

**THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN
VOTERS OF GREATER
OMAHA**

**YEARBOOK
2017**



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Mission Statement

The League of Women Voters, a nonpartisan political organization, encourages the 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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FOR VOTING INFORMATION

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THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS

PRINCIPLES

- * The League of Women Voters believes in representative government and in the individual liberties established in the Constitution of the United States.

- * The League of Women Voters believes that democratic government depends upon the informed and active participation and requires that governmental bodies protect the citizen's right to know by giving adequate notice of proposed actions, holding open meetings, and making public records accessible.

- * The League of Women Voters believes that every citizen should be protected in the right to vote; that every person should have access to free public education that provides equal opportunity for all; and that no person or group should suffer legal, economic, or administrative discrimination.

- * The League of Women Voters believes that efficient and economical government requires competent personnel, the clear assignment of responsibility, adequate financing, and coordination among the different agencies and levels of government.

- * The League of Women Voters believes that responsible government should be responsive to the will of the people; that government should maintain an equitable and flexible system of taxation, promote the conservation and development of natural resources in the public interest, share in the solution of economic and social problems that affect the general welfare, promote a sound economy, and adopt domestic policies that facilitate the solution of international problems.

- The League of Women Voters believes that cooperation with other nations is essential in the search for solutions to world problems, and that development of international organization and international law is imperative in the promotion of world peace.

Where Do the Principles Come From?

The Principles are "concepts of government" to which the League subscribes. They are a descendant of the Platform, which served from 1942 to 1956 as the national repository for "principles supported and positions taken by the League as a whole in fields of government to which it has given sustained attention." Since then, the Principles have served two functions, according to the LWVUS

Bylaws: 1) authorization for adoption of national, state and local program (Article XII), and 2) a basis for taking action at the national, state and local levels (Article XII).

The appropriate board authorizes action to implement the Principles once it determines that member understanding and agreement do exist and that action is appropriate. As with other action, when there are ramifications beyond a League's own government jurisdiction, that League should consult other Leagues affected.

The National Board suggests that any action on the Principles be taken in conjunction with current League positions to which they apply and on which member agreement and understanding are known to exist. The Principles are rather broad when standing alone, so it is necessary to exercise caution when considering using them as a basis for action. Furthermore, since 1974 most of the Principles have been an integral part of the national program, most notably in the criteria for evaluating government that appear at the end of the summary of public policy positions.

**THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF NEBRASKA
PROGRAM 2017 – 2018**

GOVERNMENT

THE NEBRASKA CONSTITUTION: Members of the League of Women Voters of Nebraska support measures to improve the Nebraska Constitution through comprehensive coordinated revision. The League is not committed to any specific method of constitutional change, but will accept any practical method of change. Members of the League believe a good constitution should contain only fundamental provisions for a framework of government and should define its powers and organization.—Adopted 1969, amended 2011.

Specifically, the League supports:

- 1) A concise Bill of Rights;
- 2) Additional means to amend the Constitution;
- 3) An executive branch with authority adequate to carry out responsibilities assigned to it by the Constitution;
- 4) Provisions for initiative and referendum;
- 5) A nonpartisan unicameral Legislature;
- 6) Four-year terms with no term limits for Legislators;
- 7) A merit plan for judges;
- 8) Public hearings on legislative bills;
- 9) Mandatory legislative reapportionment after each federal census;
- 10) Salaries set by statute;
- 11) An appointed parole board consisting of specialists in penal and related matters; and
- 12) Opposition to state aid to non-public schools.

REDISTRICTING: The League of Women Voters of Nebraska has found that redistricting is an exceptionally important issue for good government, and is a complex issue. The LWVNE supports creating a redistricting process that is fair and unbiased. —Adopted 2015.

Specifically, the League supports:

- 1) A redistricting process that is either patterned after the 2014 Iowa model (with the Legislative Research Office preparing the maps without Legislative input) or on a model that creates a nonpartisan Citizen Redistricting Commission (composed of an equal number of Republicans and Democrats plus a mutually agreed upon registered nonpartisan chairperson) to create maps that are submitted to the Legislature for its approval or rejection.
- 2) A redistricting process that includes the criteria for drawing redistricting that are historical best practices adopted by most states, namely:
 - Comply with the U.S. Constitution (federal mandate)
 - Comply with the Voting Rights Act (federal mandate)
 - Equal population (federal mandate)
 - Compact and contiguous

- Respect of communities of interest
 - Where possible, district lines shall follow permanent and easily recognized features, such as toll ways, expressways, highways, streets, rivers, and clear geographical features, and when practical, shall coincide with census tract boundaries
 - Maintain, as much as feasible, city, town & county boundaries, & undivided census tracts
 - Create competitive districts with no significant detriment to other goals.
 - Ignore incumbent officials addresses
 - Cannot intentionally favor or disfavor a political party, incumbent, or candidate
 - No city block shall be subdivided, since a city block is the smallest parcel for which census data are available.
- 3) Consideration of two possible amendments to the Nebraska Constitution to facilitate the redistricting process:
- To provide for two-year elections in the districts where no legislators or two legislators are residents in new districts;
 - To provide for the Nebraska Supreme Court to take responsibility for redistricting if the Legislature rejects three sets of plans submitted to them.

MERIT PLAN FOR SELECTION OF JUDGES: The League of Women Voters of Nebraska supports the nominative, appointive and elective features of the Merit Plan for the judges of the Supreme Court, the district courts, the juvenile courts, the county courts and the Workmen’s Compensation Court, and recommends that it be retained in the Constitution.—Adopted 1967, amended 1985 and 1987.

Specifically, the League supports:

- 1) The Commission on Judicial Qualifications as the appointed body to confidentially receive and process complaints from any citizen concerning the discipline or removal of any judge;
- 2) The right of appeal and removal power remaining with the Supreme Court; and
- 3) The right of the electorate to reject judges by election under the Merit Plan, and the Legislature to retain the impeachment power.

COUNTY GOVERNMENT: Members of the League of Women Voters of Nebraska advocate a county government structure that is representative, responsive and responsible, flexible and accountable, that permits the separation of legislative and administrative functions and allows efficient and economical delivery of services with adequate funding. Major structural changes in each county government must be approved by a majority vote of the people in that county.—Adopted 1977, 1991.

Specifically, the League supports:

- 1) The right of a county to choose its own structure, including elective and appointive options;
- 2) Structural and/or functional consolidations of counties and of a city with a

county;

- 3) The option of county home rule;
- 4) Permission for counties to possess all powers not prohibited by state laws;
- 5) Alternative methods for initiating change in a county structure by legislative action of the state or the county and/or by a petition of the county voters;
- 6) A variety of means of financing county government;
- 7) Permission to allow county governments to create or dissolve special purpose districts; excluding school districts, lying wholly within the county, to approve their budgets and to supervise their long-range plans;
- 8) The right of counties to appoint a county administrator; and
- 9) The right of counties to appoint row officers.

FINANCING STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT: The League of Women Voters of Nebraska supports a state fiscal policy that reflects the goal of adequate revenues in order to meet the budgeted expenditures of all levels of government to meet state and local services. In order to allow the aforementioned levels of government to fulfill their governmental responsibilities, a tax structure which is progressive, efficient and flexible is necessary.—Adopted 1987, amended 2011.

Specifically, the League supports the following:

- 1) The state's primary sources of revenue should continue to be derived from a combination of sales and personal income taxes. Additional revenues can be achieved through an increase in tax rates, by extending the sales tax to services with exemptions for medical, legal, child-care and educational services, and increases in tobacco products and liquor taxes.
- 2) The League is opposed to the state operating, or sanctioning the operation of any state or regional lottery.
- 3) The state should utilize the federal income tax form as a progressive, economic and efficient vehicle for taxpayers to determine their tax obligations.
- 4) The state's primary responsibility is in providing adequate funding, in priority order, for: all levels of education, human services programs, aid to local governments, government services and economic development.
- 5) The state legislature when considering budget reductions should carefully evaluate each program and use line item reductions, not across-the-board reductions. The League does not support the imposition of fixed percentage "lids" on state expenditures as a proper method of budget reduction or the use of deficit spending in times of inadequate revenue.
- 6) We believe there should not be any sales tax on food.

NATURAL RESOURCES

WATER: The League of Women Voters of Nebraska supports a water policy, which promotes wise use and care of water resources guided by the principle that water be managed in the public interest.—Updated 1978, amended 1993, updated 1995, amended 1999.

Specifically, the League supports:

- 1) Conservation of water through efficient irrigation practices, improved farming

- techniques and continued research and education;
- 2) Legislative support for beneficial use of water to include water for domestic use including livestock watering, agricultural and manufacturing, including power production uses, and for the following instream uses: fish and wildlife, ground water recharge recreation, and dilution of wastes. Highest priority shall be given to domestic use; and
 - 3) Legislative action to resolve the issues of ground water ownership, interrelationship of ground and surface water, and the administrative structure of water management.

The League acknowledges that there is a physical relationship between surface and groundwater, which is recognized by hydrogeologists, and that Nebraska's statutes must be changed to recognize this relationship. Since geological conditions vary from region to region across the state, laws should be sufficiently flexible to acknowledge this fact.

The League believes that a method for resolving conflicts between competing interests should be established. This method should include tested mediation procedures, and the parties to a dispute should be encouraged to settle the matter between themselves. If arbitrary decisions are made, they should recognize statewide and local interests, should balance public and private interests, and should recognize the differences between the various areas of the state.

Specifically, the League:

- 1) Supports retention of existing water law, but with modification to recognize the relationship between ground and surface water;
- 2) Recognizes the respective roles of the Department of Natural Resources and the Natural Resources Districts;
- 3) Recommends the creation of an institutional framework for resolving water conflicts which is flexible and expedient and which reflects publicly established criteria; and
- 4) Proposes that water problems be resolved by statute instead of abdicating decision-making authority to the courts.

The League supports state regulated water marketing (which includes leasing) as a means of allocating ground and surface water, with consideration given to protection of the public interest, environmental factors, effect on third parties, property tax implications and future water requirements.

Specifically, water marketing administration should include:

- 1) Quantification of water available for sale;
- 2) Terms of sale; and
- 3) A framework for resolving unintended consequences.

The League supports the sale (or leasing) of ground surface water between preference classes with the understanding that the preference system should be preserved.

Since the U.S. Supreme Court has determined ground water to be "publicly owned" and the Nebraska Constitution states that use of surface water is "dedicated to the

people of the state” the League believes that the state should derive revenue from the marketing of water.

LAND USE: Members of the League of Women Voters of Nebraska support a state land use program based on goals and strategies which encourage local control, while at the same time identifying and providing statutory mechanisms for managing areas of statewide concern. Preservation of unique and prime agricultural land should be a primary goal and programs should be developed to implement that goal. The League of Women Voters of Nebraska supports green belt (buffer zone) type legislation and recognizes the inter-relationship of taxation and land use.—Adopted 1979, amended 1985, 1987, 1991.

Specifically, a state land use program should incorporate the following:

- 1) Requirement that local government exercises at least a minimum level of planning and control over land use;
- 2) Provision of state technical assistance to local governments;
- 3) Requirement that state agencies and political subdivisions abide by comprehensive planning of local government with provision for appeal to the state if conflicts occur;
- 4) Encouragement of coordination between governmental agencies, commissions, and boards, which are planning for the same area, and coordination between areas;
- 5) Identification of areas of statewide concern;
- 6) Recognition of the interrelationship of urban and rural concerns in land use;
- 7) Adoption of goals and implementation of policies to preserve unique and prime agricultural land;
- 8) Coordination of the state land use planning process by the Policy Research Office;
- 9) Establishment of a capital improvements process with long and short-range goals;
- 10) Involvement of the public; and
- 11) Insurance that policies and procedures are understandable and simple to follow for those who need to work with and under them.

ENERGY: The League of Women Voters of Nebraska believes that energy conservation must be a part of any national or state energy policy. Public understanding and cooperation are essential to the success of any program of energy conservation. Citizens should be involved in the difficult choices that must be made.

ELECTRIC UTILITY DEREGULATION/PRIVATIZATION IN NEBRASKA: Sound government policies are supported with “condition certain.” “Condition certain” means that no changes in the regulation of electricity will take place unless and until certain conditions are in place, such as viable wholesale energy markets and viable transmission networks.

SOCIAL POLICY

CORRECTIONS: The League of Women Voters of Nebraska supports a correctional system which provides for realistic and humane treatment of the accused and sentenced offender both juvenile and adult, as well as for the protection of the community. In order to achieve such a system, the League advocates the use of community-based alternatives to incarceration and the separation of corrections from law enforcement.—Adopted 1975, *Alternatives to Incarceration*, -updated 1984, amended 1993, 2016.

Specifically, the League supports:

- 1) Diversion of offenders from the criminal justice system to appropriate programs;
- 2) Decriminalizing certain victimless crimes when alternative programs and facilities are feasible;
- 3) Improved and increased use of a variety of pre-trial release procedures;
- 4) The principle that juveniles be heard in juvenile court and held in facilities specifically designed for juvenile offenders;
- 5) A probation system comprising an adequate professional staff as well as volunteers;
- 6) Institutional programs aimed at reintegrating the offender into the community;
- 7) A central state agency to set minimum jail standards and to coordinate local correctional administration;
- 8) Removal of payment to jailer based on number of prisoners confined; and
- 9) A system which insures the preservation of civil and human rights of pre-trial detainees and which insures basic human rights of sentenced offenders.
- 10) Abolition of the death penalty.

EQUAL RIGHTS AMENDMENT: The League of Women Voters of Nebraska supports bringing state laws into compliance with the goals of the Equal Rights Amendment.—Amended 1981, 1985.

Specifically, the League supports:

- 1) Elimination or amendment of those laws that have the effect of discrimination on the basis of sex;
- 2) Promotion of laws that support the goal of ERA; and
- 3) Strengthening the enforcement of such existing laws.

NATIVE AMERICANS: The League of Women Voters of Nebraska believes that Native Americans should participate in the formulation, development implementation and valuation of all policies and programs affecting them.—Adopted 1974, amended 1985, 1987, 1993.

Specifically, the League supports:

- 1) Equality of opportunity for employment, health care, education, and welfare benefits;
- 2) Efforts to keep Native American children within their own families. In cases in which the child must be removed from his/her family, the primary concern of welfare departments should be to place the child in willing and qualified Native

American foster/adoptive homes. Non-native American foster/adoptive parents should receive cultural awareness and sensitivity training before a Native American child is placed in the home;

- 3) Multicultural education and sensitivity training which includes the customs and culture of the Native American;
- 4) Affirmative action programs as a necessity;
- 5) Education efforts as a necessity to inform Native Americans of their rights and the services available to them;
- 6) A Nebraska Commission on Indian Affairs composed entirely of Native Americans, whose objective shall be to enhance the cause of the Native American rights and to develop solutions to problems common to all Nebraska Native Americans, maintained and adequately funded; and
- 7) A review by this commission of all treaties of Midwestern Native Americans, specifically as they apply to the tribes or their branches located within the state of Nebraska. The existing responsibilities and rights outlined in the federal and Nebraska statutes should be determined and implemented.

CHILD CARE: The League of Women Voters of Nebraska believes that children in preschools, child care and learning centers or child care homes should be provided humane, quality care in a safe and healthy environment.—amended 1985, 1986, 1987, 1989.

Specifically, the League supports:

- 1) Establishment of uniform minimum standards by federal, state and local governments in the regulation of preschool, child-care, and learning centers and homes;
- 2) Adequate staffing to promote personal, emotional and intellectual growth;
- 3) Education of preschool and learning center teachers, parents, caregivers and others about quality care; and
- 4) An environment free from child abuse and/or neglect.

CHILD WELFARE: The League of Women Voters of Nebraska supports policies and programs that respect the rights, promote the well-being and insure the safety of Nebraska's children. Government services for children should be comprehensive, accessible in all areas of the state, integrated/coordinated, efficient, adequately funded and should provide for accountability. These services should be staffed by professionals and volunteers who are well trained and competent in the specific area of service and should respect the rights of parents.—Adopted 1993.

Specifically, the League of Women Voters of Nebraska believes:

- 1) All reports of alleged abuse and neglect should be investigated. This may include screening by trained staff using a standard, effective protocol. An appropriate number of investigative workers should be hired and maintained to perform investigative tasks and to ensure the safety of children;
- 2) Foster families need preservice/inservice training, respite care, access to counseling (especially for behaviorally disordered children), adequate financial compensation based on the needs of the children, access to

information about foster children needing placement and regular communication with Child Welfare, Juvenile & Adult Protective Services (CWJAPS) workers. Foster families should be recruited and trained to provide specialized care for children with special needs;

- 3) A range of placement options based on the needs of children should be developed in all areas of the state, including specialized treatment foster homes, specialized group homes, and long term residential treatment facilities. The Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) and other state agencies caring for state wards should continue to contract with out-patient mental health providers and other agencies for diagnostic, evaluative and treatment services to enable foster children to remain in existing foster homes. Contracting with out-of-state facilities for out-of-home care or treatment should be a last resort;
- 4) Permanency for children should be achieved in an expeditious manner. Standards and a protocol should be developed for county attorneys, judges and CWJAPS workers to use in determining if parents are making progress towards reunification with children or if termination of parental rights is appropriate. CWJAPS workers should be trained in collecting and documenting information necessary to make reunification or termination of parental rights decisions. County attorneys, guardians ad litem, and judges and CWJAPS workers should be trained on issues related to termination of parental rights and on the adoptability of disabled children. Adoption laws should allow and encourage open adoption in appropriate cases;
- 5) The number of juvenile courts and juvenile judges should be increased in areas of the state where there is a demonstrated need. County attorneys, guardians ad litem and judges should be provided with on-going training on child abuse and adoption issues. Court Appointed Special Advocates should be used in the juvenile court system whenever possible; and
- 6) Public awareness of abuse and neglect problems and preventive measures should be increased. Public health education about the relationship between chemical dependency and increased risk of abuse and neglect should be undertaken. Family life education classes should be available in the public schools, especially parenting classes for high school students, and home visits of high risk families with newborns should be made. Family counseling services and parent education classes should be available in all areas of the state. Family Preservation Services providing intensive casework and in-home therapy for both short-term cases and longer-term intervention should be available to at-risk families in all areas of the state.

VIOLENCE PREVENTION: The League of Women Voters of Nebraska supports policies and programs at all levels of the community and government that serve to prevent violence in the home and in the community. These include:

- 1) Programs and services for the prevention of child abuse and intervention;
- 2) Family support services for violence prevention and intervention;
- 3) Public and private development and coordination of programs that emphasize the prevention of violence;
- 4) The active role of government and social institutions in preventing violent

behavior; and

- 5) The allocation of public monies in government programs to prevent violence.—Adopted 2000.

HEALTH CARE: The League of Women Voters of Nebraska bases action for primary health care strategies on the LWVUS position. —Adopted 2004.

MENTAL HEALTH CARE: Supports an adequately funded mental health care system which provides comprehensive and coordinated services for children and adults with mental disorders. Supports state and local policies and programs which provide the opportunity for persons with mental disorders to achieve optimal management of their illness. —Adopted 2004.

INVESTIGATION OF EXPANDED GAMBLING IN NEBRASKA: The intent of the effort is to look at the issue of expanded gambling in Nebraska, to collect as much available information as possible on the subject with attention to both the economic and social implications, and to present these findings to our membership. At that time, we may or may not propose a formal position. —Adopted 2003.

EDUCATION

FINANCING PUBLIC SCHOOLS IN NEBRASKA

The LWVNE believes in a public educational system financed by a combination of local and state revenues. Since state government has created the public schools by law it has a responsibility to aid local school districts in providing adequate and equitable school financing while maintaining local control. The wealth of the local school district in which a student resides should not determine what services are available. (Adopted 1981, amended 1983, 1991, 2008)

Specifically, the League supports:

- 1) Teacher salaries that are competitive with other states and that reflect upon teaching as a respected profession;
- 2) Teacher salaries for superior teachers that are comparable with administrators' salaries, to encourage those teachers to remain in the classroom;
- 3) Shifting the tax burden from heavy reliance on the local property tax to increased state support while maintaining local control of school districts and budgets;
- 4) Removal of arbitrary limitations upon budgets of local government subdivisions;
- 5) Provision of adequate revenue from sales and income taxes, both individual and corporate, to support educational services;
- 6) Accreditation standards of the minimum level of education regardless of the wealth of the local district in which a student resides; and
- 7) A free public school education through 12th grade, age not a limiting factor. Public school funds should be used to provide special education services to children with verified special needs from birth to age 21.

CURRICULUM IN NEBRASKA PUBLIC SCHOOLS

The LWVNE supports policies and programs to promote a quality education for all

Nebraska children from early childhood through grade 12. (Adopted May 1985, amended 1993, 2008, 2014)

Specifically, the League supports:

- 1) Teachers being endorsed in all subjects they are teaching;
- 2) Public school curriculum standards that will prepare students for citizenship, the world of work and to meet admission requirements of post-secondary educational institutions;
- 3) A strong social studies and government curriculum;
- 4) An emphasis on citizenship to include the relationship between freedom and responsibility and how to be a responsible voter;
- 5) Incorporation of critical thinking skills into all teaching. Throughout the educational process, the purpose of critical thinking is to develop patterns of active analysis of information rather than passive acceptance of information;
- 6) A minimum school year of 180 school days with a minimum of 1,032 instructional hours for elementary schools and 1,080 instructional hours for secondary schools;
- 7) The option of year-round public schools for districts that elect to do so;
- 8) Comprehensive counseling being offered to all Nebraska students;
- 9) Expanded learning options available and accessible to all students, including a higher emphasis on technology, vocational instruction, independent learning, apprenticeships, and dual enrollment in high school and post-secondary schools;
- 10) Arts, humanities, music, health, and physical education as a significant part of education that should be offered and available in every school; and
- 11) Service learning as an important style of learning that validates students as contributing members of their community.

STUDENT TESTING

The LWVNE supports:

- 1) Mandatory minimum competency testing of students before graduation from high school;
- 2) Criterion-based testing of students, which means testing for mastery, allowing for different ways for students to demonstrate mastery, and testing on 100 percent of the curriculum;
- 3) A reduction in the amount of standardized testing that is norm-referenced which guarantees some students will always fail and which detracts from classroom teaching of the curriculum;
- 4) The exemption of students with special needs from mandatory standardized testing or mandatory minimum competency testing.

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

A comprehensive pre-kindergarten educational program should be available and accessible to all Nebraska children.

TRANSITIONS

The LWVNE supports renewed focus on the needs of students at the key transition years (for example, 4th to 5th grade and 8th to 9th grade). Emphasis should be

placed on individual tutoring, skill-building, extended school days, extended school years, and summer enrichment programs.

ACADEMIC FREEDOM

The LWWNE supports academic freedom for all public school teachers and students in order to instill in students the value of democracy and to prepare students for informed and active civic participation.

SCHOOL SAFETY

The LWWNE supports policies and programs that promote safe school environments for all students and staff to the exclusion of those zero-tolerance policies that do not allow for common sense and individual mitigating circumstances.

EVALUATION OF TEACHERS AND ADMINISTRATORS

The LWWNE supports teacher tenure and Nebraska laws on teacher certification, just cause, and due process. The League supports performance-based evaluation of teachers and administrators. (Adopted 1993, amended 2008)

WATER STUDY UPDATE

(Adopted 2017)

TOPIC: Quality of Drinking Water in Nebraska

FOCUS: Review the Safe Drinking Water Act and the Clean Water Act as they are applied in Nebraska to protect drinking water.

SCOPE: Research Nebraska compliance with and enforcement of current regulations by the Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality and various other State agencies and their ability to meet Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services standards of quality for public and private drinking water. This may include:

- * agricultural production, including protection from herbicide, pesticide and solid waste runoff
- * industrial discharge
- * urban sanitary and storm-water overflow
- * food processing, including discharge of waste water
- * medical, veterinary and pharmaceutical contaminants
- * pipeline construction/location
- * fracking and mining operations
- * wellhead protection

GOAL: Provide a basic overview of the current state of drinking water quality in Nebraska. Provide resources for citizens' use at local levels. Develop a position as basis for testimony at local and state government levels.

**BYLAWS OF
THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS
OF GREATER OMAHA, INC.**

ARTICLE I

Name

Sec. 1. Name. The name of this organization shall be the League of Women Voters of Greater Omaha, hereinafter referred to in these bylaws as LWVGO, or as the League. This local League is an integral part of the League of Women Voters of the United States, hereinafter referred to in these bylaws as LWVUS, and of the League of Women Voters of Nebraska, hereinafter referred to as LWVNE.

ARTICLE II

Purpose and Policy

Sec. 1. Purposes. The purposes of the LWVGO are to promote voter registration, voter education, and general civic responsibility through informed and active participation of citizens in government.

Sec. 2. Political Policy. The League shall not support or oppose any political party or any candidate. No substantial part of the activities of the corporation shall be the carrying on of propaganda or otherwise attempting to influence legislation.

Sec. 3. Tax Status. The LWVGO is organized exclusively for charitable, religious, educational, and scientific purposes, including for such purposes, the making of distributions to organizations that qualify as exempt organizations described under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, or corresponding section of any future federal tax code.

ARTICLE III

Membership

Sec. 1. Eligibility. Any person who subscribes to the purposes and policy of the League shall be eligible for membership.

Sec. 2. Types of Membership.

a. Voting Members. Persons at least 16 years of age who join the League shall be voting members of local Leagues, state Leagues and of the LWVUS;

(1) individuals who live within an area of a local League may join that League or any other local League;

(2) those who reside outside the area of any local League may join a local League or shall be state members-at-large;

(3) those who have been members of the League for 50 years or more shall be honorary life members excused from the payment of dues.

b. Associate Members. All others who join the League shall be associate members.

ARTICLE IV

Officers

Sec. 1. Election, Qualifications, and Term. The officers of the LWVGO shall be a president, immediate past president, a vice president, a secretary, and a treasurer. They shall be voting members of the LWVGO and, except for the immediate past president, shall be elected during the annual meeting. The officers shall hold office until 30 days after the next annual meeting. No officer shall serve more than three consecutive terms in the same office.

Sec. 2. The President. The president shall preside at all meetings of the organization and the board, or designate another person to do so; shall be ex officio a member of all committees except the nominating committee; may sign or endorse checks, drafts, and notes in the absence of the treasurer; shall have such usual powers of supervision and management as may pertain to the office; and shall perform such other duties as the board may direct.

Sec. 3. The Vice President. The vice president shall chair an annual meeting committee. The annual meeting committee shall plan and organize the next annual meeting. The vice president shall perform such other duties as the president and board shall direct. If the president is unable to be present at a board or membership meeting, the order of officers to preside shall be: vice president, immediate past president, secretary, treasurer.

Sec. 4. The Secretary. The secretary shall keep minutes of the meetings of the membership and of the board. The secretary shall sign with the president all contracts and other instruments when so authorized by the board, and shall perform such other duties as the president and the board shall direct.

Sec. 5. The Treasurer. The treasurer shall collect and receive all

moneys due, shall maintain deposits in a financial institution designated by the board, shall disburse the same only upon order of the board, and shall present statements to the board at its regular meetings and an annual report at the annual meeting.

ARTICLE V

Board of Directors

Sec. 1. Selection, Qualifications, and Term. The board of directors shall consist of the officers of the LWVGO, up to nine directors which shall be elected during the annual meeting, and up to three directors-at-large appointed by the president with the approval of the elected members of the board. All directors shall be voting members of the LWVGO. They shall serve until 30 days after the close of the next annual meeting.

In the event that an elected office or directorship cannot be filled by one member, the office or directorship may be filled by two members. The two members filling the position shall be considered as one voting member of the board.

Sec. 2. Powers and Duties. The board shall manage and supervise the business affairs and activities of the LWVGO, subject to the directions to the board received during the annual meeting. It shall select delegates to the national convention. It shall accept responsibility for such other matters as the national or state board may delegate to it. It shall have the power to create special committees as it deems necessary, and it shall perform such other duties as are specified in these bylaws.

It shall elect active LWVGO members for two-year terms on the Board of Trustees of the League of Women Voters Education Fund of Greater Omaha, elect successor trustees, ratify the vote to remove any trustee by the Education Fund Board, receive the annual report of the finances and activities of the Education Fund and other reports as the LWVGO Board may direct, and rule upon any proposed amendments to the Education Fund Declaration of Trust.

Sec. 3. Executive Committee. The executive committee shall consist of the officers of the LWVGO (president, immediate past president, vice president, secretary, and treasurer) and one director who shall be appointed by the officers to serve on the executive committee. A majority of the executive committee shall constitute a quorum. It may

transact routine business between board meetings and act in emergencies. All business transacted or any action taken by the executive committee shall be submitted to the board for ratification at its next meeting.

Sec. 4. Meetings. At least six regular meetings of the board shall be held annually. The president may call special meetings, and shall call a special meeting upon the written request of five members of the board.

Sec. 5. Quorum. Six members, two of whom shall be officers, shall constitute a quorum for the board of directors.

Sec. 6. Filling of Vacancies. In the event the president is unable to complete the term of office, the vice president shall assume the office of president and shall serve the remainder of that term. If the vice president is unable to serve as president, the board shall elect one of its members to serve as president. All other board vacancies shall be filled by a majority vote of the remaining members of the board.

Sec. 7. Voting. The board of directors shall be authorized to vote by mail, defined as surface mail, email or fax, when it is deemed necessary or by phone in an emergency. Emails shall use a reply back verification for documentation that all members received the email. If a quorum shall vote by the deadline established by the president on a question sent to all members of the board, the vote shall be counted and shall have the same effect as if cast at a meeting of the board. The vote shall be made a part of the minutes at the next meeting of the board.

ARTICLE VI

Committees

Sec. 1. Committee Formation. The board may create committees as needed.

Sec. 2. Committee Functions. Committees shall perform duties as assigned by the board of directors and as stated in the policy sheet.

Sec. 3. Composition. A committee shall consist of one or more persons. The committee chair shall be appointed by the president in consultation with the appropriate director. Members of the committee shall be appointed by the committee chair and/or appropriate director.

ARTICLE VII

Meetings

Sec. 1. Membership Meetings. There shall be at least three meetings of the membership each year. The time and place shall be determined by the board. The board may call a special general membership meeting, and shall call such a meeting upon the written request of one-eighth of the voting members.

Sec. 2. Annual Meeting. An annual meeting shall be held between April 15 and May 14, the exact date to be determined by the board. The annual meeting shall adopt a local program for the coming year; elect officers, directors, and the chair and two members of the nominating committee; discuss financial planning; and transact such other business as may properly come before it. Absentee or proxy voting shall not be permitted.

Sec. 3. Notice of Meetings. Written notice of a membership meeting or annual meeting shall be sent to the members at least fifteen (15) days in advance.

Sec. 4. Quorum. One-tenth of the voting members shall constitute a quorum at all business meetings of the LWVGO.

ARTICLE VIII

Nominations and Elections

Sec. 1. Nominating Committee. The nominating committee shall consist of at least five members. The chair and two members, who shall not be members of the board, shall be elected during the annual meeting. At the first meeting of the board of directors following the annual meeting, the board shall appoint the membership directors to the committee. Vacancies shall be filled by appointment by the board. Suggestions for nominations for officers and directors may be sent to the committee by any voting member.

Sec. 2. Report of Nominating Committee. The report of the nominating committee shall contain its nominations for officers, up to nine directors, plus the chair and two members of the next nominating committee. It shall be sent to the members at least fifteen (15) days before the annual meeting. The report of the nominating committee shall be presented at the annual meeting. Nominations may be made from the floor immediately thereafter. No name shall be placed in nomination without the consent of the nominee.

Sec. 3. Elections. Election shall be by ballot, except when there is only one nominee for each office, election may be by voice vote. A majority vote shall constitute an election. Absentee or proxy voting shall not be permitted.

ARTICLE IX

Principles and Program

Sec. 1. Principles. Principles are concepts of government adopted by the national convention to which the League subscribes. Most Principles have been an integral part of the national program since 1974 and are the authorization for the adoption of national, state, and local program.

Sec. 2. Program. The program of the LWVGO shall consist of action to implement the Principles. Local governmental issues may be chosen at the annual meeting for further study as follows:

Voting members residing within the jurisdiction(s) of the local government(s) concerned may make recommendations on issues at least two months before the annual meeting. This is usually done during program planning, but may be submitted directly to the board at any time.

The board shall consider these recommendations before formulating and submitting a written copy of a proposed program to the members at least fifteen (15) days before the annual meeting, or the public policy director may consider all recommendations and present a program to the board for approval before submitting it to the members. The annual meeting shall adopt a program by a majority vote of the members in attendance.

Sec. 3. Changes in Program. Changes in the program, in the case of altered conditions, may be made provided that: (1) information concerning the proposed changes has been sent to all members at least two weeks before a general membership meeting at which the change is to be discussed, and (2) attendance at said meeting shall constitute a quorum. Final action may be taken with a majority vote by the LWVGO membership.

In the case of an emergency, as determined by the board of directors, changes in the program may be made provided that the proposed changes have been sent to all members along with voting response directions.

Members shall have a minimum of two weeks to research the proposal and respond in the fashion(s) requested. The public policy director shall present the results to the board for final action. A majority vote of all LWVGO members is needed to amend the program.

Sec. 4. Program Action. Members may act in the name of the LWVGO only when authorized to do so by the board or executive committee. They may act only in conformity with, and not contrary to, a position taken by the LWVGO, LWVNE, and the LWVUS. Violation of this bylaw, or any unauthorized use of the LWVGO membership list, may constitute sufficient reason for expulsion from membership in the LWVGO, upon vote of the board.

ARTICLE X

Financial Administration

Sec. 1. Fiscal Year. The fiscal year of the LWVGO shall be from September 1 to August 31 of each year.

Sec. 2. Dues. Annual dues, in an amount to be determined by three-fifths of the voting members at each annual meeting, shall be payable the first day of September. Any member who fails to pay dues within three months after they become payable may be dropped from the membership rolls.

Sec. 3. Budget Committee. The proposed budget shall be prepared by a committee that shall be appointed by the incoming president with the approval of the incoming board of directors. The treasurer shall be an ex-officio member of the budget committee, but shall not be eligible to serve as chair. The committee shall include the finance and development director and a representative of the Education Fund of the LWVGO.

Sec. 4. Budget. The proposed budget for the ensuing fiscal year shall be submitted to the board of directors by July 31. The board of directors shall finalize and adopt the budget by August 15, and shall notify the membership of the adopted budget. The budget shall include per member payments to the LWVUS and to the LWVNE, as determined at the national convention and state annual meeting.

Sec. 5. Financial Review. The books of the treasurer shall be thoroughly reviewed at the end of every fiscal year and at any other time when a new treasurer takes office. The reviewer shall be a League member or a

person recommended by a League member, who is appointed by the president, approved by the executive committee, and not on the board of directors. Each financial review report shall be submitted to the board of directors and shall be filed as a permanent record in the League office.

Sec. 6. Distribution of Funds on Dissolution. In the event of the dissolution of the LWVGO, all assets shall be distributed for one or more exempt public purposes to the LWVNE Education Fund, a corporation exempt from federal income tax under section 501(c)(3). Any such assets not so disposed of shall be disposed of by a Court of Competent Jurisdiction in Douglas County, Nebraska, exclusively for such purposes or to such organization or organizations, as the Court shall determine, which are organized and operated exclusively for such purposes.

ARTICLE XI

Parliamentary Authority

The rules contained in the current edition of Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised shall govern the organization in all cases to which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with these bylaws.

ARTICLE XII

Indemnification

Every member of the board may be indemnified by the organization against all expenses and liabilities, including counsel fees, reasonably incurred or imposed upon such members of the board in connection with any threatened, pending, or completed action, suit, or proceeding to which the board member may become involved by reason of being or having been a member of the organization, or any settlement thereof, unless adjudged therein to be liable for negligence or misconduct in the performance of duties. In the event of a settlement, the indemnification herein shall apply only when the organization's board approved such settlement and reimbursement as being in the best interest of the organization. The foregoing right of indemnification shall be in addition to and not exclusive of all other rights to which the member of the board is entitled.

ARTICLE XIII

Amendments

These bylaws may be amended by a two-thirds vote of the voting members attending the annual meeting, provided that the proposed

amendments were submitted to the members in writing at least fifteen (15) days in advance of the meeting.

Incorporated March 20, 1967, and as amended April 6, 1968; April 12, 1969; April 1, 1971; April 6, 1972; April 17, 1975; April 19, 1976; April 20, 1977; April 20, 1979; April 16, 1981; April 28, 1983; April 12, 1984; April 18, 1985; April 17, 1986; April 29, 1989; April 24, 1993; April 13, 1996; April 21, 2001; April 19, 2008;; April 24, 2010, April 23, 2011, April 27, 2013, May 3,2014, and April 25, 2015, April 23, 2016, and April 15 2017.

MAKING DEMOCRACY WORK AWARD

The Making Democracy Work Award began in 2006 with the Membership Initiative through LWVUS. The award is designed to recognize one woman who has gone above and beyond the necessities of her job to make Omaha a stronger, more vibrant community. Her dedication to improving the lives of members of our community exemplifies our mission statement of encouraging informed and active participation in government and increasing understanding of public policy issues. Effort is made in the selection process to find an individual who has creatively brought attention to an issue and worked to improve the situation.

Each fall the award organizer meets with the membership director, the public relations director, the vice-president of program, and the league president to select a timeline for entries and publish the application form for the award. Great effort is made to present the information to as many organizations as possible, as well as to publicize the award to the entire Omaha community. The same group of league leaders serves as the selection committee for determining the award winner. The award is presented at the February birthday celebration of the Omaha League.

LWVGO's Making Democracy Work Award Winners:

2007	Ellie Archer
2008	Mary Ann Stevens
2009	Connie Hammitt
2010	Crystal Rhoades
2011	Pam Brown

MAKE A DIFFERENCE AWARD

The Make a Difference Award recognizes a member who has brought great benefit to the community and also to our local League of Women Voters. All of our awardees have done extraordinary work in a variety of pursuits, whether raising large amounts of money for the League, bringing in tremendous numbers of new members, or starting a brand new program that garners positive attention for the League.

MAKE A DIFFERENCE AWARD WINNERS

2017	Joanna Lindberg	2003	Belinda Greiner
2016	Carolyn Thiele	2002	Annette Conser
2015	Renee Claborn	2000	Pat Galusha
2014	Rebecca Armstrong	1999	Polly Goecke
2013	Mary Ann Sturek	1998	Karren Kerr
2012	Linda Duckworth	1997	Beverly Traub
2011	Shirley Fritz	1995	Phyllis Comstock
2010	Barbara Tripp	1994	Nancy Shugrue
2009	Barbara Rennard	1993	Carol McDonald
2008	Sally Fellows	1991	Dorothy Dollis
2006	Jeanette Smith		

LWVGO PRESIDENTS

Ann Chalson	2017-	Sylvia Wagner	1979 - 81
Elaine Johnson	2016-17	Andrea Kuhn	1978 - 79
Gail Formaneck	2015-16	Wanda Blotcky	1977 - 78
Peggy Adair	2013-15	Marlene Muse	1976 - 77
Bev Traub	2011 - 13	Diane Taylor	1973 - 75
Sharon Conlon	2011	Ricky Salisbury	1971 -73
Linda Duckworth	2007 - 11	Emmajean Wupper	1970 - 71
Barbara Tripp	2006 - 07	Peg Taylor	1969 - 70
Kay Wise	2005 - 06	Harriet Johnson	1967 - 69
Barbara Rennard	2003 - 05	Mimi Walbaum	1965 - 67
Belinda Greiner	2001 - 03	Mrs. Bruce Stafford	1963 - 65
Bev Traub	1999 - 01	Florence Smith	1959 - 63
Pat Galusha	1997 - 99	Emmjean Wupper	1957 - 59
Polly Goecke	1995 - 97	Mrs George Owens	1955 - 57
Barba Edwards	1993 - 95	Mrs Walter Stephenson	1953 - 55
Deb Suttle	1991 - 93	Mrs Roy Marshall	1952 - 53
Carol McDonald	1989 - 91	Mary Hyde	1944 - 47
Carol Bryce	1986 - 89	Mrs Deane Carre	1943 - 44
Nancy Shugrue	1985 - 86	Mrs Jack Abajain	1939 - 42
Ruth Metcalf	1984 - 85	Mrs J. H.Rhoads	1934 - 35
Emmajean Wupper	1982 - 83	Mrs. W. A. Willard	1932 - 34
Deanna Frisk	1981 - 82	Mr. Harley G. Moorhead	1930 -31

NO RECORDS FOR:

1983 - 84	1935 - 39
1975 - 76	1931 - 32
1947 - 52	

Policy Sheet of the League of Women Voters of Greater Omaha

Revised and approved August 2010; September 2011; February 2012; February 2013;
November 2013

Purposes: The purposes of the League of Women Voters of Greater Omaha shall be to promote political responsibility through informed and active participation in government and to act on selected governmental issues after member study and agreement.

Political Policy: The League of Women Voters of Greater Omaha shall not support or oppose any political party or any candidate.

The purpose of this policy sheet is to set forth more specifically some of the aims and policies of the League of Women Voters of Greater Omaha. It shall be reviewed yearly by February 1 by a committee appointed by the president and, if needed, amended by board action.

1. Non-Partisanship

Members of the league board may not be actively identified with any party or candidate during their term of office.

- League board positions with high public visibility, including the executive committee, voters service director, public relations director, and finance director, (herein-after called sensitive positions), must maintain scrupulously the non-partisan policy.
- Other board members may attend precinct meetings or caucuses of their party affiliation as part of their own education process, if their presence will not jeopardize league nonpartisan policy.
- Political activities of a spouse or relative of a board member shall be considered as separate and distinct from the activities of the board member.

The board will take final action when any questions arise under this policy.

It is the responsibility of all board members involved in employment or community activities to report to the board possible conflict of interest with league program and policies.

2. Statement of League Positions

- Written or verbal statements made in the community in the name of the league shall be made only by the president or a duly authorized representative. Materials for presentations made by league speakers to the community (speakers bureau, public service announcements, etc.) must be approved by the president or a duly authorized representative.
- All correspondence regarding league positions must be cleared with the president before mailing; the president will sign or co-sign all official letters.
- Information concerning the organization will be released by the public relations director with presidential approval.
- All information and notices on the league website must be cleared with the president before being posted. Materials developed by non-League sources (for example, articles) must be approved by the president and two members of the executive committee.

3. Relations with Other Community Groups or Governmental Bodies

Observers: Members serving as league observers or monitors at meetings of official governmental bodies must take no action which could be interpreted as

a violation of the league's non-partisan policy.

- Observers may not address the meeting unless duly appointed and authorized by the president.

Representatives: No one shall represent the league in any other organization except as duly appointed by the board.

- The representative must have prior approval by the board before making any formal or public statement on behalf of the league position on a specific issue.
- The board will determine the extent of cooperation with other organizations insofar as that cooperation is in accord with the league program, adopted advocacy agenda or citizen education priorities, and adheres to the principles of the League of Women Voters of the United States (LWVUS).

Examples are the following:

- **Networking**
- Is encouraged for the sharing of information in an informal manner.
- Requires reporting to the board.
- **Coalitions**
- To obtain board approval the following must be submitted:
 - Goals consistent with league principles, positions and policies.
 - Written statement of purpose, names of coalition groups, league's obligation, commitment required in time, money and resources, expected duration of coalition.
- Financial contributions, if any, require board approval.

4. Board

- Local board meetings are open to the general membership. A standing invitation is extended to the chair of the nominating committee and members of the State and National Boards.
- The president will provide an agenda for board meetings. Minutes are to be made available to board members prior to the board meetings.
- One copy of the minutes with the treasurer's report and other attachments shall be placed in the corporation minutes book.
- Board members who are unable to attend a board meeting shall notify the president and submit any report to the president as soon as possible.
- More than three unexcused absences from regular board meetings during a league year shall constitute a resignation.
- If necessary the president may request a decision through email. This decision shall be made by a majority of the board through email by the deadline set by the president and shall be entered into the minutes of the next board meeting. During the discussion and voting, board members are to use "reply all" when responding to the email request.
- Board members shall keep an expense record and turn in vouchers for expenses, either for reimbursement or as a contribution. (See Appendix A for the voucher form) An agent appointed by the president or board may be reimbursed for expenses incurred in doing a specific job.
- Board members are encouraged to establish committees to carry out their duties. The president should be notified of all committee meetings.

5. League Office

- A key to the league office may be provided, at the discretion of the president, to an officer, director or other member for the purpose of

conducting league business. The president shall inform the administrative vice president of all persons who are assigned keys. The administrative vice president shall maintain a record of all office keys. Each person with a key shall return it to the administrative vice president at the end of the term of office or when the league business has been completed.

- All meetings held in the league office should be recorded on the office calendar, if possible. Every person scheduling such a meeting shall notify the administrative vice president of the date, time and expected duration of the meeting as soon as possible.
- Other organizations may be allowed to use the league office provided that a current or former board member is present. A rental fee of at least \$25.00 per use shall be paid by the guest organization; this fee may be changed by board action. (See 5-6-10 minutes)
- League property (such as the rubber stamps and the 3-hole punch) shall remain in the office. With permission from the administrative vice president an item may be borrowed from the office and shall be noted by the borrower on the check-out form at the office desk.

6. Membership Contact Information

- The names, addresses, phone numbers and email addresses of League members are generally confidential. Contact information for members shall not be rented, exchanged or shared.
- All contact information submitted by members will be included in the yearbook.
- Members shall not use or distribute membership contact information for purposes unrelated to the League. The Board of Directors, upon a recommendation from the Executive Board, may terminate a person's LWVGO membership for an intentional violation of this policy.
- A member shall obtain permission from the president prior to sending correspondence to the membership.

7. General Meetings

- The time and place of general meetings shall be determined each year following the annual meeting and prior to publication of the yearbook.
- Time and place of general meetings can be changed only with the permission of the program vice president and the meeting coordinator.
- Board members are encouraged to attend as many general meetings as possible.
- Only board-approved petitions may be circulated at general meetings. No one may wear, carry or distribute materials which support or oppose any candidate or party at league meetings.

8. Studies

- Refer to LWVUS Impact on Issues at: <http://www.lwv.org/content/impact-issues>
- Refer to LWVGO member yearbook for GO's program
- Refer to LWVNE program in the LWVGO member yearbook or on the LWVNE website.
- Refer to the LWVUS document at: <http://www.lwv.org/content/overview-program>

9. Advocacy/Action

- The board formulates local positions, based on member consensus.
- The board designs and directs the action strategy; action plans are

approved and carried out under the board's direction.

- Further information can be found in Article VIII of the LWVGO bylaws.

Awards

- **Making Democracy Work Award**

A Making Democracy Work Award may be presented each year at the February birthday celebration of the League of Women Voters of Greater Omaha. The award honoree shall be one woman who resides in the Greater Omaha area who is not a member of the League of Women Voters but who exemplifies the League's mission. Applications for the Making Democracy Work Award shall be made available to the public and shall include the qualifications and attributes the League is seeking in award applicants.

The president may appoint, with board approval, a Making Democracy Work Award committee chairperson by August of each year. The MDWA committee shall consist of the appointed chairperson and the League president, membership director, public relations director, and vice president of program. The committee shall meet in the fall to select a timeline for entries and publish the application form for the award using both social media and traditional media. The committee shall serve as the selection committee for determining the award winner. The determination of the selection committee shall be final.

- **Make a Difference Award**

A Make a Difference Award may be awarded each year to a member of the League of Women Voters of Greater Omaha. The president shall have sole discretion in determining whether or not to call for nominations from League members for a Make a Difference Award honore(e). If the president calls for nominations, they shall be in essay form, and the president shall choose a member to receive the Make a Difference Award from the nomination essays.

10. Bulletin

- The president approves all final copies of the bulletin.
- The bulletin shall be distributed via electronic mail unless a recipient requests a paper copy.
- The bulletin shall be distributed to the general membership, LWVNE officers, Midwest LWVUS liaison, LWVUS national office, the Douglas County Election Commissioner and prospective members.

11. WebSite (*Website policy is unchanged with the understanding that a Website/Social Media committee shall be appointed in the near future to develop a social media plan and make recommendations to the Board for a new plan and updated policy.*)

- LWVGO will fund and maintain a website at www.omahalwv.org.
- The purpose of this website is to provide League members and the voting public with resources to understand and research local issues.
- A copy of the bulletin will be posted on the web site for public access but without members' contact information such as telephone numbers or email addresses.
- Neither the minutes of the board of directors nor the treasurer's report shall be posted on the website.
- By agreement of the president and two members of the executive committee of the board of directors, additional information, including links to other web sites, may be posted if such posting is consistent with other policies in this document.

12. Voters Service

Voter Registration

- League may provide voter registration services for groups that request this service following the Douglas County Election Commission rules and regulations.
- If there is a question about providing the service, the request may be referred to the board.

Voters' Guide

- Questions to candidates to be used in the Voters' Guide shall be approved by the appointed committee.

Candidates Forums

- LWVGO may sponsor or co-sponsor candidates forums.
- The league's services shall be available to other organizations to provide moderators and technical expertise, the format to be prescribed by the LWVGO. (See minutes: August 30, 1982 and September 13, 1982.)

13. Financial Policies (Adopted at the LWVGO Annual Meeting April 24, 2010)

Expenditure Reimbursement

- All expenditures made by a member of the board of directors on LWVGO's behalf must pass an approval process. Most such expenditures will be included in the annual budget which is approved by the membership at the annual meeting. However, unplanned or unanticipated expenditures of over \$50.00 must be approved in advance by the board. All members must submit receipts to the treasurer for any expenditure.
- Members frequently make expenditures on LWVGO's behalf without expectation of reimbursement. Members are encouraged to submit an accounting of donated expenses to LWVGO's treasurer to enable the league to track this important source of funding.
- LWVGO may pay designated delegates for certain costs incurred in conjunction with attending state and national conventions. In all circumstances delegates must submit receipts when requesting reimbursement.
 - For state conventions: LWVGO may reimburse delegates' registration fees.
 - For national conventions: LWVGO may pay delegates' registration fees, the banquet fee, transportation expenses, and per diem of \$50.00. These expenses may be paid directly in advance and/or reimbursed. With prior board approval, the cost of supplemental workshops may also be reimbursed.
- LWVGO maintains a bulk postage account at the Central Post Office in downtown Omaha. Members sending approved mailings may charge them to this account, provided that they first confirm with the treasurer that sufficient money is on deposit in the postal account to cover the anticipated cost. Members who use LWVGO's bulk postage account shall remit the receipt issued at the post office to LWVGO's treasurer, along with a note identifying the related project.
- The president shall be reimbursed for incidental expenses incurred in conjunction with the performance of her/his duties, such as mileage, in an amount to be determined annually by the board.

Sharing of Dues Revenue

- LWVGO participates financially in the state and national activities of the League of Women Voters and shares its dues accordingly. This formula changes from time to time, as voted on at state and national conventions.

- LWVGO's treasurer shall confirm the February 1 membership counts which appear on state and national Per Member Payment (PMP) invoices with the membership (co)director(s) prior to making PMP payments.

New Member Dues

- New members joining LWVGO during the first nine months of the fiscal year will be assessed a full year's dues. (The amount to be determined at the annual meeting). New members joining during the fourth quarter of the fiscal year will be assessed a full year's dues at the current rate and be considered a member in good standing through the next fiscal year.

Financial Agreements Between LWVGO and The League of Women Voters Educational Fund of Greater Omaha (Ed Fund)

Shared Office Space and Equipment. The Ed Fund reimburses LWVGO for the following services provided by the Ed Fund: 10 percent of the basic cost of rent of shared office space, maintaining facilities and sign, receiving and distributing mail, telephone, storage and file space, meeting space, minimal secretarial service (if any), maintenance of equipment, insurance, and utilities. This may be paid quarterly. (approved 12/4/73, 8/24/94)

- **Citizens Information Service.** The Ed Fund provides an ongoing grant to the LWVGO for provision of the Citizens Information Service, which provides information to citizens on a continuing basis. This grant covers 15 percent of the cost of office facilities, references and services necessary to answer questions over the phone and in person, providing speakers on citizen education and governmental subjects, and training volunteer members. This may be paid quarterly. (approved 4/10/74)
- **Computer Equipment.** The Ed Fund has agreed to pay 25 percent of the acquisition and ongoing expense of maintaining a shared office computer system. (approved 9/24/92, 11/3/93)
- **Per Member Payments.** The treasurers of the LWVGO and the Ed Fund shall negotiate the Ed Fund's contribution to the national Per Member Payments. Said contribution may vary from year to year but shall not exceed fifty percent (50%) of the actual payments.

14. Educational Fund of Greater Omaha (see Appendix B)

Appendix A

**LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF GREATER OMAHA, INC.
EXPENSE VOUCHER
SUBMIT RECEIPTS WITH VOUCHER
ANY EXPENDITURE OVER \$50.00 MUST BE APPROVED IN ADVANCE BY THE
BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

Date: _____

Pay To:

Name _____ Officer, Director or Committee Chair

Address _____

FOR: (e.g., postage, printing, stationery, etc.)

Total Amount \$ _____

_____ I request reimbursement for the total amount

_____ I request reimbursement for \$ _____ of the total amount

_____ I am contributing the total amount to LWVGO.

Signature of member completing voucher _____

Approved by _____

SUBMIT TO THE LWVGO TREASURER

.....

For Treasurer's Use

Date Received: _____

Date Approved: _____

Date Payment Made: _____

Check Number: _____

Charge Budget Account: _____

Appendix B
Educational Fund of Greater Omaha
(Abbreviated and annotated Declaration of Trust)

1. Name

The charitable trust known as League of Women Voters Educational fund of Greater Omaha, hereinafter referred to as the ED FUND, is a separate 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation which is allowed to accept tax-deductible contributions.

2. Purpose of Ed Fund

The Ed Fund is organized and operated exclusively for educational, charitable, scientific, and literary purposes, no part of the net earnings of which inures to the benefit of any individual, no substantial part of the activities of which is carrying on propaganda, or otherwise attempting to influence legislation, and which does not attempt to participate or intervene in any political campaign.

3. Board of Trustees

- The five members of the Ed Fund Board of Trustees shall be elected to two-year terms of office by the Board of Directors of the LWVGO from among its active members; such election is a LWVGO board matter and the nominating committee is not involved. In the event of an Ed Fund board vacancy, the LWVGO board shall promptly appoint a successor Trustee to serve for the remaining unexpired term. The LWVGO board shall have the power to ratify any vote by the Ed Fund Board to remove a Trustee, in order for such removal to take place.
- Election of new Trustees should take place at the February or March LWVGO board meeting, in order for the new Trustees to be in place by the time of the April Ed Fund annual meeting. The LWVGO board may define for itself what constitutes an "active member" in terms of degree of involvement, years of membership, or other qualification. League members may serve on both boards simultaneously, but duties and meetings and funds are kept separate.
- Trustees become ineligible to serve by participation in a political campaign on behalf of any candidate or other conduct which would cause a Trustee to be ineligible to serve on the LWVGO board.
- Trustees may propose amendments to the Declaration of Trust of the Ed Fund, as therein provided, by unanimous action in writing, but such amendments are subject to approval by the board of directors of the LWVGO.

4. Annual and Interim Reports

The Trustees shall submit an annual report of the finances and activities of the Ed Fund to the board of directors of LWVGO, and shall furnish said board with such other reports as it may direct.

5. Funds and Properties

The Trustees shall have the power to received, accept, and disburse gifts and donations to effectuate any of the purposes of the Ed Fund as expressed in Sec. 2. Such funds and investment property of the trust shall be kept separate and distinct and shall not be intermingled with other funds. The financial resources of the Ed Fund are not to be used for the general purpose of the LWVGO, but the Ed Fund and LWVGO may share offices and office equipment under a formal agreement to apportion costs.

6. Duration

The duration of the Ed Fund shall be perpetual, subject to termination only by vote of the board of directors of the LWVGO, or in the event of the dissolution of the LWVGO, by the

actions of the Trustees, as provided in the Declaration of Trust in the Ed Fund.

The Ed Fund is organized and operated for the sole purpose of conducting the purely educational aspects of the activities of the LWVGO. These educational purposes may include the publication and dissemination of information and the distribution of publications relating to the operation of various governmental agencies.

- to inform voters of the Omaha area of the issues being presented to the voters for their decision
- to acquaint the electorate with the qualifications and representations of candidates running for public office in elections in the Omaha area, and
- other activities and publications which encourage the active and informed participation in government or increase understanding of public policy issues.

According to the LWVUS, in the event of an IRS audit, an Ed Fund must be able to demonstrate:

- that its resources are used for appropriate educational purposes
- that it (the Ed Fund) does not expend funds on lobbying (See Sect. 2 above, Purpose of Ed Fund)
- that funds are not used to underwrite ongoing organizational expenses of the league, and no funds are appropriated for member agreement or member recruitment, or to report League news – that the Ed Fund is, in fact, a separate functioning organization with its own activities – that it is not controlled by an affiliate organization
- that it has its own complete set of officers and board members for its governing body, with separate roles for anyone who serves on both boards
- that it holds separate board meetings, with formal minutes recording board resolutions on all decisions require board action, without discussion of the other entity's business while convened – that accounts are maintained with separate books in separate bank accounts
- if space or services are shared with the league, a formal arrangement is necessary to identify whose costs are whose.

ANNUAL MEETING, 2017 SUMMARY OF MEETING

By Sherry Miller

The 4th Annual Meeting of LWWNE was held April 29, 2017, with the Lincoln League hosting.

Business included reports from the president and directors, minutes of the 3rd Annual Meeting, end of fiscal year financial report, adoption of the 2017-18 operating budget, and election and installation of officers and directors. A special word of thanks to League volunteers who donated more than \$4,000.00 in time, money, and mileage.

Nominees for election were:

Officers - Sherry Miller (President); Darci Garcia (VP Action); Linda Duckworth (VP Membership); Tina Miller (Secretary); and Kate High (Treasurer)

Directors - Mary Ann Sturek (Education); Phyllis Salyards (Health Care); Janece Mohllhoff (Natural Resources); and John Else (Social Policy)

Nominating Committee - Katie Wadas Thalken (Chair); Linda Duckworth (Member); Amy McGaha (Member).

All were elected by voice vote.

The luncheon speaker was Jack Gould, Director of Common Cause Nebraska, who spoke on the impact of money in politics, particularly the outsized influence of dark money on election of state government officials.

The 2017-18 Program (League positions) included an update of the Water Study to include Water Quality and was adopted by a 2/3 vote.

Based on an existing National League position on Money in Politics, a motion to adopt Money in Politics as a project of LWWNE was made and approved. Kate High volunteered to chair the project.

Special gifts were presented to Lois Poppe, Sheryl Wright, Katie Wadas Thalken, and Sharon Nemeth in recognition of their past service to the League board.

The 2018 Annual Meeting will be hosted by the Hastings League.

LWVUS 2017 Council Report
Mission Impact, Engagement & Sustainability
Transformation of the League—National, State and Local
Defend Democracy

By Caroline Sedlacek

LWVNE Board Parliamentarian

The League of Women Voters of the United States (LWVUS) biennial National Council was held at the National Conference Center June 22-25, 2017 in Leesburg, VA. The national board of directors, national office staff, one or two leaders from each of 43 states and the District of Columbia, and the LWVUS Nominating Committee attended for a total of 110 participants. League leaders discussed the important role and impact of the League, as well as how LWV will evolve to be the most effective organization on voting rights and election services.

“As the League approaches our first centennial, we want to become the most powerful organization we can be,” said LWVUS president **Chris Carson**. “It is a critical time in our democracy, and an amazing time of opportunity for the League as we expand and attract new members.”

“We know there are going to be challenges, but we are going to get there together because we are a stronger League when we speak with one voice,” said LWVUS CEO Wylecia Wiggs Harris. “We all want to see this organization be as influential as it can be because our democracy needs us.”

The goals and objectives for Council were the following:

- Ensuring all Council participants are grounded in the underlying assumptions for why we have engaged on this transformation journey.
- Clarifying and confirming the process and the guiding principles that have informed our work to date, including the proposed next steps to validate the “what” and “how” to best strengthen the collective League. These next steps include:
 1. Examining how to retain and expand engagement of new individuals.
 2. Increasing the external perception of “one League” by exploring shared data and joint fundraising opportunities.
 3. Dialoguing about the engagement continuum and how we increase our outreach and impact by supporting multiple ways into the organization and assuming an “outside in” perspective.
 4. Leveraging the new local League recognition guidelines to more quickly onboard new Leagues and when appropriate shift administrative responsibilities to the state level

5. Evaluating the proposed framework for national and state opportunities to test new approaches.

- Enhancing our skills as transformative leaders to facilitate and guide the organization.

The following information is taken from the *Blueprint for Mission, Impact Engagement Sustainability*, a document that was sent out before the Council to those registered to attend and to state presidents.

New social movements have emerged that often demonstrate greater fluidity, inclusiveness and focus moving our core or competing issues forward at a pace different from the League's deliberative, consensus-driven processes.

Likewise, other more established organizations, who often serve as LWV partners, have arguably more quickly embraced 21st century approaches, including technological advancements, social media, streamlined governance processes, and learning how to most effectively leverage human resources (members, volunteers and staff where applicable) that enable these organizations to be more agile, secure deeper funding, and address infrastructure challenges more rapidly than the League.

The Membership, Engagement and Structure (MES) Steering Committee has discussed structure, people and process-related issues and has outlined three potential broad goals to drive greater impact, relevance, visibility, and sustainability for the entire organization:

1. Lessen the administrative burden on Leagues;
2. Enhance engagement by offering and embracing multiple paths to affiliation with the League; and,
3. Strengthen our overall structure by reimagining our financial structure. The preliminary thinking

is to lessen the administrative burden for local Leagues with improvements such as:

- Shift the current local legal administrative burden to the state and/or national levels of the organization;
- Strengthen the state and national infrastructure, and where it may make sense, create regional administrative hubs to absorb the increased administrative responsibilities;
- Increase standardization of core administrative responsibilities across the entire organization;

- Design systems and business practices that support data sharing and transparency across all levels of League; and
- More clearly define the core responsibilities and work portfolio of the local, state, and national components of the League to create a seamless organizational structure for those who wish to engage with the League.

LWV Transformation Vision (*adopted by LWVUS Board in 2016*)

To unabashedly reclaim the League of Women Voter's role in the American elections process by 2020.

So that...

- We are known as *the* organization to register and turn out new citizens and the next generation of women to vote
 - We are the authoritative voice on election reform
 - We create an electorate that is representative of the diversity of the U.S. population
1. In order to make impact in our communities need more people power. Avoid reinventing the wheel. Need continuity of members and programs to stay alive.
 2. Collaborate with other groups. Need money to carry out projects and programs to educate. Need better communication among state and local leagues.
 3. Visibility—to demonstrate our expertise in communication and disseminating information using all social media.
 4. Involve more diversity, take action early, support administrative details.
 5. Need to know what works—change, tweak, redo.

**THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS
OF GREATER OMAHA
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