\*Some of these can be seen on cable TV

Please add my name, street address, phone number, and email address to the LWVA mailing list: Yes No

(Note: This information will not be sent to anyone outside the LWVA)

**November/December 2023**

**League of Women Voters of Arlington  
Post Office Box 461  
Arlington, MA 02476**

