



League of Women Voters Orange Durham and Chatham Counties, Inc.

P.O. Box 3397, Chapel Hill, NC 27515-3397

www.lwvdc.org

[Date]

Dear Candidate

The League of Women Voters Orange Durham and Chatham Counties, Inc. (LWVODC) invites you to participate in a Candidate Forum for the office of [redacted]. The Forum will take place on [redacted] at [redacted] and will be open to the public.

The League of Women Voters is a nonpartisan organization and does not endorse or oppose candidates or political parties. LWVODC is hosting this candidate forum to provide an opportunity for the candidates to offer their views on issues important to the voters of [Orange/Durham/Chatham] County. The forum will comply with guidelines established by the League of Women Voters as outlined in the enclosed documents.

1. General Rules
2. List of Invited Candidates and Staging Format
3. Media Coverage
4. Forum Process
5. Candidate's agreement to adhere to established guidelines.

We hope you will accept this invitation to participate in this forum. Please indicate your agreement to participate in the forum on or before [redacted], by signing Enclosure 5 and returning the signed document as instructed on Enclosure 5.

We look forward to your participation in this LWVODC Candidate Forum. Please let me know if you have any questions by emailing [redacted].

Sincerely,

[redacted], Team Leader, [Orange/Durham/Chatham] Forum, LWVODC

Enclosures (5)

General Rules for Candidate Forum

The League of Women Voters is a nonpartisan political organization that was founded 98 years ago to encourage informed citizen participation in government. It has sponsored numerous candidate debates and forums at the national, state and local level. The public holds the League in high regard for its work on candidate forums and for its commitment to follow best practices to ensure a fair and well-executed forum. These forum rules are designed to continue this respected tradition.

Under Federal Election Commission rules, a forum is classified as a “Non-Debate Candidate Appearance” consisting of consecutive candidate questions and responses with no planned opportunities for a candidate to respond to other candidates.

Questions for Candidates: A forum team consisting of LWV Orange/Durham/Chatham County members will create candidate questions. Audience questions may also be used after review by the team members prior to submitting to the moderator. Approved audience questions will not be candidate-specific and must be suitable for all candidates to answer.

Campaign literature: No campaign literature, signs, candidate buttons, etc. will be allowed **except on tables outside the meeting room.** Candidates’ staff may be available to greet and answer questions of the public who come to the table prior to the start of the forum and after the close of the forum.

Rules for Candidate Participation:

1. In contested seats, at least two candidates for each seat must be present for participation in the forum. If a candidate is unopposed, the candidate is invited to make a five-minute presentation to the audience but does not participate in the question and answer portion of the forum.
2. No surrogate(s) may stand in for a candidate in the forum.
3. Candidates may not bring written material to the forum table. However, paper and pencil will be provided to allow candidates to take notes during the forum.
4. Time limits on responses will be strictly observed. A timekeeper will hold cards, visible to the speaker, indicating how much time remains. When the “stop” card is shown, the speaker must end his/her speech within 10 seconds.
5. Personal attacks on opposing candidates will not be allowed.
6. The candidates may not interrupt each other.
7. Water for participants will be provided at the forum table.

Enclosure 2: League of Women Voters Candidate Forum Guidelines

Invited Candidate Participants and Staging Format

[Office(s)]:

[Candidates]

Forum Staging

The forum will be staged in a way that does not promote or advance one candidate over another and that allows the candidates to appear concurrently in a medium where ideas and views on particular issues are exchanged.

Time of Candidate Forum: [REDACTED]

Venue of Candidate Forum: [REDACTED]

Candidates and their staff must arrive at least 20 minutes prior to the start of the forum time to receive instructions on the microphones to be used, to draw for their speaking positions for their opening and closing remarks, to set-up their video equipment for live streaming and to ask any last-minute questions.

Media Coverage

1. LWVODC will announce the forum through press releases to local media and the News and Observer, and print, radio, and TV media will be invited to attend to obtain the broadest possible coverage.
2. LWVODC will provide information about the forum to local online community calendars for posting.
3. LWVODC will publicize information about the forum on its website, Facebook page, and in VOTE411.org.
4. All forum recordings will be owned and copyrighted by LWVODC. LWVODC will make a video recording of the forum, copies of which may be requested by candidates in writing. LWVODC maintains discretion to approve release of any recording of the forum made by or on behalf of LWVODC and will only do so if such recording is broadcast in its entirety. No candidate may use or edit media footage of the forum for campaign advertising purposes.
5. LWVODC guidelines for media outlets broadcasting events will include a statement that any broadcast of the forum requires the express prior written approval of LWVODC. LWVODC will only allow audio and/or video of the forum to be broadcast in its entirety, except by media reporting on the forum in “real time”.
6. No flash photography will be allowed at the forum.
7. Social Media: Audience members may use social media during the forum as long as it is not disruptive.
8. LWVODC grants candidates a limited license allowing candidate representatives to live stream and record the forum, said license being subject to the following conditions:
 - (a) LWVODC is informed in advance of the candidate’s intention to live stream;
 - (b) candidate live streaming does not disrupt the forum;
 - (c) no audience member’s image is included in the live stream;
 - (d) live streaming and recordings thereof may only be posted on the candidate’s web site and must show the forum in its entirety;
 - (e) no part of any candidate-generated recording of the forum may be used in campaign advertising; and
 - (f) archived candidate-generated forum recordings are destroyed within five years of the forum date.

Candidates may contact [REDACTED] for technical assistance in setting up live streams of the forum.

Enclosure 4: League of Women Voters Forum Guidelines

Forum Process

1. At the beginning of the forum, the moderator will announce that all cell phones, tablets, computers, cameras, and any audio/video recording devices be turned on the silent mode.
2. The rules for the forum will be explained at the opening of the forum and then each candidate will be introduced by the moderator. The audience will be asked to hold their applause until the end of the forum.
3. Candidate speaking order will be determined by a draw. Candidates will have 1 minute for their opening statements. A separate draw will be used for the closing statements of 2 minute.
4. The forum will follow a traditional question and answer with timed responses format. The moderator will address a question to a candidate and the candidate has one minute to respond.
5. A candidate will be allowed to finish a sentence, once started, but strict time limits will be enforced.
6. If a candidate does not use all the time allotted for a response, it cannot be applied to any other purpose or question.
7. Candidates will NOT be allowed any time for rebuttals because of time constraints. The candidate can choose to use part of his/her two minute closing statement for any specific rebuttal.
8. The time keeper will alert the moderator and candidates as to when they have 15 seconds remaining for their responses and when to stop. The moderator will have the responsibility for enforcing time limits.
9. The moderator will have the authority to interrupt the proceedings to enforce the ground rules and format that were agreed to by the candidates and the forum organizers.
10. A two-minute closing statement will be allowed each candidate at the end of the forum so that the candidates can sum up their positions, tie up loose ends and address issues that came up during the forum.

Candidate Participation Agreement

I agree to participate in the forum on [redacted]. I will arrive 20 minutes prior to my appointed time.

I agree to the rules as listed in the referenced enclosures.

I agree that I will not use excerpts of any forum recording in my campaign advertising materials.

Print Name

Signature

Date

Please return this signed form either by taking a cell phone photo or scan the signed form and emailing it to [redacted]. or by sending a copy to [redacted] by [redacted].