

# BYLAWS OF THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF CHICAGO

Revised June 11, 2016

## ARTICLE I Name

The name of this organization shall be the League of Women Voters of Chicago, hereinafter referred to in these bylaws as LWVChicago. 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 Illinois, hereinafter referred to in these bylaws as LWVIL; of the League of Women Voters of Cook County, hereinafter referred to in these bylaws as LWVCC, of the League of Women Voters Lake Michigan Region, hereinafter referred to in these bylaws as LWVLMR and League of Women Voters Upper Mississippi River Region, hereinafter referred to in these bylaws as LWVUMRR.

## ARTICLE II Purpose and Policy

**Sec. 1. Purpose.** The purpose of LWVChicago shall be to promote political responsibility through informed and active participation in government and to act on selected issues.

**Sec. 2. Policy.** LWVChicago shall neither support nor oppose political parties or any candidate.

## 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 LWVChicago shall be voting members of LWVChicago, LWVCC, LWVIL, LWVUS, LWVLMR, and LWVUMRR. [1] individuals who live within an area of a local League may join that League or any other local League; [2] those who have been members of the League for 50 years or more shall be 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 LWVChicago shall be a president or co-presidents, two or more vice presidents, a secretary and a treasurer. All officers shall be voting members, elected for terms of two years by the general membership at the annual meeting and shall take office immediately. The officers shall be elected to staggered terms to ensure continuity of leadership.

**Sec. 2. The President or Co-Presidents.** The president or co-presidents (hereinafter referred to as president) shall have such usual powers of supervision and management as may pertain to the office of the president and perform such other duties as may be designated by 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; and shall perform such other duties as the board may direct. In the event of the absence, resignation, disability or death of the president, the board shall elect a vice president to assume the office. If no vice president is able to serve as president, the board shall fill the vacancy from among the elected directors. A majority vote shall elect.

**Sec. 3. The Vice Presidents.** There shall be no more than four vice presidents who shall perform such duties as the president and the board shall designate.

**Sec. 4. The Secretary.** The secretary shall keep minutes of any membership business meetings and board meetings. The secretary shall notify all officers and directors of their election and shall perform such other duties as the president and board may direct.

**Sec. 5. The Treasurer.** The treasurer shall perform such duties as customarily pertain to the office and at the direction of the board, maintain deposits in authorized financial institutions. The Treasurer may serve a maximum of three consecutive terms, but shall not be limited in the total number of terms served.

## **ARTICLE V**

### **Board of Directors**

**Sec. 1. Number, Manner of Selection and Term of Office.** The board shall consist of the officers of the League and not fewer than five nor more than twelve elected directors. The elected members may appoint additional directors not to exceed the number of elected directors. All directors must be voting members of LWVChicago. No person shall be elected to a particular position on the board for more than eight consecutive years. Officers and directors shall serve terms of two years, or until their successors have been qualified and elected. Appointed directors shall serve until the close of the next annual meeting. At the annual meeting, directors shall be elected so that staggered terms will be maintained.

**Sec. 2. Vacancies.** Any vacancy, except the presidency, occurring in the board by reason of resignation, death, or disqualification of an officer or elected or appointed member may be filled, until the next annual meeting, by a majority vote of the remaining members of the board. Three absences from a board meeting of any member without a valid excuse shall be deemed a resignation. Notification of such action shall be sent to the board member after two absences.

**Sec. 3. Powers and Duties.** The board shall manage and supervise the business, affairs, and activities of the LWV subject to the instructions of the annual meeting. It shall select delegates to county and state conventions and councils and to national convention. Members shall be notified of the opportunity to be a delegate. The board shall accept responsibility for such other matters as the national or state Leagues may from time to time delegate to it. It shall have the power to create such standing or special committees as it deems necessary and shall perform such other duties as are specified in these bylaws.

**Sec. 4. Meetings.** There shall be at least eight regular meetings of the board annually. The president may call special meetings of the board and shall call a special meeting upon the written request of five members of the board.

**Sec. 5. Remote Meetings.** If circumstances make it inconvenient or impossible for the board to meet, it may conduct business by holding a meeting through

electronic communications (e.g. e-mail or telephone conference call). Such meetings shall be referred to as remote meetings. All materials for considerations at a remote meeting must be distributed to all members of the board. Remote meetings shall not count as any of the eight regular board meetings required each year.

**Sec. 6. Quorum.** A majority of the members of the board shall constitute a quorum. In the presence of a quorum, a majority of members in attendance at any board meeting may decide its actions. One or more members of the board may participate in a meeting by means of conference telephone or similar communications equipment allowing all persons participating in the meeting to communicate with each other at the same time.

**Sec. 7. Executive Committee.** The officers of LWVChicago shall constitute the executive committee, which shall exercise such power and authority as may be designated by the board; and shall report to the board on all actions taken by it between regular meetings of the board. Meetings of the executive committee may be called by the president or by a majority of members of the committee. A majority of the members of the committee shall constitute a quorum.

**Sec. 8. Standing and Special Committees.**

a) The board shall appoint such standing committees deemed necessary for the effective functioning of the organization unless otherwise provided by this article. Membership of such committees is open to any LWV member. The following standing committees shall be organized by February 1:

**1) Nominating Committee.** The nominating committee shall consist of three voting members of LWVChicago who shall be elected at the annual meeting. The nominations for these positions shall be made by the current nominating committee and further nominations may be made from the floor at the annual meeting when the new nominating committee will be elected. Any vacancies on the nominating committee shall be filled by the Board. The chair of the nominating committee shall, at least three months before the annual meeting, notify the membership of the offices to be filled and request advisory recommendations.

2) **Bylaws Committee.** The bylaws committee will study the bylaws, suggest amendments, if necessary, and consider proposals suggested by any League member for changing the bylaws.

3) **Budget Committee.** The budget shall be prepared by the budget committee. The treasurer shall be, ex officio, a member of the budget committee but shall not be eligible to serve as chair. The proposed budget for the next fiscal year shall be sent to all members at least one month before the annual meeting.

b) The board shall appoint such additional standing committees as are deemed adequate for the effective fulfillment of program priorities of all levels of the League. Membership in such committees is open to members or non-members.

c) The board shall appoint such special committees as it deems necessary. The chair and committee members shall be voting members of LWVChicago.

## **ARTICLE VI Meetings**

**Sec. 1. Annual Meeting.** The annual meeting shall be held once a year between May and August, the exact date to be determined by the board. The annual meeting shall elect officers and directors; the members of the nominating committee; adopt a budget; adopt amendments to the bylaws; and transact such other business as may properly come before it. Absentee or proxy voting shall not be permitted.

Notice of the annual meeting shall be sent to all members one month in advance of the meeting. Such notice shall include the slate of candidates, any proposed bylaws changes, report of the nominating committee, the proposed budget and the proposed program.

### **Sec. 2. Membership Meetings.**

a) Annually, there shall be at least two general meetings of the membership regarding issues chosen by the national, state, county or local LWV, for information, discussion or advocacy. Such meetings may include organizational matters. If consensus or concurrence is required, a quorum shall be present. The time and place shall be determined by the board.

b) The board may call a special general membership meeting and shall call such a meeting upon the written request of ten percent of the voting members provided that: notice of the meeting is sent to all members at least two weeks prior to the date of the meeting, the meeting agenda is included in the notification, and the business is confined to the announced agenda.

c) Unit meetings may be scheduled to further inform and involve members.

**Sec. 3. Composition and Representation.** Every voting member of the LWVChicago shall be entitled to voice and vote at annual, membership and special meetings. Associate members shall be given voice at such meetings.

**Sec. 4. Quorum.** Ten percent of the voting members shall constitute a quorum at all business meetings of LWVChicago.

## **ARTICLE VII Nominations and Elections**

**Sec. 1. Report of Nominating Committee and Nominations from the Floor.** The report of the nominating committee of its nominations for officers, directors, and members of the nominating committee shall be sent to all members one month before the annual meeting. Members also shall be notified that nominations may be made from the floor by any voting member.

The chair of the nominating committee shall, at least three months before the annual meeting, notify the membership of the offices to be filled and request advisory recommendations.

The report of the nominating committee shall be presented to the annual meeting. Immediately thereafter, nominations may be made from the floor by any voting member, provided the consent of the nominee has been secured.

**Sec. 2. Elections.** Election shall be by ballot except if there is only one nominee for an office, it may be by voice vote. Such voice vote shall be ordered by a member of the body. A majority vote shall constitute an election. Absentee or proxy voting shall not be permitted.

## **ARTICLE VIII**

### **Principles and Program**

**Sec. 1. Principles.** The principles are concepts of government adopted by the national convention and supported by the League as a whole. They are the authorization for the adoption of national, state, county and local programs.

**Sec. 2. National, State, and County Program Recommendations.** Program planning for the LWVUS, LWVIL and LWVCC shall be done in accordance with the procedures established by the respective levels of League. If LWVChicago is to send in the recommendations, they shall come to the board of directors in the manner recommended by the appropriate League board.

**Sec. 3. Program.** The local program shall consist of implementation of the Principles and Positions of the LWV, including updates or studies chosen by the annual meeting to the positions of LWVChicago. Areas of special concern the members want to emphasize, whether at the national, state, inter-league, county or local level may also be chosen at this meeting. The annual meeting shall act upon the local program; using the following procedures:

a) Voting members may make recommendations to the board at least three months before the annual meeting. The method of member input shall be determined by the board.

b) All recommendations shall be submitted to the program planning chair who shall compile all program recommendations and e-mail them to board members at least five days before the board meeting at which local program is to be voted.

c) The board shall consider the recommendations and formulate a proposed program which shall be sent to the members at least one month before the annual meeting.

d) The annual meeting shall adopt a program by majority vote. Program recommendations submitted to the board at least three months before the annual meeting but not recommended by the board may be considered provided that the annual meeting shall order consideration by a majority vote and shall adopt the item by a two-thirds vote.

Changes in the local program may be made provided that information concerning the proposed change has been sent to all members at least two weeks before a general membership meeting at which the change is to be discussed.

**Sec. 4. Program Action.** Members may act in the name of LWVChicago only when authorized to do so by the board and/or the president. They may act only in conformity with, and not contrary to, a position taken by LWVChicago, LWVCC, LWVIL, LWVUS, LWVLMR, and LWVUMRR.

## **ARTICLE IX**

### **Financial Administration**

**Sec. 1. Fiscal Year.** The fiscal year of LWVChicago shall be the same as the fiscal year of the LWVUS.

**Sec. 2. Financial Review.** The books of the organization shall be reviewed within ninety days after the end of the fiscal year by an independent licensed professional. Whenever there is a change in the Treasurer, an audit shall be done. A report of all reviews and audits shall be sent to the membership.

**Sec. 3. Dues.** Annual dues shall be payable on the first day of July. Any member who fails to pay dues within three months after they become payable may be dropped from active membership and shall be notified of that action. Provision for prorated dues shall be made by the board. The board may set reduced student and household dues and may provide for scholarships for active members.

**Sec. 4. State and National Support.** LWVChicago shall make a contribution for the financial support of LWVCC, LWVIL and LWVUS based on per capita membership; and shall pay annual dues to the LWVLMR and LWVUMRR. LWVChicago shall make provisions for these contributions in the annual budget.

**Sec. 5. Distribution of Funds on Dissolution.** In the event of dissolution of LWVChicago, all moneys and securities which may at the time be owned by or under the control of LWVChicago shall be paid to LWVIL, and all property shall become the property of LWVIL after the state and national per member payments and other obligations have been met. All other property of whatsoever nature, whether real, personal or mixed which may at the time be owned or under the control of LWVChicago shall be disposed to such person, organization or corporation for such public, charitable or educational use and purposes that the board in its absolute discretion may designate.

**ARTICLE X**  
**Parliamentary Authority**

The rules in the most recent edition of ***Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised*** shall govern the organization in all cases in which they are applicable and not inconsistent with these Bylaws.

**ARTICLE XI**  
**Amendments**

**Amendments.** These bylaws may be amended by a two-thirds vote of the voting members present and voting at the annual meeting, provided that:

- a) At least two months prior to the annual meeting members or units submit proposals for amendments to the board of directors.
- b) At least one month prior to the meeting, all proposed amendments together with the recommendations of the board shall be sent to the membership.
- c) Recommended amendments shall be presented to the meeting for action.
- d) Not-recommended amendments may be voted consideration by a majority vote.

**These bylaws were adopted on May 12, 1950 when many neighborhood Leagues joined together to form the League of Women Voters of Chicago.**

Amended: 1951, 1953, 1954, 1957, 1959, 1960, 1962, 1963, 1964, 1966, 1967, 1968, 1969, 1971, 1973, 1974, 1975, 1976, 1977, 1978, 1979, 1980, 1982, 1984, 1987, 1988, 1989, 1991, 1993, 1994, 1995, 1996, 1997, 1998, 1999, 2000, 2001, 2002, 2006, 2009, 2011, 2013, 2014, 2016.