



BULLETIN, February, 2022

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF LEXINGTON

TOWN ELECTIONS: IMPORTANT DATES

Tuesday, February 15, 8:00 pm Last day to register to vote in Town Election.

Monday, February 28 Deadline for posting Warrant. The Warrant is available now on the Town Website at [2022_stm.atm_warrant_final_to_be_printed_1.25.22.pdf](#)

Tuesday, March 1, 5:00 pm Deadline to file Application for Absentee Vote by Mail Ballot

Friday, March 4, 12:00 noon Deadline to file Application for Absentee Ballot

Monday, March 7, 7:00 am to 8:00 pm Annual Town Election (voted by Select Board)

Monday, March 28 Annual Town Meeting (voted by Select Board)

2022 CANDIDATES NIGHT THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2022

Candidates Night, in anticipation of Lexington's March 7 Elections, will be conducted on Zoom again this year.

Precinct Meetings, for Town Meeting Members and interested residents, are an opportunity to talk directly with TM candidates running in your own precinct and to discuss issues of particular interest to your neighborhood. They will convene at 7:30 pm and will require registration to assure that members find their own precincts.

Register at:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZcodOmuqz4rGd2KzbGq98dMRNMj9bLzC625>. After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting.

The General Forum to introduce Town wide candidates will begin at 8:15 pm and will not require registration. Join at <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81187942076>.

Alternatively, dial in at **US: +1 301 715 8592 or +1 646 558 8656**, The Webinar ID is **811 8794 2076**. This year there is only one contested race, with three candidates for two open seats on the School Committee. The Town wide forum will be videoed for later broadcast on LexMedia.

FIRST FRIDAY FORUM, FEBRUARY 4, 2022: Referendum on Gas Powered Leaf Blowers

Lexington's November 2021 Special Town Meeting voted to approve local bylaw changes to define the hours when landscape maintenance equipment may be operated, establish seasonal limitations on the use of gas-powered leaf blowers (GLBs) until 2025, and prohibit the use of most GLBs by commercial landscaping contractors and the Town beginning in March 2025 and by residents in 2026. A group of voters petitioned to refer this matter back to the voters by referendum.

The March 7 ballot will include this referendum question: *"Shall the town vote to approve the action of the representative town meeting whereby it was voted to amend Chapter 80 of the Code of Lexington, limiting the use of outdoor landscape maintenance equipment to specified days and hours and further to impose restrictions and eventual prohibitions on the use of gas-powered leaf blowers."* A **Yes** vote will keep the Town Meeting vote in place. A **No** vote will overturn the Town Meeting action.

The Lexington League of Women Voters takes no position on this question, but will invite presentations by both sides at our First Friday Forum on February 4, at 9:30 am. Panelists will include representatives of the "Lexington Citizens for Choice" and the "Quiet Clean Lexington" campaign committee. There will be time for Q&A after the program, which will be conducted on Zoom. For more information about the webinar, assistance using Zoom, or other activities of the League, go to <http://www.lwvlexington.org/FirstFriday.html>.

This program is the fifth in the 2021-2022 First Friday Forum series hosted by the League of Women Voters to promote awareness and understanding of public policy issues. All League forums are free and open to the public.

PLANNING BOARD HEARING ON WARRANT ARTICLE 38

The Planning Board is holding a public hearing on February 2, at 7:00 pm. on Zoom (<https://www.lexingtonma.gov/planning-office/pages/access-virtual-meetings>) to take residents' questions, comments and recommendations on a rezoning proposal submitted by Hobbs Brook Real Estate, LLC for 45 and 49 Hayden Avenue (128 Spring Street).

Hobbs Brook proposes designating this location as a Planned Development District to allow the demolition, renovation and replacement of commercial and laboratory space there, including the construction of a parking garage. Under the Zoning Bylaw, a Planned Development District has no predetermined standards. Specific standards for dimensions, use, etc. are proposed by the developer in a Preliminary Site Development and Use Plan (PSDUP) which, after review by the Planning Board, must be approved by Town Meeting. After this public hearing, and possibly more information or amendments from the applicant, the Planning Board will decide whether or not to recommend the zoning change to the 2022 Town Meeting, and the matter will be considered as Article 38 on the Warrant. If the Article is approved by Town Meeting, the applicant submits a more detailed Site Plan to the Planning Board for approval. While more specific, this Plan cannot differ in any substantive way from proposal approved by Town Meeting. The Select Board is preparing a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that will require specific mitigation measures for potential negative effects of this project.

While of particular interest to Precinct 9 and the Woodhaven neighborhood abutting the location, this proposal has potentially wider implications for the Town, including increased employee and other traffic, impact on transportation systems, effect on conservation lands and residential buffer zones, increased tax revenue, and consonance with the Town's Comprehensive Plan, currently being updated. Project documents for the public hearing can be found on the Planning webpage at the link below: <https://www.lexingtonma.gov/planning-office/pages/95-hayden-avene-and-128-spring-street-99-hayden-avenue-preliminary-site>.

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF MASSACHUSETTS

LWVMA ADVOCACY

STATUS REPORT: MA HOUSE PASSES THE VOTES ACT NO SAME DAY REGISTRATION

After strong support from League members all over the state, including numerous contacts with State Representatives, the House passed its version of the VOTES Act (H.4359) by a count of 124-34, on January 27. The bill, along with the Senate version, (S.2554), will now go to a conference committee to iron out differences. The League, with its partners in the Election Modernization Coalition, helped to draft this strong voting reform bill and to get it through the legislative process to this point. Its provisions include:

- Making unrestricted voting by mail permanent;
- Requiring the Secretary of State to send voters applications to vote by mail;
- Expanding the in-person early voting period before general elections and adding in-person early voting for primaries;
- Reducing the deadline to register to vote from 20 to 10 days before an election;
- Encouraging placement of ballot drop boxes;
- Implementing jail-based voting reforms;
- Allowing election officials to process mailed ballots as received and providing other provisions to help election officials;
- Requiring Massachusetts to join the ERIC voter clearing house by July 1, 2022

Despite a strong push by the League in support of same-day voter registration (SDR), this provision did not make it into the bill. The Coalition offered a compromise amendment on SDR. Rather than same-day voter registration that would have allowed people to register and vote during the early voting period, we suggested limiting the ability to register and vote to Election Day, a compromise supported by the Town Clerks' Association. House leadership is opposed to any form of same-day voter registration and submitted an amendment to our

amendment that requires a report from the Secretary of State on SDR before any action. The leadership amendment passed by a 93-64 vote (note that 64 votes is a very strong vote against leadership). Therefore, the House version of the VOTES Act does not include any form of same-day voter registration. Our Representative Ciccolo voted to oppose the leadership amendment, and thus to allow same-day voter registration. Send her an email in appreciation of her support!

OF INTEREST: RANKED CHOICE VOTING IN MASSACHUSETTS

In January, three towns in Massachusetts took steps to consider instituting ranked choice voting:

Northampton, MA is pursuing Proportional RCV (STV) for its at-large seats.

The Somerville Charter Review Committee voted 6-4 to pursue RCV implementation in its review process.

The Massachusetts Joint Committee on Election Laws had a hearing on *An Act relative to ranked choice voting in the town of Arlington*, Bill H.4207.

Concord also anticipates action on ranked choice voting this spring.

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF THE UNITED STATES

LWVUS EVENTS

LWV CELEBRATES OUR 102nd BIRTHDAY FEBRUARY 14, 2022

On Feb. 14, 2022, the League turns 102 years old! It is a pivotal election year, a critical moment for voting rights, our elections, and our democratic system. Leagues across the country will be observing the birthday by redoubling their efforts on voting rights.

The failure of the U.S. Congress to pass either of two voting rights bills this year is a difficult loss, but as national President Dr. Deborah Ann Turner wrote recently:

The League is no stranger to the fight for democracy. It is embedded in the fabric of our organization, and we will continue to be advocates for federal voting rights long-term. Progress for voting rights has always been a journey in our country. It took

nearly a century for women's suffrage to pass and several more decades before federal legislation passed to protect the right to vote for voters of color and Indigenous voters. This fight is a marathon, and we will not stop running until we succeed. Be encouraged! The League has a history of getting this work done, and we will live up to our reputation in this century. Defending democracy is our mission — we are not backing down.

Massachusetts Leaguers have reason to celebrate with the recent passage of the VOTES Act in the Massachusetts House of Representatives, but there is much more work to be done, including continued advocacy for same day voter registration. And while Lexington is a community where voting is accessible and generally convenient, the percentage of eligible voters who turn out for local elections is not impressive: Only 12% of eligible voters actually voted in the last Town election. The Lexington LWV Candidates Night (February 10) is one way our local League seeks to educate and inform voters and to encourage wide participation in local elections. Registering new voters is another. Recent history has reminded us that voting is too precious (and too impactful) to neglect.

REMINDER: LWVUS 55TH NATIONAL CONVENTION
SHERATON DOWNTOWN DENVER (CO) AND ONLINE
JUNE 23-26, 2022.

All League members are invited to attend our biennial national gathering, to be held in Denver, CO and online in 2022. Voting delegates will participate in plenary sessions dealing with the League budget, programs and election of officers. In addition, there will be opportunities to network with fellow League members from all areas of the country, attend large and small group training and education sessions, and be informed and inspired by League and invited speakers. The sessions will be fully hybrid with combined in-person and virtual experiences. More information can be found on the LWVUS website under League Management.

LWVUS HAS UPDATED ITS WEB SITE AT LWV.ORG

The new homepage is designed to better highlight the League's focus areas, recent news, and voter tools. Search functions, donation options, and advocacy reporting have all been improved. In the coming year, more enhancements, including a legal center with information on all cases the League is involved in, will be added. There is also a new tool kit to allow local Leagues to share this content on social media.

LEAGUE PRESIDENT ADDRESS ON YouTube

League of Women Voters President Dr. Deborah Ann Turner addresses Leagues across the country for the 2022 midterm election year in a new video on the LWVUS YouTube channel. Check out her talk for inspiration at:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rrbg6LivGVw> .

Contact Information for Legislators

U.S. Senator Elizabeth Warren	309 Hart Senate Office Building Washington, D.C. 20510 202 244-4543
U.S. Senator Edward Markey	255 Dirksen Senate Office Building Washington, D.C. 20510 202 224-2742
U.S. Representative Katherine Clark	2448 Rayburn House Office Building Washington, D.C. 20515 202 225-2836
MA Senator Michael Barrett	Mike.Barrett@masenate.gov 617 722-1572
MA Senator Cindy Friedman	Cindy.Friedman@masenate.gov 617 722-1432
MA Representative Michelle Ciccolo	Michelle.Ciccolo@mahouse.gov 617 722-2210

SAVE THE DATE

February 4, 2022 First Friday Forum (on Zoom) Ballot Initiative on
Leaf Blowers

February 10, 2022 Local Candidates Night (on Zoom)

February 14, 2022 LWV 102nd Birthday

March 7, 2022 Local Election Day

June 23-26, 2023 LWVUS Biennial Convention on Zoom & in Denver, CO

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF LEXINGTON

BOARD MEMBERS 2021-2022

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The League of Women Voters is a non-partisan organization dedicated to the principles of self-government established in the Constitution of the United States.

The League works to promote political responsibility through informed and active participation of citizens in government.

For more information, contact the Lexington League Convener Margaret Coppe at mecoppe@gmail.com.

We welcome Bulletin articles from members. If you'd like to submit an article for the March, 2022 LWV LEXINGTON Bulletin, please send it to Wendy Manz at wendy_manz@yahoo.com prior to February 25, 2022.