



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS®
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Editor's Note: If you do not see a photo of Robin Krivanek below, click on "display images" in your email program.

Message from Robin Krivanek, LWV Sanibel President

Greetings, Leaguers:

I imagine you are as dismayed by the antics in Tallahassee as I am. In an attempt to clarify the situation, I queried our LWV Florida lobbyist, Debbie Harrison Rumberger, and here are some of her comments:

"The regular session broke down because the House adjourned prematurely and without the knowledge or agreement of the Senate. This unprecedented action meant the Senate could only pass those bills that were identical to ones passed by the House or they could adopt the House version of any bill the House had adopted. The standoff more specifically deals with the 2015-2016 budget, the one piece of legislation that is required by law to be passed by July 1. However you are correct in that the dispute has been created by the House's and Governor's refusal to accept Medicaid expansion for Florida. Also at issue is hospital funding designed to offset treatment provided to Florida's 800,000 currently uninsured individuals.



A Special Legislative Session has been called for June 1-20, however rumor has it that it may not start until June 10. There is no crystal ball as to what will be included in the session call. The topics are generally quite limited. A budget must be adopted. Distribution of Amendment 1 funds must occur. Whether this will include a discussion of water policy bills (SB 918, HB 7003) or just the appropriation of funds is unknown."

So, Leaguers, stay tuned and rejoice in the fact that, although most legislation passes in the last few days of the session, online voter registration had already passed over-whelmingly in both houses before this fiasco. Since the governor opposes it, we can hope either that he will change his mind and sign it or let it become law without his signature. Stay tuned.

INFORMATIVE TALK BY CITY MANAGER JUDIE ZIMOMRA AT LAST LWV SANIBEL MEETING OF THE SEASON

By Mary E. La Velle



Judie has been Sanibel's City Manager since 2001- an impressive tenure, even more so since the City previously had six different managers in five years! Educated at The Ohio State University's School of Administration as well as the Kennedy School of Government, she has brought a rare degree of dedication and smarts, as well as stability, to Sanibel's governance.

We know our 40-year old City is unique, starting with its Vision Statement ([CLICK HERE](#) to see the Vision Statement). The City Charter further sets us apart from most of the 410 other Florida cities in that our City Council is non-partisan, elected at large and not from wards or districts, and compensated only for expenses...thus more likely to be serving the Island as a whole, and for love rather than money. The Council hires only the City Attorney, also a long-serving employee, and the City Manager. The latter has all the responsibility for hiring, firing, dealing with employees, and operating within the budget set by Council.

By Florida law, that budget's fiscal year begins in October. So it is not only in Sanibel that hearings on budgets are held when snowbirds have flown north! Interested residents can, however, keep up with Council proceedings via the

MYSANIBEL.COM website ([CLICK HERE](#)); from the Agendas and Minutes page you follow the "click here" instruction in the text block at the top of the web page to take you to the list of meetings. You can sort by committee or year and month. Click on the blue text to go to the described document (agendas) or stream (audio). All public meetings in progress--not just Council but all boards and committees-- are now part of live streaming and are also archived on the City's website. What's even better is that agendas are bookmarked, so you don't have to sit through the excruciatingly boring parts to get to the juicier ones.

The Council's current priorities are 1) WATER QUALITY both on and off the island, 2) FINANCIAL STABILITY AND 3) REDEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS. Councilman Mick Denham heads up efforts on-island, and Mayor Kevin Ruane, off-island. Kevin is no doubt very disappointed in the State's refusal to fund the already approved purchase of sugar land that would have improved the polluted flows coming to us from Lake Okeechobee. Clean water has lost again.



One part of Judie's job that keeps her burning midnight oil is answering emails. 26,000 so far in 2015! A good bet is that a lot of those were about traffic. Managing the cars coming across the causeway is a challenge, especially since Mr. Fodor's and other travel guide books have designated our island as a "place to see before you die." Some days, folks sitting on Periwinkle might have thought that death might happen before traffic began to clear. In response, during the coming summer, Council will revisit all traffic studies previously done and decide where to go from where we are. Your ideas -- especially in light of the Sanibel Vision Statement -- could help inform their decisions if you make your voice heard.

Related to traffic management is the issue of the Civic Core proposal. Many questions remain to be answered before that is even put to referendum. Our LWV will keep on top of that! Untangling the traffic snarl continues to bedevil, with the Dunes Golf and Tennis Club now deciding that hosting events like CROW's Taste of the Islands is no longer in their best interest.

Also related---future sharing of causeway tolls with Lee County, whose commissioners set the rates. Too complicated to go into here....but something you can ask your Councilmen about.

Interesting traffic facts: 33% of causeway crossers surveyed were on their way to Captiva, so what happens there affects Sanibel as well. Fully 20% had no idea where they were going...which is why they stopped at the Chamber of Commerce! No doubt many of them were unhappy to hear that by 9:30 AM EVERY DAY during season, all the parking at public beaches was filled! Technology such as the App "Park Me" might discourage some visitors. But maybe not. Got to see the jam on Periwinkle before they die?

Traffic will also be one concern when the Doc Ford Restaurant's application to relocate to Tarpon Bay Road continues to wind its way through the City's permit process.

Kudos to the City for holding an informational meeting for new residents (over a hundred in attendance!) and for including voter registration materials in a packet prepared for those attendees which was also sent to all who could not attend but expressed interest. Florida's voter participation --- and voter engagement --- is among the lowest in the nation; a challenge especially for us in the League.

Kudos also to Ellen O'Neill for a great set of years of wonderful speakers on issues that are close to our hearts. Thanks, Ellen!!!

And thanks to Judie for a most informative hour.

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Make your voice heard! The Legislature will be in Special Session in June. Contact your representatives to let them know your views on Amendment One funding, the FL budget, and other issues.



Senator Lizbeth Benacquisto (District 30)



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Membership Renewal & Records Update

Please copy this form and mail it along with your check (made out to LWV Sanibel) to LWV Sanibel, P.O. Box 1194, Sanibel, FL 33957

Questions: lwvsanibel@gmail.com

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Please Circle Annual Membership Level

\$125 Susan B. Anthony membership _____

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Voter Services

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LWV Sanibel Board Meetings 2015-2016

Members are invited to attend all Board meetings which are held at 3:30 p.m. on the second Wednesday of the month at the Bank of the Islands.

The League of Women Voters is a nonpartisan political organization that encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy.



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