

# LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF THE HELENA AREA

## BYLAWS

*Updated and approved at Annual Membership Meeting on April 21, 2026*

### ARTICLE I: Name

The name of this organization shall be League of Women Voters of the Helena Area, hereinafter referred to in these bylaws as LWVHA.

### ARTICLE II: Purposes & Policies

**Section 1. Purposes.** 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.

#### Section 2. Policies.

- **Nonpartisan Political Policy.** The LWVHA shall not support or oppose any political party or any candidate.
- **Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Policy.** The LWVHA is fully committed to ensure compliance – in principle and in practice – with LWVUS’ Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Policy.

### ARTICLE III: Membership

**Section 1. Eligibility.** Any person who subscribes to the purposes and policy of the LWVHA shall be eligible for membership.

#### Section 2. Membership.

- **Voting Members.** Persons at least 16 years of age who join the League shall be voting members of local Leagues, state Leagues and of the LWVUS.
- **Life Members.** Those who have been members of the League for 50 years or more shall be life members excused from the payment of dues.
- **Associate Members.** All others who join the League shall be associate members.

## ARTICLE IV: Board of Directors

**Section 1.** LWVHA has adopted a traditional model of organization, subject to approval at the annual business meeting and governed by the relevant sections of the bylaws.

**Section 2. Traditional Structure. Officers and Board of Directors.** The LWVHA shall have a president, vice president, secretary, treasurer, and at least three other Board of Directors members.

- **Enumeration and Election of Officers.** The officers of LWVHA – President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer—make up the Executive Committee, and shall be elected at the annual business meeting for a two-year term. Each officer shall hold office until the conclusion of their term or until their successors have been elected.
- The **Executive Committee** may approve minor expenditures up to an amount determined and approved by the Board. The Executive Committee may approve League public relations/involvement decisions as necessary.
- **The President.** The President shall have such powers of supervision and management as customarily pertain to the office; shall preside at all meetings of the organization and of the Board of Directors; shall be an ex-officio 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.
- **The Vice President.** The Vice President, in the absence, resignation, disability or death of the President will possess all the powers and perform all the duties of that office. If the Vice President is unable to serve in this capacity, the Board of Directors shall elect one of its members to fill the vacancy. The Vice President shall perform such other duties as the President and Board may designate.
- **The Secretary.** The Secretary shall keep minutes of the annual business meeting and of meetings of the Board of Directors. The Secretary is responsible for compiling committee reports and other agenda items and disseminating an agenda prior to board meetings. The Secretary shall sign, with the President, all contracts and other instruments when so authorized by the Board and shall perform such other functions as may be incident to the Secretary's office.
- **The Treasurer.** The Treasurer shall collect and receive all monies due, except that the Board may appoint a special project treasurer who shall be accountable to the Board. The Treasurer shall be the custodian of these monies, shall deposit them in a bank or banks designated by the Board of Directors, and shall disburse the same only upon order of the Board of Directors or the Executive Board. The Treasurer shall present periodic statements to the Board at its regular meetings and an annual report at the annual business meeting. The President shall appoint a review

committee to review the books annually and to present a report at the annual business meeting. The Treasurer shall file and retain tax forms in accordance with regulations for non-profit organizations and perform other financial duties as needed. The Treasurer shall maintain an up-to-date membership list of all League members.

- **Directors.** Three (or more) members shall be elected as Directors of the Board at the annual meeting, or appointed by the Executive Committee in the case of a mid-term vacancy. Directors serve three-year terms, unless appointed to fill the remainder of a term. There are no term limits for Directors.
- **Committee Chairs** may also serve as voting members of the Board as appointed by the Executive Committee.

## **ARTICLE V: Meetings**

**Section 1. Membership Meetings.** There will be at least nine (9) membership or public meetings each year. The Board shall determine the time and place of the meetings. These meetings shall include an annual business meeting.

**Section 2. Annual Business Meeting.** There shall be an annual business meeting to elect officers, and to approve bylaws amendments and other business, such as the annual Program and goals or directions to delegates attending conventions or council meetings of the League of Women Voters of Montana (LWVMT) or League of Women Voters of the United States (LWVUS).

### **Section 3. Board Meetings.**

- Meetings of the Board shall be held at least quarterly.
- The Board President or Vice President may call special meetings and shall call a special meeting upon the written request of two other members of the Board.
- A majority of the members of the Board is needed to pass any measure voted upon. Any one or more members of the Board or a committee may participate in a meeting by means of a conference telephone or similar equipment allowing all persons participating in the meeting to hear each other at the same time. Participation by such means shall constitute presence in person at a meeting.
- The Board may vote on a specific item by email as necessary between Board meetings. The Secretary shall add an addendum to the previous Board meeting minutes to reflect the vote.

**Section 4. Electronically-Conferenced Meetings.** When beneficial or desired, meetings may be held by conference telephone, video conferencing, or other communication technology.

## ARTICLE VI: Nomination and Elections

**Section 1. Nominating Committee.** The Board is responsible for succession planning and shall appoint an elections committee or serve as the *ad hoc* election committee. If a nominating committee is used, it shall consist of at least two members: the chair and one member. Vacancies occurring mid-term shall be filled by appointment of the Executive Committee for the remainder of that position's term.

**Section 2. Report of the Nominating Committee.** The report of the nominating committee, containing its nominations for officers, shall be sent to the members one month before the annual business meeting. The report of the nominating committee shall be presented at the annual business meeting. Nominations may be made from the floor immediately thereafter, provided the consent of the nominee has been obtained.

**Section 3. Elections.** Election shall be by ballot, except that if there is only one nominee for each position, it shall be by voice vote. A majority vote of the members present shall constitute election.

## ARTICLE VII: Principles, Positions and Program

**Section 1. Principles.** The Principles are concepts of government adopted at the LWVUS national convention and supported by the League as a whole. They are the authorization for the adoption of national, state and local positions and programs. (Article XII, *Impact on Issues*.)

**Section 2. Positions.** Positions are specific statements and guidelines developed as the result of study and provide the basis for action. LWVHA focuses on local positions.

**Section 3. Program.** The Board shall recommend to the membership, at the annual business meeting, a program of work focused on the local community, which is consistent with the Principles of the State and National Leagues. Program of work, as used in these bylaws, may include observing local government, advocating on a local issue or educating the membership and the community on the structure and services of local government.

**Section 4. Program Action.** Members may act in the name of the LWVHA only when authorized to do so by the Board or President. They may act only in conformity with a position taken by the LWVHA, the LWVMT, and the LWVUS.

## ARTICLE VIII: Financial Administration

**Section 1. Fiscal Year.** The fiscal year of the LWVHA shall commence on the first of April each year.

**Section 2. Dues.** All members shall pay membership dues except those exempted from paying dues in Article III. Membership lasts for one year after joining or renewal. Net

revenue collected through membership dues is shared by LWVHA, LWVMT, and LWVUS.

**Section 3. Budget.** An annual budget shall be prepared by a committee that shall be appointed for that purpose at least two months before the annual meeting. The treasurer shall be an *ex officio* member of the budget committee but is not eligible to serve as chair. The Board shall consider the proposed budget and recommend a budget which shall be sent to the members at least one month before the annual business meeting. The budget, as presented, may be amended at the annual business meeting and shall be adopted at the annual business meeting by a majority vote of the members present in person or by video.

**Section 4. Financial Review.** The Board shall appoint one or more members to review the books and report the findings at the annual business meeting.

**Section 5. Distribution of Funds on Dissolution.** In the event of the dissolution of the LWVHA, all monies and securities which may at the time be owned by or under the control of the LWVHA shall be paid to the LWVMT 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 that may at the time be owned by or under the control of the LWVHA shall be disposed of to such person, organization, or corporation for such public, charitable or educational use and purposes as the Board may designate.

#### **ARTICLE IX: Amendments**

These bylaws may be amended by a majority vote of the voting members present at the annual business meeting.

Adopted May 2012  
Amended April 2021  
Amended April 17, 2023  
Amended April 22, 2025  
Amended April 21, 2026