



**BULLETIN**  
*lwva.com*

**May 2024**

**Calendar**

May 7	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.
June 10	Monday 6 p.m.	LWVA Annual meeting/potluck at Meredith Zona's home, 1 Andrews Way. Our guest speaker will be Beth Locke of the Chamber of Commerce. Details on page 3.
June 22	Saturday 9 to 11 a.m.	LWVMA Council 2024 via Zoom teleconference, with speaker Beth Chandler. Details on page 5.

**LWV ARLINGTON RECEIVES SCHARFMAN GRANT**

*By Meredith Zona*

LWV Arlington recently received a \$400 Scharfman Grant from LWV Massachusetts to help cover the cost of stickers for our "Arlington Votes" signs for recent and upcoming elections. You may have seen these signs around town just ahead of elections in recent years. We're able to reuse these weatherproof signs many times by applying stickers with the appropriate day of the week and date for each election.

LWV Massachusetts awards Scharfman Grants to local Leagues for carrying out civic education and voter engagement programs, events, and/or projects, and the update and reuse of our signs to encourage citizens to vote met these criteria.

**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 thank Kathy and Paul Fennelly for hosting the Legislators' Brunch. A full house, wonderful food, and a lively discussion in person is just "the ticket" as my mother would say. A guest came up to me as I was leaving and said that the legislators "know their stuff." I agree!

I am thrilled to announce that Beth Locke of the Arlington Chamber of Commerce has agreed to be our speaker at Annual Meeting on June 10. Details on page 3.

As a Town Meeting Member (TMM), the experience of being in the Town Hall auditorium never gets old. On the first night there is a bit of pomp, remembrances of town officials and Town Meeting Members who have passed away during the past year, a State of the Town Address, and several formal votes to expedite the whole meeting. An amendment is being proposed to one of the articles in the warrant to require that the appointed Town Clerk be a resident of Arlington. I will vote against this proposal. My view is that the Town should hire the most qualified candidate whether or not the person resides in Arlington. The town has not had a residency requirement for the Town Manager for several years. Given that reality, I see no reason to require the Town Clerk to live in Arlington. I look forward to a heated discussion.

*Carolyn Parsons*

## LWVA Welcomes New Members

We extend a warm welcome to our members who have joined in the past year: Marina Popova, Laura Ahner, and Dana Cooperson, and Maura Albert.

### In Memoriam

We have learned that Marian King, a longtime member of the LWVA as well as a Town Meeting Member, has recently passed away. We extend our condolences to her family and friends.



### 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
Anne Linn, Secretary	781-643-0356
Ann FitzGerald, Membership Director	781-646-9711
Elisabeth Carr-Jones, Voter Service	781-648-9026
Jo Anne Preston, Voter Service	781-643-5431
Kim Haase, Bulletin Editor/Ads	781-643-3429
Margaret Reiners, Bulletin Mailing	781-646-9611
Pamela Meister, Email Coordinator	781-646-8024
Elisabeth Carr-Jones, Webmistress	781-648-9026

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 ARE INVITED TO LWV ARLINGTON'S  
ANNUAL MEETING & PARTY – LIVE & IN PERSON!!!**

**MONDAY, JUNE 10, 2024**

**MEREDITH ZONA'S HOME  
1 ANDREWS WAY**

**APPETIZERS AT 6:00 P.M., DINNER AT 6:30 P.M.**

**FOLLOWED BY A SPECIAL PROGRAM AND A BRIEF BUSINESS MEETING**

Please come to socialize, enjoy great food, listen to our guest speaker, and find out what's happening with LWV Arlington. The guest speaker for our program will be Beth Locke, Executive Director of the Arlington Chamber of Commerce. We hope to learn about the state of Arlington's business community.

Please RSVP by June 6 to Meredith Zona at 781-540-4473, or Meredith.Zona@stantec.com. Beverages will be provided. Please let Meredith know if you can bring a dish to share. If anyone needs a ride or would like to carpool, please call Carolyn Parsons at 781-646-9309.

**Friends, neighbors, spouses, etc., are most welcome!**

***Directions to Meredith's House:***

From the west end of Arlington, turn onto Overlook Rd. at the Summer St. traffic light across from the skating rink. Keep to the left at the fork and travel about 1/2 mile to Ridge St. Turn right onto Ridge St., then 1st left onto Cherokee Rd., 1st right onto Old Colony Rd., and 1st right onto Andrews Way. *Andrews Way is a short street that looks like a driveway. 1 Andrews Way is the tan-colored house directly ahead on the left. You may want to park on Old Colony Rd. Come in through the garage if you prefer not to climb the stairs to the front door.*



From Arlington Center, travel on Mystic St. towards Winchester and take a slight left on Old Mystic St. (about 3/4 mile north of Summer St.), then 2nd left onto Hutchinson Rd., 2nd left onto Morningside Dr., 1st right onto Windmill Lane, 1st left onto Old Colony Rd., and 1st left onto Andrews Way; see directions in italics above.


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10% off for LWVA members and their families

## Legislators Address Justice, Health Care, Housing, and Other Issues at Festive Brunch

*By Kim Haase*

On a sunny April day, League members and guests gathered at Kathy and Paul Fennelly's home for our annual Legislators' Brunch.

After a delicious and abundant potluck brunch, LWVA VP Meredith Zona thanked the Fennellys for their warm hospitality and then thanked State Senator Cindy Friedman and State Representatives Sean Garballey and Dave Rogers for joining us to provide updates on the work of the legislature.

The program began with a question-and answer session and ended with our guests describing their legislative accomplishments and priorities.

**Criminal Justice:** The first question was about the status of the LWVMA-supported "Raise the Age" bill, which would raise the age of juvenile jurisdiction gradually over five years to include young people from 18 through 20 years of age in the juvenile justice system, or alternatively divert them to community-based diversion programs. Sen. Friedman said that this was Senate President Karen Spilka's number one priority and that it had a very good chance of passing the Senate. Reps. Rogers and Garballey said that the odds in the House may not be as high, although there is a lot of support. Rep. Rogers noted that there had been a good many criminal justice reforms recently, including no-cost calls for incarcerated people. In response to a question, Rep. Garballey said the cost for these free calls was about \$30 million annually.

**Health Care:** Another question was about the status of Sen. Friedman's "PC4You" bill. Sen. Friedman, who is chair of the Joint Committee on Health Care Financing, explained that the bill was designed to address the crisis in primary care: there are not enough primary care physicians or psychiatrists, because these are the lowest paid areas of medicine. Only about 5% of medical students here go into primary care. The bill would require doubling primary care funding by increasing it by 30% each year. It would also require a shift from fee for service to per-patient expenditure for primary care, with regular outcome-based evaluation. The bill is currently in the Senate Ways and Means Committee. (There's a good explainer at <https://sites.tufts.edu/chsp/2023/05/18/primary-care-for-you-pc4you/>.)

A League member commented that when Lahey acquired Mt. Auburn Hospital, it dismantled the geriatric center there that had focused on preventive care for seniors, because it didn't bring in enough money. Asked if we have enough doctors in the state, since licensing is so hard here, Sen. Friedman said that we have enough specialists (who are paid on a more profitable fee for service basis) but not enough primary care physicians. Doctors are leaving primary care because of money pressure and administrative burdens.

Asked about the Steward Health Care situation, Sen. Friedman said that there was a prospect of bankruptcy and bringing in buyers for the hospitals, but it was complicated because private equity and real estate investment trusts (REITs) are involved. The hospitals' land has been transferred to REITs. Because the company is privately held, potential buyers can't obtain information as to the assets they may or may not be buying. The courts may play a role.

*(Continued on page 7)*



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*Initial consultation is free for LWVA members*

A promotional graphic for Arlington Community Media, Inc. (ACMi). The background is a solid green color. At the top and bottom, there are horizontal bars composed of a series of colored squares in shades of green, blue, purple, and red. The ACMi logo is on the left, featuring the letters 'ACMi' in a stylized white font with a swoosh above the 'i', and 'Arlington Community Media Inc.' in a smaller font below it. To the right of the logo, the text 'EXPLORE ACMi' is written in large, bold, white capital letters. Below this, 'Arlington Community Media, Inc.' is written in a slightly smaller white font. Further down, the text 'Check out the channels and schedules:' is written in white. Below that, the website 'www.ACMI.tv/watch' is listed in white. The phone number '781-777-1115' is shown in white. Finally, the email address 'info@acmi.tv' is displayed in white at the bottom of the text block.

## Legislators' Brunch (Continued)

**State Budget:** Asked what would be happening with the state budget in view of revenue shortfalls, Rep. Garballey noted that the House had just passed its version of the FY25 budget. Revenues were up in March, and he was optimistic this would continue. The budget includes \$600 million in new investment in public transportation (from the Fair Share Amendment funds) and increases in Chapter 70 education funding. Sen. Friedman noted that because of high interest rates, big-ticket item sales are down, causing a reduction in sales tax revenue. Reps. Rogers and Garballey both noted that revenues during the pandemic had been very high because of federal support for the economy, so the current reductions are not drastic. Sen. Rogers said that many areas were level-funded, though some were cut. The Fair Share Amendment is helping provide free state college tuition to students with family incomes under \$70K, and half price tuition to those with incomes under \$100K. Also, the stabilization fund is in great shape.

**End of Life Options:** Asked about the end of life options bill, which the State League supports, Sen. Friedman said that there is fairly strong support in the Senate, because safeguards have been added based on input from the disability community, and polling shows high support.. Rep. Rogers noted that a ballot question on the issue was defeated in 2012, so it has taken a long time to get legislative momentum. Rep. Garballey added that it may not pass the House, because the leadership is in no rush.

**Alewife Brook:** Another major topic was the Alewife Brook and combined sewer overflows (CSOs), which will reportedly take many years and billions of dollars to remove. A League member asked about the possibility of ordering no additional sewer hookups until the problem is solved. Rep. Rogers said that he hadn't heard of this option, but that the current housing shortage means that stopping all building is unlikely. He has filed a bill to end CSOs by 2035. Cambridge, Somerville, and the Massachusetts Water Resources Authority (MWRA) are the main culprits. Cambridge, with its commercial tax base, is very prosperous and can afford more remediation. Filtration systems and hydrology will be part of the solution. The MWRA has finally agreed to include climate change in its rain forecasts.

**Brain Drain:** An attendee asked about the current brain drain reported recently in the *Globe*, with younger professionals leaving the state. Sen. Friedman said that it is real, and caused largely by the high cost of housing in the state. She added that the solution would have to involve adding much more housing, and that immigration is also needed to fill job openings.

The legislators then described their legislative priorities.

Rep. Garballey began by thanking the Fennellys for their hospitality and by saying that he appreciated his partnership with Rep. Rogers and Sen. Friedman. In the previous session, he was glad to have opened the state's colleges and universities to students with intellectual disabilities; this was the last bill signed by Gov. Baker before he left office. He was also proud of his bill allowing adoptees to have access to their original birth certificates, and of another forbidding health insurers from dropping coverage for multiple sclerosis drugs that have worked for patients. This session, he was pleased that the House had just passed his "R word" bill, which removed all references to "retardation" from the Massachusetts General Laws; he hoped it would get through the Senate. As chair of the House Committee on Global Warming and Climate Change, he has hopes for the energy bill, which would support offshore wind and EV infrastructure; he hopes to do more. He also has hopes for the Dark Skies bill to alleviate light pollution by requiring focused, shielded lighting.

*(Continued on next page)*

## Legislators' Brunch (Continued)

Rep. Rogers said that his main priority for many years has been the provision in the House budget to provide lawyers for tenants facing eviction. Governor Healey herself added this line item to the budget; it has support from over 200 groups, including some landlords. This access to counsel will ultimately save the state money by keeping people in their homes. He hopes it will make it into the final budget. Rep. Rogers is chair of the Joint Committee on Higher Education.

Sen. Friedman said that in addition to health care, the immigration issue is a major priority for her; the supplemental budget reconstitutes a task force to look at emergency shelter and homelessness with the goal of fixing our system, which was broken even before the current influx of migrants. As with Rep. Rogers' bill, we need to focus on keeping people housed, providing emergency shelter and finding permanent housing as soon as possible. Sen. Friedman is also chair of the Special Joint Committee on Initiative Petitions, which is weighing ten ballot questions, some of which may be thrown out by the courts. Among the questions are making rideshare and delivery drivers employees instead of contractors; increasing the tipped minimum wage; legalizing psychedelic mushrooms; and allowing the state auditor to audit the legislature. The last is likely to be ruled unconstitutional because it violates the separation of powers.

A few more questions followed, mainly on housing issues. The problem of teardowns -- replacing small houses with giant ones -- can be resolved mainly by adding to the housing supply, according to Sen. Friedman. Passing a real estate transfer tax in the housing bond bill will give communities the option to raise revenue to be applied to affordable housing. A League member pointed out that we needed not just more affordable housing but substantially more low-income housing. Rep. Rogers said that the housing bond bill did include funding for public housing.



Sen. Cindy Friedman answers a question from a Legislators' Brunch guest as Rep. Dave Rogers, Rep. Sean Garballey, and other attendees listen.

*Photo by Kim Haase*



## Legislative Action Committee (LAC) in Action

*From the League of Women Voters of Massachusetts*

LWVMA's priority legislation is on the move as we head towards the finish line of the formal legislative session on July 31. What is the Legislative Action Committee doing right now to advance our priority bills? We are...

- Cheering on conference committees for wage equity, firearms, and preventing abuse and exploitation, including coercive control. Three members from each chamber are meeting to iron out differences between versions of the bills. We urge the conferees to report out quickly. Each chamber must vote up or down on the final bill before it reaches Governor Healey's desk.
- Applauding Senate passage of the Healthy Youth Act (<https://malegislature.gov/Bills/193/S2694>), Common Start (<https://malegislature.gov/Bills/193/S2697>), and increased access to disposable menstrual products for all (<https://malegislature.gov/Bills/193/S2491>). We now urge the House to take quick action on these critical bills. Missed our Healthy Youth Act Action Alert (<https://myemail.constantcontact.com/ACTION-ALERT--Act-today-to-bring-Sex-Education-Bill-for-a-House-Vote.html?soid=1102238939046&aid=QhEctz-jnCQ>)? There's still time to urge your representatives to call for a floor vote to ensure students receive medically accurate sex ed.
- Ensuring firearms are banned from polling stations. Missed our firearms Action Alert (<https://myemail.constantcontact.com/ACTION-ALERT--Ban-firearms-at-polling-stations.html?soid=1102238939046&aid=fSwPKM9gVT8>)? There's still time to contact your legislators and ask them to urge the conference committee to ensure safety at polling stations.
- Asking lawmakers to reject Governor Healey's request in the municipal bond bill so that public meetings remain public virtually or hybrid. Missed our hybrid meeting Action Alert ([https://myemail.constantcontact.com/ACTION-ALERT--Keep-Remote-Access-to-Public-Meetings.html?soid=1102238939046&aid=b7rD\\_Mo-olA](https://myemail.constantcontact.com/ACTION-ALERT--Keep-Remote-Access-to-Public-Meetings.html?soid=1102238939046&aid=b7rD_Mo-olA))? There's still time to urge lawmakers to act to make public meetings more accessible. And see the Boston Globe editorial: Maura Healey's hybrid-meeting proposal doesn't go far enough (<https://www.bostonglobe.com/2024/03/10/opinion/hybrid-public-meetings-healey-legislature/>).
- Requesting the Affordable Homes Act and the FY'25 budgets include money for a statewide access to counsel program.
- Signing coalition letters to committee chairs to support electrification of public transportation as well as to remove subsidies for woody biomass energy in proposed climate legislation.
- Lobbying with coalition partners including Election Modernization Coalition, Jane Doe Inc., MA Coalition for the Homeless, and MA Public Health Association.

Questions about legislation or actions you can take? Email [specialists@lwvma.org](mailto:specialists@lwvma.org).

*Editor's Note: This report reflects the bills' status as of April 22; progress may have been made since.*



## LWVMA Announces Council Speaker for June 22

*From the League of Women Voters of Massachusetts*

We are pleased to announce that Beth Chandler will be our featured speaker for Council 2024!

Beth is no stranger to the League - she was with us in 2021 as we focused on our Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion policy and she spoke about the ABC's of Change. On June 22nd, Beth will be speaking at Council about best practices for building the next generation of leaders. Her remarks will include strategies and tips for building the leadership pipeline to insure that Leagues are "building their bench" for the sustainability of the organization.

See <https://www.ywboston.org/people-list/beth-chandler/> for more information about Beth.

Beth is a leadership trailblazer who has been involved in mission-driven nonprofit work in Massachusetts for over twenty years. She currently serves as the President and CEO of YW Boston, an organization committed to eliminating racism, empowering women, and promoting peace, justice, freedom and dignity for all.

Council will be held via Zoom on Saturday, June 22nd from 9:00 to 11:00 AM. Register at [https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZ0tce2vqTkiG9KNp0PWXcqJCJTh-g3HPrW\\_#/registration](https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZ0tce2vqTkiG9KNp0PWXcqJCJTh-g3HPrW_#/registration) and check out our Council 2024 webpage (<https://lwwma.org/council-2024/>) for additional information.

**Our fiscal year started April 1, so please renew if you haven't already, online (see next page for instructions) or by using this form. Thank you!**

**LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF ARLINGTON  
Membership Application/Renewal Form**

*\*\*Fiscal Year runs from April 1 to March 31\*\**

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\_\_\_\_ Basic Membership Dues..... \$60  
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\_\_\_\_ 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  
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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

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- Congress/Presidency/Election Process
- Discrimination/Equal Employment/Civil Rights
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- 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  
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- Select Board (Mondays)
- Redevelopment Board (Mondays)
- School Committee (2nd & 4th Thursdays)
- Conservation Commission
- Housing Authority

**SKILLS LEAGUE COULD DRAW ON**

- Writing articles
- Computer spreadsheet
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- 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)

## Renew Your League Membership Online!

You can now use the League of Women Voters of Arlington website to renew your membership or join the League. Follow these steps:

1. Go to <https://www.lwva.com> and click **Join the Arlington League**.
2. On the Join page, click the **Join or Renew using PayPal, debit or credit card** button
3. On the Membership page, fill in the form and click the **Submit and Proceed to PayPal for Payment** button.
4. On the Payment page, click the option you want (Basic Membership, etc.).
5. Choose **Donate with PayPal** (if you have an account) or **Donate with your Debit or Credit Card**.
6. On the PayPal site, fill in the form and click **Donate Now**.

You can still renew by printing the form on page 7 and mailing it to the LWVA with your check.

**MAY 2024**

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

