



**Council of Metropolitan Area
Leagues**

Established in 1962 as an ILO
and composed of the
members of local LWVs
in the seven metro counties
Anoka, Carver, Dakota,
Hennepin, Ramsey,
Scott and Washington

CMAL
Board of Directors

Officers
Wes Volkenant, Chair
Karen Schaffer, Vice Chair
Marti Micks, Secretary
Peg DuBord, Treasurer

Directors
Gwen Willems
Jean McMenimen
Joann Ellis
Thana Ross

Greetings to Metro Area League Members & Friends

What is CMAL?

CMAL was established in 1962 to increase the knowledge and effectiveness of the seven (7) county metro local chapters of the League of Women Voters MN

- CMAL is a wholly owned LLC of the League of Women Voters of Minnesota
- CMAL is recognized as an inter-league organization (ILO) by the League of Women Voters of the United States (LWVUS).
- All LWV members who reside in the 7-county metro area are members of CMAL.

What does CMAL do?

The purpose of CMAL is to promote political responsibility through informed and active participation in government and to act on selected metropolitan-area governmental issues.

Since its inception in 1962, CMAL has studied and acted upon the following metropolitan government issues:

- Metropolitan Council (functions, duties and governance)
- Financing Metro-Area Services
- Metro Area Regional Parks
- Metro Area Wastewater Services
- Metro Area Water Planning
- Metro Area Housing/Health Care for Aging
- Land Use and Comprehensive Planning
- School Desegregation
- Transportation and Transit
- County Government in the seven County Metro Area
- Metro Area Watershed Management

The CMAL Board of Directors decides how LWVUS, LWLVMN, and CMAL positions apply to current metro-area issues. It takes action on adopted positions by writing letters, presenting testimony, and lobbying.

The CMAL Program for Action may be found at [CMAL Positions & Studies](#). The CMAL Board of Directors develops programs for Quarterly Meetings on topics of metropolitan area importance and member interest. These meetings are also open to the public.

Wes

Wes Volkenant
CMAL Chair 2025-2027
LWV Anoka, Blaine, Coon Rapids Area

ANNUAL MEETING KEYNOTE - HENNEPIN COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH

By Karen Schaffer

CMAL delegates were honored May 27th to hear from Sara Hollie, Director of Hennepin County Public Health Health. She was appointed to her current position on October 1, 2024. For Hollie, public health is deeply personal. It's about improving outcomes for communities, building trust, and addressing inequities that have persisted for generations.

Hollie is a true "local girl makes good" story. Sara is a Minneapolis native. She graduated from North High School and earned an undergraduate degree in Women's Studies and a master's in Public Health from the University of Minnesota.

Her 20 years of experience include serving as Saint Paul Ramsey County Public Health Director, and in her spare time she hosts "Know Your Options" on radio KMOJ 89.9

Rather than dazzle with data, Hollie framed up the current challenges that she faces. Hennepin County serves 41 cities, making it the largest local public health department in Minnesota. Her responsibilities include:

- Communicable disease control
- Chronic disease and injury prevention
- Environmental public health
- Maternal, child and family health
- Access to and linkage with clinical care.
- Challenges include:
- Lack of sustained investment
- Increased need for "safety net" while insurance and reimbursements decline
- Federal agency withdrawal, leading to increased reliance on state and local governments
- New infectious diseases and fewer resources to monitor
- Declining trust in government, public health and science.

In addressing the challenges, her department works with federal and state partners as well as local public health agencies and non-governmental organizations.

Examples include the community health assessment (done every 5 years), the community health improvement partnership (among Hennepin County, Minneapolis, Bloomington, Richfield and Edina), and the unique SHAPE Survey (to occur in 2027) that collects anonymous information about all populations to understand health status.

Hollie encouraged LWV members to keep learning about public health and to keep supporting public health work and programs. Her watchwords:

- Educate yourself
- Identify your cause
- Use multiple avenues of communication
- Engage policymakers
- Collaborate with others working in the same space.

Hollie can be reached at Sara.Hollie@hennepin.us. Or [Public Health | Hennepin County](#)

On her way out the door on May 27, we asked if she was hurrying to the KMOJ radio studio for "Know Your Options." She smiled and disclosed that, well, sometimes those are pre-recorded. We are grateful that she gave CMAL some of her valuable in-person time.

ANNUAL MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

The Annual Meeting was a great opportunity to meet with the Board of Directors and all the delegates. Sara Hollie gave a great presentation about Hennepin County Public Health, but also touched on statewide topics of public health interest.

Election of Officers and Directors 2026

Motion by the CMAL Board of Directors to elect the following individuals to serve on the CMAL Board for the designated terms:

- Vice Chair: Karen Schaffer, LWV-Roseville Area; Term: 2026-2028
- Treasurer: Peg DuBord, LWV-Lake Minnetonka, Plymouth Area; Term: 2026-2028
- Director: Gwen Willems, LWV-Roseville Area; Term 2026-2027 (to complete final year of Lindsay Stambaugh's term)
- Director: Thana Ross, LWV-Dakota County; Term 2026-2028
- Director: Jean McMenimen, LWV-Dakota County; Term 2026-2028
- Director: Joann Ellis, LWV St. Paul, accepted a one-year term ending in 2027

CMAL DELEGATE RESPONSIBILITIES

All the LWV annual meetings are over, and some of you have been given the opportunity and responsibility to serve as a delegate from your local league to CMAL. I suppose you are wondering what that entails.

The CMAL Board communicates with local league presidents to identify the member(s) chosen to serve as CMAL delegates. From that point on, CMAL Delegates will be invited to join any of CMAL meetings or activities for the coming year to represent their local league.

What are the CMAL Delegate Responsibilities?

- Attend CMAL Quarterly meetings and the Annual Meeting.
- Be familiar with CMAL policies, practices, and procedures.
- Publicize upcoming CMAL Quarterly meetings/programs and encourage their local league members to attend.
- Share CMAL newsletters with their local league members and the public as appropriate.
- Support CMAL studies by participating on a study committee
- Recruit local league members to participate in study committees
- Coordinate in the LWV consensus process in their local league when this occurs.
- Propose metro governmental concerns to the CMAL Board for consideration as program or study topics

Also, please feel free to contact any Board member with questions or email at: LWVCMAL@LWVMN.org

CMAL Mailing List

If you would like to be added to the CMAL mailing list, please send your contact information to: LWVCMAL@lwvmn.org or Karen Schaffer at schafferka@gmail.com

WE THOUGHT OUR MEMBERSHIP MIGHT BE INTERESTED IN THIS...

A Generational Breakdown in the Metro Area

The Seven-County Metro Area had a population of 3.2 million people in 2024

There are now at least six generations estimated to be living together in the Metro Area by the numbers.

- **Millennials:** 1981-1996: **734,500 people**
- **Generation Z:** 1997-2009: **657,100 people**
- **Generation X:** 1965-1980: **628,400 people**
- **Baby Boomers:** 1946-1964: **556,400 people**
- **Generation Alpha:** 2010-2024; **481,100 people**
- **Silent Generation** 1928-1945: &
- **Greatest Generation** 1901-1927: **141,700 people**

March 19, 2026 | [Tim O'Neill https://mn.gov/deed/data/locallook/metro/metro-blog.jsp?id=1045-738778](https://mn.gov/deed/data/locallook/metro/metro-blog.jsp?id=1045-738778)

26 27 PROGRAM CALENDAR

QUARTERLY MEETING DATES

OCTOBER 29, 2026
ANIA MCDONNELL - METRO CITIES

HOW WILL THE METRO MEET ITS HOUSING DEMANDS?

JANUARY 28, 2027
SPEAKER TBD

ANNUAL MEETING
APRIL 29, 2027