



POLICIES  
AND  
PROCEDURES  
2022-2023

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## **MISSION STATEMENT**

*Based on LWVUC: Adopted by the board: November 2, 2009; Re-adopted by the Board August 5, 2017*

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

## **NONPARTISAN POLICY**

*Adopted by the board: August 12, 1996. Re-adopted by the board: July 25, 1998; July 24, 1999; July 29, 2000; June 30, 2001; July 20, 2002; July 12, 2003; Sept. 7, 2004; July 24, 2005; November 2, 2009, August 2, 2010, June 25, 2011, June 30, 2012, July 28, 2013, August 5, 2017, and Revised August 13, 2022.*

The LWVHC shall not support or oppose any political party or candidate. The LWVHC Board, as well as each Board member has the responsibility to maintain the nonpartisanship of the organization.

A Board member shall not run for or hold an elective position.

A Board member shall not speak in public against a League position.

The President, the Voter Service Director, the Forums Directors, the Community Education Director, the Public Relations Chair and the Action Directors shall not take an active, visible role in, or make a financial contribution to, any political candidate's campaign, or to any political party. They are not allowed to attend any fundraising function of any individual candidate.

Other Board members shall not undertake any action that will cause them to be identified publicly as supporting any candidate for elective office or any political party. They may attend political, but not partisan functions. They may make donations to candidates, providing their names are not published as contributors or endorsers.

The political activities of a spouse or relative of a Board member are to be considered as separate and distinct from the activities of a Board member.

A person resigning from the Board for political reasons will have to remain off the Board for at least three months following that political activity.

Questions about specific situations should be presented to the full Board for interpretation and resolution.

## **DIVERSITY POLICY**

*Based on LWVUS with LWVHC additions: Re-adopted by the Board August 5, 2017*

The League of Women Voters of Humboldt County (LWVHC), in both its values and practices, affirms its belief and commitment to diversity and pluralism, which means there shall be no barriers to membership nor participation in the LWVHC on the basis of gender, race, creed, age, sexual orientation, national origin, disability, economic status, or political affiliation. LWVHC recognizes that diverse perspectives are important and necessary for responsible and representative decision-making. LWVHC affirms its commitment to reflect the diversity of the community in its membership, Board and programs.

## **GENERAL POLICY**

*Re-adopted by the Board August 5, 2017*

For the duration of a Board term, a Board member needs to remain aware of League positions and speak only in favor of these positions. She or he should not jeopardize League function or credibility by any seeming dissent.

A Board member has the option to remain silent, but she or he does not have the option to undermine the overall LWV effort. The LWVHC and other Leagues enjoy a reputation for integrity which is the direct result of our own respect for League principles and positions.

In all public meetings or interviews, it is advisable to use tact, to be direct and factual. A Board member never assumes what the Board decision "might" be or "would probably" be. To the greatest extent possible such meetings or interviews are to be attended with another League member. Only under extreme or extraordinary circumstances is it permissible to attend interviews or public meetings where a Board member is to speak without another League member in attendance.

## **WHO SPEAKS FOR THE LEAGUE?**

*Re-adopted by the Board August 5, 2017*

In theory, it is the President who represents a League before the public, official agencies, and other LWV bodies. All letters and statements are signed by/in the name of the President and prepared with her or his knowledge and Board concurrence.

In practice, letters and statements are often prepared by the Chair most conversant with the subject material and signed in the following manner:

Jane M. Doe, President  
League of Women Voters of Humboldt County

Betty J. Smith  
(Title and Portfolio)

Public statements are prepared in the same manner with sufficient copies made for all members of the agency or body to be addressed. Additional copies for the press are desirable.

However, public statements may be presented by the Action Chair or portfolio holder, a former Chair in the same category, or a resource committee member knowledgeable in the subject matter to be presented. It is desirable for any speaker presenting a League statement to have sufficient background in the subject under discussion to be able to handle questions arising from the presentation. However, it is definitely preferable to admit to limited knowledge and a willingness to carry further questions back to the League Board than to compromise League credibility with an ill-informed or inadequate reply.

Under all circumstances, the portfolio holder must be informed of all statements and letters which affect her or his portfolio.

All statements and letters need Board approval prior to mailing or presentation. If time prevents a full Board hearing, such communications are to be presented for approval to the Executive Committee and reported on at the next regular Board meeting.

Previously approved statements with or without an explanatory cover letter may be cleared through the Executive Committee by telephone or e-mail.

Telephone or e-mail approval by the Executive Committee is also permitted on 'Calls to Action' from the LWVC and 'Action Alerts' from the LWVUS.

## **CONFLICT OF INTEREST POLICY**

*Re-adopted by the Board August 5, 2017*

A conflict of interest exists whenever the interests of the League as stated in the League principles and positions clash with a Board member's interests. Potential conflicts might arise from: a) certain employment duties, b) lobbying, c) representing employers, d) acting as liaisons, e) acting as a negotiator, f) situations where undue influence may be exerted on other League members because of the employment title or portfolio of the Board members, and g) private litigation undertaken against a public agency or elected official.

Whenever a conflict of interest exists the affected Board member shall so state and not participate in the deliberations and decision-making by the Board on the item causing the conflict of interest. It is possible that in the event of such conflict the Board may request the Board member to function in an off-Board capacity for a period of time, or the Board member may be asked to withdraw from the Board activity for the duration of the conflict.

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS POLICY**

*Re-adopted by the Board August 5, 2017*

Only League announcements are to be made at LWVHC meetings. The LWVHC mission statement will be announced at the start of all League meetings.

## **VOTER (Monthly Newsletter) POLICY**

*Re-adopted by the Board August 5, 2017*

Materials submitted by other organizations will not be published in the VOTER. VOTER materials will be limited to content relating to our positions, studies, and general League information. The President and Voter Coordinator shall edit the VOTER and follow general editing procedures.

## **CONVENTIONS, PRESIDENTS' COUNCIL, AND WORKSHOP POLICIES**

*Revised by the Board August 5, 2017*

### **❖ LWVUS Convention:**

The LWVHC is responsible for the following expenses for the President or one Board member:

- Convention registration;
- Convention banquet;
- Travel – least costly, most reasonable;
- Housing – least costly, most reasonable;
- Food may be reimbursed up the federal per diem rate of the city visited.

If the LWVHC President is unable to attend, the Board must approve the delegate. It is understood that the delegate must prepare a concise convention report to be printed in the VOTER.

### **❖ LWVC Convention:**

The LWVHC is responsible for the following expenses for the President or one Board member:

- Convention registration;
- Convention banquet;
- Travel – least costly, most reasonable;
- Housing – least costly, most reasonable;
- Food may be reimbursed up the federal per diem rate of the city visited.

The LWVHC may be responsible for convention registration and housing for additional eligible delegates.

❖ **LWVC Leadership Council:**

The LWVHC is responsible for the following expenses for the President or eligible delegate:

- Registration;
- Travel – least costly, most reasonable;
- Housing – least costly, most reasonable;
- Food may be reimbursed up the federal per diem rate of the city visited.

❖ **Workshops:**

The LWVHC will be responsible for the following expenses:

- Registration – any attendee;
- Housing – President or designee and one member.

## **LWVHC AWARD POLICY**

*Re-adopted by the Board August 5, 2017*

Name of Award: Outstanding League Member Award

Frequency: To be awarded by the Board when appropriate at the Annual Meeting

Criteria:

- ❖ LWVHC Member
- ❖ League participation/dedication
- ❖ Not currently a candidate for public office
- ❖ Not currently an elected official
- ❖ Not currently a Board member
- ❖ Outstanding contribution to the League

Award: Appropriate individual gift under \$50, and a Certificate of Appreciation

## **FINANCE PROCEDURES**

*Re-adopted by the Board August 5, 2017*

The Treasurer shall make monthly reports on the total assets and liabilities of the LWVHC and on the balance of each portfolio account.

Since the budget and accounting system are developed so that each portfolio has its own budget and account the following procedures need to be followed:

- ❖ Monies can only be reassigned from one portfolio to another, or from reserves to a portfolio, upon the authorization by the Board (majority vote).
- ❖ The Treasurer can make reimbursements from LWVHC assets only upon proper submission of vouchers.
- ❖ Only the portfolio holder can authorize expenditures from the assigned portfolio budget. If a committee member or other Board member incurs expenses for that portfolio, the expenditures have to be reported and be reimbursed through the portfolio holder. In this way, the portfolio holder can better manage the financial resources of his or her portfolio.
- ❖ If there is a vacancy in a portfolio, the Board should clearly designate who is to carry out certain portfolio activities, so that the Treasurer can reimburse those individuals out of the vacant portfolio account.

## **DUES ASSISTANCE POLICY**

*Re-adopted by the Board August 5, 2017*

Recognizing that members may not be able to meet the full cost of dues, and that the services and/or participation of a member can be as valuable as monetary contributions, the LWVHC may offer a membership through full or partial dues assistance. The dues assistance will be for one year.

The criteria for granting dues assistance will be financial need, anticipated participation of the member in the organization, and the available budgeted funds.

The total dues assistance funds that are available is determined by the annual budget. If sufficient money is not available from the budget to fund approved memberships, the Board may decide if and how to cover the additional dues assistance expenditure (e.g., donation from members, fund raiser, transfer from savings, or simply going over budget).

Submissions of dues assistance applications are private; only the Membership Chair and the Treasurer are privy to the applications and the granting of dues assistance.

Any member/potential member may apply for a dues-assisted membership by filling out an application, available on the LWVHC website and through the Membership Chair. The application form will provide an opportunity for the applicant to express areas of interest. The completed application shall be submitted to the Membership Chair, who will consider the application. Consultation regarding the applicant is permitted between the Membership Chair and the Treasurer. Full or partial dues assistance, as well as rejection of dues assistance, shall be communicated to the applicant within one month of the application submission.

With the granting of the dues-assisted membership, the applicant must become an active member of LWVHC. Such membership shall be henceforth considered to be the same as any other. Applicants may re-apply.

## **HUMBOLDT AREA FOUNDATION FUNDS POLICY**

*Re-adopted by the Board August 5, 2017*

### **BACKGROUND**

Humboldt Area Foundation holds an account with funds bequeathed and donated to the League. The history of the account is as follows:

- ❖ In 1999 the League established the Education Fund with HAF. In 2001 Thelma Ingebriksen bequeathed the LWVHC \$20,000 for the League to use at its discretion. The League split the amount of the bequest and deposited half with the existing HAF Education Fund, and half with HAF in a new Membership Development Fund. The names of the accounts have been altered over time, but the purposes of the two accounts were:

*Education Fund:* for the education of citizens, including voter service.

*Membership Fund:* for the development and expansion of the League's membership.

- ❖ League members have made tax-deductible donations to each of these Funds.
- ❖ In February 2009 the Board approved the transfer of the Membership Fund into the Education Fund. The funds in the two accounts were combined, and the Membership Fund was eliminated because access to the Membership Fund was encumbered by its stated purpose. Most membership development activities are not

strictly separate from advocacy activities, (e.g., Membership Brunch), and HAF is reluctant to release tax-deductible funds for those activities.

Expenditures from the Education Fund are limited to educational purposes only. Portions of the State and National PMP can be paid from the Education Fund, if those portions are identified by the State and National Leagues. Annual expenditures from the fund should not be greater than 10 percent of the fund's balance as reported on the December 31st quarter-to-date HAF fund statement.

Member contributions to the Education Fund, which are tax-deductible, should be encouraged.

## **REQUESTS FOR DONATIONS TO NONPROFIT GROUPS POLICY**

*Re-adopted by the Board August 5, 2017*

The LWVHC does not generally donate money to other groups or individuals. It is our policy only to respond to solicitations from other groups for funds that clearly further the League's goals as stated in our adopted positions. The LWVHC also may make a donation to another group that provides meeting space or similar benefits for our group. All donations must be authorized by the Board.

## **COMMUNITY ELECTIONS ASSISTANCE POLICY**

*Re-adopted by the Board August 5, 2017*

### **1. CONTRACT**

- a. There will be an MOU or Working Agreement approved by the Board, and signed by both parties.
- b. Each party will have a dated copy with original signatures.
- c. The agreement will delineate the responsibilities of the League as well as those of the organization. It will also include the fees for the election assistance.

### **2. FEES**

- a. All expenses shall be paid by the community organization or reimbursed to the League. Expenses may include, but are not limited to, postage, printing, stationery materials and any legal fees.
- b. A fee, or donation, of at least \$500 shall be made to the League.
- c. If there are more than 150 eligible voters, an additional fee of at least \$.25 per voter may be added.
- d. The fee will range upward from \$500 based on the complexity of the election and the amount of work required from the League.
- e. Considerations for an increased fee include: General Election, Special Election, Runoff Election, Priority Mailings, Voter Data Base, Consultation on Bylaws or Election Ordinance, etc.

### **3. PREPARATION**

- a. Visit physical location to evaluate requirements and needs.
- b. Review Election Ordinance and/or Bylaws.
- c. Review procedures for a tie vote.
- d. Determine time frame.
- e. Determine equipment requirements, such as polling booths and voting box.
- f. Allow for security issues at the polling place.
- g. Assure access to the polling place.
- h. Determine necessary follow-up to the election.
- i. Determine storage and disposal of election materials after the election.

### **4. PERSONNEL**

- a. Determine number of League members needed to prepare information, ballots and mailings.
- b. Determine number of League members needed at the polls.



- c. Coordinate with the Post Office staff if priority mailings required.
- d. Determine distance and travel time required.
- e. Record volunteer hours given.
- f. Provide a training workshop for League participants.

5. Develop and use a “Community Elections Assistance Manual.”

**PARTICIPATION WITH OTHER ORGANIZATIONS POLICY**

*Approved by the Board October 6, 2008; Re-adopted by the Board August 5, 2017*

The LWVHC may participate with other organizations in several ways. However that participation is structured, the following must apply:

- 1. Participation must support the LWVHC mission statement.
- 2. Nonpartisanship shall not be compromised in any way.
- 3. Association with any other group(s) must not compromise the reputation of the League.
- 4. The mission statement(s) of the other organization(s) shall not conflict with the League’s mission statement.
- 5. The LWVHC will not participate in any activity where candidates or parties are endorsed.
- 6. All Voter Service activities will conform to League Voter Service guidelines.
- 7. The League’s participation will be determined to be either Education or Advocacy; appropriate guidelines will be followed for each.
- 8. The LWVHC may withdraw from any type of participation with any other group at any time.
- 9. The Board shall make the final decision regarding any participation with another group, considering the following guidelines in each individual case.

**Participation in Public Meetings**

- 1. Providing Moderators and Facilitators:
  - a. The structure of the event ensures fairness and balance.
  - b. The event is not organized to promote an issue that conflicts with League positions or principles.
- 2. Participation in an Event planned by another group:
  - a. All points covered in 1. a) through b).
  - b. The issue is timely and important to the community.
  - c. The participation of the LWVHC with a specific topic or sponsor is at the discretion of the current Board.
  - d. Any educational event will present balanced representation of all major viewpoints.
  - e. Any financial commitment is approved by the Board.
  - f. Members of the LWVHC are interested and willing to do the necessary work.
- 3. Sponsorship of Events initiated by the League or by another group:
  - a. All points covered in 2. a) through f).
  - b. A representative of the LWVHC is involved in the planning and decision-making.
  - c. Any co-sponsoring groups must not endorse candidates or issues before the event or activity.
  - d. The LWVHC must approve significant changes in plans and must approve written materials before their release.
  - e. The LWVHC may withdraw from participation and/or sponsorship at any time.
  - f. The Board approves listing the LWVHC as a sponsor and allocates any necessary funds.

## **Guidelines for Joining a Coalition or an Association**

An *action coalition* will be defined as a temporary alliance that brings together organizations for joint action toward a limited and well-defined goal. An *association* may be a long-term, continuing relationship to support efforts related to a major goal. The LWVHC Board must approve participation prior to the LWVHC joining any coalition/association (C/A). In addition to the criteria 1 – 9 at the beginning of this policy, the following criteria and ground rules must be considered before approval by the Board.

### 1. Criteria:

- a. The major issues of the C/A shall mesh with LWVHC positions or be issues of LWVHC concern.
- b. The aims of the C/A shall not conflict with any League positions.
- c. The C/A must be with organizations with which the League can work effectively.
- d. The LWVHC has positions, experience, abilities and interests that make joining appropriate.
- e. The LWVHC must have confidence in the leadership of the C/A.
- f. The C/A has adequate financing for its success.
- g. The LWVHC members are interested and willing to do the necessary work.
- h. The C/A shall bring added effectiveness to the overall efforts to reach League goals.
- i. The C/A shall not support or oppose any candidate or political party. If the C/A participates in any partisan activity, the LWVHC shall withdraw immediately.
- j. The LWVHC Board shall review participation in any C/A during its annual retreat.

### 2. Ground Rules:

- a. All members of the C/A shall agree to established ground rules so that all parties know what they may and may not do in the name of the C/A.
- b. The C/A will define the parameters of the issue or issues.
- c. The C/A will agree on specific strategies.
- d. The entire C/A will approve any person(s) who speak(s) for the C/A.
- e. Member organizations must have the opportunity to edit and approve any distributed materials.
- f. The LWVHC shall be responsible for only those expenses approved by the LWVHC Board.
- g. The League member representing the Board with any C/A shall be appointed by the Board.
- h. The LWVHC representative must have Board approval for any statement of a League position on a specific issue.
- i. If the LWVHC Board disagrees with the majority opinion of the C/A, a public statement of the League's dissension shall be issued.

## **Representing the LWVHC on Community Advisory Boards and Commissions**

1. The Board shall evaluate the qualifications of potential League representatives based on their:
  - a. Understanding of the LWVHC's mission, policies, positions, and protocols.
  - b. Understanding of League principles of "good" government (open, accountable, responsive, etc.).
  - c. Specialized knowledge and/or interest in the group's purpose.
  - d. Ability and willingness to attend meetings and to do the necessary work.
  - e. Willingness to report regularly to the Board and the membership through the VOTER and the annual meeting.
2. The Board shall review and approve such representation annually or when the appointment expires.

## **NON-LEAGUE MEMBERS ASSISTING IN LEAGUE VOTER REGISTRATION EVENTS**

*Adopted by the Board October 9, 2018*

The LWVHC may include non-League members to assist with voter registration events as long they are supervised by trained League members.

- Non-League members should be given instruction before they register voters. This training can be provided at the event.
- Completed voter registration forms are to be reviewed by the supervising League member while the person registering is still available.
- After the supervising League member approves the voter registration form then he/she stamps it with the League signature stamp.

## **NOMINATING COMMITTEE POLICY**

*Adopted by the Board January 8, 2019*

1. The Nominating Committee shall review the Article 9 of the LWVHC Bylaws to insure understanding of and compliance to the Article.
2. The Nominating Committee shall communicate with the Membership Chair to identify League members who have expressed an interest in serving as an officer or director of the LWVHC Board of Directors.
3. In October and November, the Nominating Committee shall submit to the VOTER editor an article for publication in the November and December VOTERs requesting those members interested in serving on the League board to contact the Nominating Committee chairperson.
4. The Nominating Committee shall review the Job Descriptions of the four elected officers to insure understanding and compliance of each of these offices. (The various directors' positions are filled by the Board from the elected directors. At that time each director should review and understand his/her job description.)
5. The Nominating Committee shall seek to include some newer League members, or members who have not served on the Board, to the slate. However, the President and the Treasurer should have two years of Board experience prior to being placed on the slate.

## **CANDIDATES FOR OFFICE AS LEAGUE SPEAKERS**

*Adopted by the Board February 11, 2020*

The League does not support candidates for public office. To maintain this independence, candidates for public office (new or incumbent) shall not speak at League functions. An exception to this policy shall be made for the State of the Community Luncheon when the Chair of the Humboldt County Board of Supervisors will be invited to give the State of the County address, regardless of election cycle candidacy.

## **BUDGET COMMITTEE COMPOSITION OF BOARD MEMBERS**

*Adopted by the Board June 9, 2020*

The LWVHC's bylaws require that the budget committee be composed of the treasurer and at least two board members, in addition to three non-board members. The two board members should be the Membership Chair and the incoming President. If the incoming President is not yet determined, the current President shall serve.