



ANNUAL MEETING
June 8, 2024

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YOUR INVITATION & AGENDA

Join us for the **69th Annual Meeting of the League of Women Voters of Kent** on Saturday, June 8, 2024, 8:45 a.m. ~ 11:30 a.m., Pierson Hall, United Methodist Church of Kent, 1435 E. Main St., Kent, Ohio 44240 [MAP](#).

Arrive ~ 8:45 a.m. ~ Brunch at 9 a.m. ~ Speaker at 9:45 a.m. ~ Business Meeting at 10:30 a.m. (You can arrive at 9:30 a.m. for the speaker and business meeting only, if desired.)

Why Have an Annual Meeting? The League's Annual Meeting sets the stage for the next program year: the organization's operating budget is approved, local program is determined, officers and directors are elected, changes to the bylaws are approved, and a general direction is given to the board.

What to Bring?

- YOUR MEETING PACKET! Be sure to read and study it first!
- Optional contribution of a brunch item. The brunch is free to all.
- ***If you plan on joining us, please bring your own reusable place setting.***
- LWV Kent will provide beverages.

Agenda

8:45 a.m.-9:00 a.m. | Gather

9:00 a.m. | Meeting opens for participants to have brunch and visit with other members

9:30 a.m. | Welcome and event highlights – President Sherry Rose

9:45 a.m. | Introduction of speaker, Collin Marozzi

10:30 a.m. | Business Meeting

- **Call to Order** – President Sherry Rose
- **Secretary's Report** – Secretary Marianne Martens; minutes from 2023 Annual Meeting (pages 3 through 8); 2023 Reviewers: Kathy Wilen, Brian Bialik and Sally Saltzman
- **Adoption and Approval of 2024-2025 Budget** (pages 9 through 11) – Budget Committee: Jen Kinney, Treasurer Gail Pytel; Jill Hazelton, Brian Bialik
- **Action on Positions to Retain, Update or Delete** (pages 12 through 21), Vice President Janice Hutchinson and Vice President Jackie Peck
- **Election of Officers and Directors** (page 22) – Nominating Committee: Chris Schjeldahl, Chair; Mary Myers, Sara Ashley-Cook; Board Members, Marianne Martens and Renee Ruchotzke
- **11:15 a.m. | Remarks:** Celebration of League accomplishments – President Sherry Rose

SPEAKER



Collin Marozzi

Collin Marozzi serves as deputy policy director for the ACLU of Ohio. Based out of the Columbus office, Collin works with coalition partners, community stakeholders and elected officials to advance the ACLU's agenda. Though always on the lookout for new advocacy opportunities, Collin is primarily focused on enacting criminal justice reforms, ensuring equal protection for the LGBTQ community and expanding voting rights.

Before joining the ACLU of Ohio in January of 2020, Collin spent more than two years working in the Ohio Legislature, first as a Legislative Service Commission Fellow and then as senior legislative aide to Senator Vernon Sykes. During his time in the General Assembly, Collin worked on the formulation of Senate Joint Resolution 5, a measure to reform Ohio's congressional redistricting process. Senate Joint Resolution 5 was placed on the May 2018 ballot as Issue 1 and passed with nearly 75 percent of the vote.

Collin earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in political science from Allegheny College in May of 2012. He then pursued graduate studies at the University of Akron where he received a Master of Applied Politics degree from UA's Bliss Institute. While studying at the Bliss Institute, Collin had the opportunity to intern with Common Cause Ohio and in Senator Sherrod Brown's office in Columbus.

An avid sports fan, Collin enjoys spending his time away from work exploring the Columbus area's many golf courses, playing rec league softball and cheering on his beloved Cleveland sports teams.

2023
ANNUAL
MEETING
MINUTES

Location: Kent United Methodist Church

Date: June 6, 2023

Welcome and Event Highlights

President Debbie Barber called the meeting to order at 9:31 am and welcomed all participants to the annual meeting of LWVK, especially the 32 new members and guest, Denise Smith, member of Portage County Board of Elections. President Barber thanked all who set up and contributed to the delicious brunch and the Kent United Methodist Church for providing the meeting space.

President Barber read the LWVK Non-Partisanship Policy and Vision Statement for Diversity.

President Barber highlighted upcoming voter registration events:

June 3, 11-8	Main Street Kent Art & Wine Festival
June 17, 10:30-4:30	Ravenna Juneteenth celebration; volunteers needed to register voters; see sign-up sheets after today's meeting
June 18, 12-4	Kent Juneteenth celebration at Plum Creek Park
July 1	Kent Heritage Festival; volunteers needed to staff our booth; see sign-up sheets after today's meeting

President Barber noted these events and additional upcoming meetings were listed on the yellow cards at each table.

President Barber introduced the speaker, Aaron Ockerman, Executive Director of the Ohio Association of Elected Officials (OAE), a bipartisan organization representing Ohio's 88 local boards of elections, and President of Ockerman Consulting, a full-service government affairs firm located in Westerville, Ohio. Aaron spoke to the overlap in mission of the League and OAE in the area of education and advocacy. Our work differs, however, in how we serve: the OAE focus is on the election system across Ohio and the League focus is on individual voters. Aaron identified one of the challenges we face is the aging poll worker force. He suggested we invite those who express doubt in the integrity of our elections to become poll workers and see for themselves how very secure our elections are. In this time of voter law changes, Aaron encouraged us to remember that disagreement doesn't have to be divisive.

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Questions for Aaron addressed Ohio's interaction with shared voter databases and funding for the August election. Aaron responded that although Ohio plans to no longer pay into the Electronic Registration Information Center (ERIC) database of voters, the state may join another database. He reviewed funding for the August election and said an important question concerns the breadth of the funding.

Business Meeting

President Barber affirmed a quorum was present and introduced our parliamentarian, Jane Preston Rose.

Minutes of the 2022 annual meeting were approved by a designated committee of Chris Schjeldahl, Kathy Wilen, and Jill Hazelton. President Barber appointed a committee of three to review the 2023 Annual Meeting minutes: Kathy Wilen, Brian Bialik, and Sally Saltzman.

Bylaws

President Barber confirmed that with no new amendments, the bylaws stand as approved at the June 2021 annual meeting.

Adoption and Approval of 2023-2024 Budget

Budget committee chair, Nena Hankins, presented the budget, summarizing revenue (\$7,723) from dues (most goes to LWVO and LWVUS), contributions, and Voter Girl; and estimated expenses (\$18,009) of which more than 54% supports our work in the community. Nena noted that estimated expenses exceed revenue by \$10,286. Nena Hankins and Treasurer Gail Pytel recommended a transfer of \$10,286 from reserves to balance the budget. Nena Hankins moved adoption of the budget for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2024.

Engaged discussion followed. Clarification of Voter Service expenses was requested. Gail explained these expenses line by line. A report on the effectiveness of social media marketing was requested. Amie Cajka reported large increases in views because social media points to voting information on our website.

She said we now come up in the top ten when someone googles Kent voting info. Responding to a question about KSU interns for helping with social media, Amie noted they provide only short-term help. In response to a question about a contingency plan to build reserves, Iris Meltzer explained the LWVUS intention (by 2026) to not receive more than 1/3 of a local membership charge. Jill Hazelton spoke to the process of seeking donations from friends who like our work! Jane Preston Rose affirmed the success of community donor drives. Jill said the League was the only organization that

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published voting law changes. Amie mentioned the tech team help with social media is available to all members. Nena explained how the voters guide was not published fully by Record Courier, affirming the need to rely on electronic media. Sherry Rose reminded members to give individual Portager ads to LWWK.

The motion to approve the budget passed by a voiced vote.

Debbie encouraged engagement with fundraising!

Action on Positions to Retain, Update, or Delete

President Barber introduced the recommended action on positions, which were discussed at length in the April 17 all member meeting. President Barber clarified the consent agenda process in which all positions would be considered in one vote. Any member present would be able to request any or all positions be removed from the consent agenda to be considered and discussed separately. However, if anyone has a simple question it can be addressed without moving the position from the consent agenda. Vice Presidents Penny Graves and Janice Hutchison presented a summary of each position and recommendation to retain, update, or delete:

It is recommended that we **retain** our position on **Intergovernmental Cooperation and Regional Tax-Base Revenue Sharing** which states, in part: The League of Women Voters of Kent supports voluntary intergovernmental, collaborative agreements which reduce costs, foster transparency and accountability, improve efficiencies and maintain service standards. We also support regional tax base revenue sharing as a constructive form of intergovernmental cooperation for the mutual benefit of participating communities.

It is recommended that we **update** our position on the **Charter of Kent City with attention to appointment of staff department heads and human resource staffing with respect to diversity**. This position states, in part, support for a charter form of government for the city of Kent; local self-government; continuation of the council-manager form of government; and the election of Mayor and council members via non-partisan elections.

It is recommended that we **retain** our position on **Kent City Finances** which states, in part, that we believe that the primary responsibility of city government is to provide basic services including fire protection, police protection, water and sewer, street upkeep and emergency medical service.; and that they be supported through property tax,

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income tax and general fund revenue, government funding, private grants and user fees as appropriate.

It is recommended that we **retain** our position on the **Portage County Justice System** which states, in part, support for: an integrated approach to solving jail-related problems through cooperation among the county's judicial, executive and law enforcement branches; the use of alternative sentencing for nonviolent offenders; the expansion of both the mental health and drug courts; and a well-trained police force reflective of the community served.

It is recommended that we **retain** our position on **Parks and Recreation** that will provide support for adequate park facilities in Kent and Portage County and continued cooperation by all parties to enhance the conservation and protection of the natural heritage of Portage County.

It is recommended that we **retain** our position on **Land Use and Zoning** which states, in part, support for development of a countywide comprehensive plan; an update of the county's subdivision regulations; implementation of the Portage County Farmland Preservation Plan; development of a transportation system throughout the county that is intermodal in nature; and meaningful public involvement of stakeholders and citizens.

It is recommended that we **retain** our position on **Kent City Schools**. Our position strongly supports public school systems that include citizen participation and is responsive to the community it serves.

Iris questioned our diversity update on the Kent City Charter when we ourselves are not very diverse. Renee Ruchotzke spoke in support of the update action.

As there were no requests for removal and discussion of any Positions, Penny moved and Ann Ward seconded the motion to adopt the positions for the 2023-2024 program year. Motion passed.

Nominations and Election

President Barber thanked the current Board members and expressed special appreciation to Penny Graves who has faithfully served the Board for seven years.

Chris Schjeldahl, chair of the nominating committee, introduced committee members: Gail Pytel, Mary Myers, Jackie Peck, Sara Ashley-Cook and mentor Roberta O'Keefe. She then presented the slate of officers.

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Two-Year Term Ending 6/30/2025:

<u>Position</u>	<u>Current 2022/2023</u>	<u>Agreed to run</u>
President	Deborah Barber	Sherry Rose
Vice President	Penny Graves	Jackie Peck
Secretary	Jackie Peck	Marianne Martens
Directors	Jill Hazelton	Jill Hazelton
	Deborah Austin Sanders	Rhonda Richardson
	Sherry Rose	Karen Carmany

Continuing Board Members:

<u>Position</u>	<u>Officeholder</u>
Vice President	Janice Hutchison
Treasurer	Gail Pytel
Directors	Kim Gruenwald
	Renee Ruchotzke
	Bill Wilen
	Amie Cajka

Nominating Committee (Non-Board Members) for 2024:

Chris Schjeldahl, Chair
Sara Ashley-Cook
Mary Myers

The nominating committee moved acceptance of the slate. A call for nominations from the floor yielded none. Jane moved and Amie seconded a motion to close nominations. Motion passed. President Barber called for a motion that the secretary cast one ballot for the slate. Jane Preston Rose moved; Sue Lanning seconded. Motion passed. President Barber thanked those who agreed to accept offices and Board positions.

President Barber: League Accomplishments

President Barber shared some of the many accomplishments of the past year. First she acknowledged the tireless work of the Voter Service committee through the more than 40 registration and education events. These events included more than 500 volunteer hours from the membership. The League collected more than 150 voter registrations and 25 absentee ballot requests, distributed 1000 election information cards, and mailed 1000 VOTE411 postcards. President Barber thanked Nena Hankins, Barb Hipsman Springer, and Renee Ruchotzke for their efforts to publish VOTE411. She thanked Anne Reid and Barb Hipsman Springer for organizing the Observer Corps that attends local government meetings and provides summaries of the proceedings.

Voter Girl had 73 girls from NE Ohio participate.

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Sixty-five members gathered for the Holiday Brunch.

Four delegates attended the National Convention by zoom; five delegates will attend the Ohio Convention.

We contributed \$250 to the Akron Community Foundation for the Sojourner Truth Project.

Under the guidance of Renee Ruchotzke and with support from the Northern Portage League we updated our Parks position.

Our priority recommendation to the Ohio League for advocacy was Education and Honesty for Education, with Reproductive Justice a close second.

Amie Cajka and team have begun tech training labs for our members.

We have applied to the state of Ohio for a Service Mark for our Face2Face event, seeking to identify and distinguish our program.

President Barber heartily thanked Amie Cajka, assisted by Audrey Kessler, for keeping us connected throughout the year; and to the Kent United Methodist Church for hosting today's meeting.

Closing Remarks

President Barber noted the brightly colored cards on each table were for members to record any suggestions for the Board. She then passionately encouraged all to **VOTE NO in AUGUST** and accounted what is at stake. President Barber closed by extending thanks to all who make the League what it is.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 11:02 am.

Respectfully submitted,
Jacqueline Peck

PROPOSED 2025 BUDGET

Budget Summary Report

Submitted by Budget Committee members Brian Boykin, Gail Pytel, Jill Hazelton and Jen Kinney (Chair).

As the Budget Committee, we propose the following budget for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2025:

- Total Revenue: \$28,460 (\$8,660 increase from previous fiscal year)
- Total Expenses: \$33,455 (\$3,368 increase from previous fiscal year)
- Draw from Reserves: \$4,995 (\$5,291 decrease from previous fiscal year)

Key Investments

These investments are for voter services:

- \$8,000 for digital promotion of voting information and events.
- \$2,500 to support the Citizens Not Politicians amendment.
- Overall, a \$3,765 increase in Voter Services, driven by the presidential election and the upcoming redistricting amendment.

Program Enhancements

The VoterGirl Program will see an increase in expenditures to replenish the badge inventory for this crucial advocacy and education effort.

Funding Needs

With significant investments in voter services, we must raise additional funds to prevent overspending from reserves. We project a need to increase contributions to:

- \$7,500 from members (\$4,500 increase from previous fiscal year budget).
- \$2,000 from friends. (\$2,000 increase from previous fiscal year budget; previously known as nonmember contributions).

These changes represent a total increase of \$6,500 over last year's budget, justified by the presidential election year and the significant redistricting initiative.

PROPOSED 2025 BUDGET

Membership Dues

No increase is proposed for the next year to keep membership accessible. We propose that decisions on dues adjustments align with upcoming changes from LWVUS in registration and payment processes, likely in the next fiscal year.

Administrative Costs

We anticipate:

- an increase of \$278, primarily due to higher insurance costs, storage unit fees and post office box expenses.
- a reduction in printing, copying and postage expenses by leveraging digital communications.

Call to Action

We urge our members and friends to increase their financial support this year to meet our ambitious goals in voter services and to support the critical Citizens Not Politicians amendment.

A summary of the proposed budget in table form can be found on the following page.

For more details about the budget, click [here](#).

PROPOSED
2025
BUDGET

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF KENT	PROPOSED BUDGET FOR YEAR ENDED 6/30/25		
	ACTUAL	BUDGET	PROPOSED BUDGET
	For period ended 12/31/2023	For year ended 6/30/24	ended 6/30/2025
Revenue			
Contributions-Member	6,205.00	3,000.00	7,500.00
Contributions-Friends	3,265.00	3,000.00	5,000.00
Contributions--In Kind	99.26	-	-
Dues	8,495.00	10,200.00	10,010.00
Book Award Contributions	40.00	-	-
CEEP Donations	-	-	1,000.00
Meeting Reservations	2,130.00	1,800.00	2,100.00
VoterGirl	450.00	1,800.00	2,850.00
Portage Foundation-Spring Voters Guide	550.00	-	-
Vote No	1,738.00	-	-
Miscellaneous	472.00	-	-
From Reserves	-	10,286.50	4,995.38
Total Revenue	23,444.26	30,086.50	33,455.38
Expenses			
<u>Membership Recruitment & Development</u>			
Women in Public Service	-	100.00	-
All Member Meetings	-	300.00	-
Printed Materials	-	300.00	-
Name Badges	-	100.00	-
Total Membership Rec. & Dev.	-	800.00	1,000.00
<u>Board and Administration</u>			
Insurance	-	500.00	750.00
Postage	-	189.00	50.00
Supplies/Copying/Etc	12.39	200.00	150.00
Website	60.00	500.00	500.00
Archives	-	400.00	100.00
Post Office box	-	-	225.00
Storage Locker	279.00	800.00	1,008.00
Miscellaneous - other	11.71	150.00	100.00
Total Board/Administration	363.10	2,739.00	2,883.00
<u>VOTER Production & Mailing</u>	-	600.00	650.00
<u>Finance Drive Exp.</u>	600.01	670.00	600.00
<u>Travel and meetings (Convention, etc.)</u>			
National/State Convention	-	3,000.00	3,000.00
Other	-	-	-
Total Travel & Meetings	-	3,000.00	3,000.00
<u>League Support</u>			
LWVUS PMP (National dues)	5,440.00	5,440.00	5,328.00
LWVO PMP (State dues)	4,037.00	4,037.50	3,954.38
Total League Support	9,477.00	9,477.50	9,282.38
<u>General Meetings</u>	2,407.64	2,300.00	
<u>Special/Social Event</u>	-	-	500.00
<u>Advocacy</u>	-	200.00	
<u>Voter Service</u>			
Promotions (Digital Media)	-	-	8,000.00
Election/Voting Info Printing	-	-	165.00
Citizens Not Politicians Amendment	-	-	2,500.00
Face2Face Primary & General	-	-	100.00
Vote411	-	-	300.00
Voters Guide Postage	-	-	50.00
KSU CEEP Sponsor	-	-	1,000.00
General Items	-	-	200.00
Total Voter Service	4,839.47	8,550.00	12,315.00
<u>Community Outreach</u>			
Festivals--fees/supplies/eqpt.	-	200.00	-
Environmental Awards Dinner sponsor	-	50.00	-
Kent Chamber of Commerce dues	100.00	100.00	100.00
Voter Girl	1,445.48	800.00	2,225.00
TRHS Book Award	-	500.00	-
Miscellaneous Outreach	1,269.53	100.00	900.00
Total Community Outreach	2,815.01	1,750.00	3,225.00
Total Expenses	20,502.23	30,086.50	33,455.38
Excess	2,942.03	-	0.00
Checking Acct. balance, beginning 7/01/2023	17,522.11		
Checking Acct. balance, ending 12/31/2023	20,463.65		
Designated for TRHS Book Award	435.00		
Designated for Spring Voters Guide	550.00		

For more details about the budget, click [here](#).

(1) Intergovernmental Cooperation and Regional Tax-Base Revenue Sharing

The League of Women Voters of Kent supports voluntary intergovernmental, collaborative agreements which reduce costs, foster transparency and accountability, improve efficiencies and maintain service standards.

Position History:

At the 2010 annual meeting, LWV Kent concurred with the position adopted/concurred in 2009 by the LWV Cuyahoga Area, Cleveland Area and Shaker Heights.

The League of Women Voters of Kent supports voluntary intergovernmental, collaborative agreements which reduce costs, foster transparency and accountability, improve efficiencies and maintain service standards. Such agreements:

- Are appropriate at local, county, metropolitan, multiple-county or regional levels.
- Should be practical and of manageable size.
- Should demonstrate the interconnectedness of all neighboring communities. The League of Women Voters of Kent supports regional tax-base revenue sharing as a constructive form of intergovernmental cooperation for the mutual benefit of participating communities. Such a program should:
 - Advance smart growth, economic development and fiscal equity within the target area.
 - Impact positively upon infrastructure, housing, education, recreation, inclusion and/or shared public facilities.
 - Set standards for finance, staffing and administration that are consistent, accountable, transparent and efficient.
 - Pool contributions from an agreed portion of new growth in local commercial and industrial property tax revenue.
 - Distribute that revenue pool among participating communities to further fiscal equity across the area.
 - Honor local sovereignty and school funding resources, be flexible, and grow with time.
 - Allow the participating communities to determine and periodically review the formulas for collection and allocations.

RECOMMENDATION: Retain

(2) Charter of Kent City

Position History:

The League's position on this issue was adopted in 1967 and updated in 1975, 1981, 2017 and 2018.

The League supports:

- Local self-government for the City of Kent.
- Retention of a charter for Kent in order that the form of government, system of representation and election system of the city may be locally determined.
- Continuation of the council-manager form of government for Kent. Full responsibility for the administration of the city should be vested in the manager, the city's chief executive.
- In conjunction with this form of government, the charter should provide for the appointment of a manager by city council and recognize the subordinate position of staff department heads to the manager. All staff department heads should be appointed by and be responsible to the manager. Department heads, such as the Director of Law and Director of Finance, should not be directly elected by the voters.
- The present system of electing council both from wards and at-large. Four-year terms for council should be retained, as should the present system of staggering terms. Council should be elected by wards that are substantially equal in population.
- The election of Mayor and council members via nonpartisan elections.
- The power of electors to remove from office by recall election any officer of the City. A petition signed by no less than 25% of Kent voters who voted in the last Presidential election to sign a petition to place on the ballot recall of Mayor or Council-at-Large, or in the case of a ward councilperson, 25% of the voters registered in the ward in question who voted in the last Presidential Election.
- The review of the Charter occurring on even numbered years, as needed, but not to exceed 10 years between reviews.

RECOMMENDATION: Continue update with attention to appointment of staff department heads and human resource staffing with respect to diversity.

(3) Kent City Finances

The League believes that the primary responsibility of city government is to provide basic services and therefore supports the provision of the following basic services and funding sources: fire protection (property tax, income tax and general fund revenue), police protection (income tax revenue, though not necessarily the sole source of funding), water and sewer (assessment of a fee for each service), street upkeep (income tax revenue, though not necessarily the sole source of funding), and emergency medical assistance (income tax revenue).

Position History:

The League's position on this issue was adopted in 1983 and updated in 1984. A third update began in 1999 and was completed in 2013.

The League believes that the primary responsibility of city government is to provide basic services and therefore supports the provision of the following basic services and funding sources:

- **Fire protection:** Property tax, income tax and general fund revenue.
- **Police Protection:** Income tax revenue, though not necessarily the sole source of funding.
- **Water and Sewer:** Assessment of a fee for each service.
- **Street Upkeep:** Income tax revenue, though not necessarily the sole source of funding.
- **Emergency Medical Assistance:** Income tax revenue.

Municipal facilities supporting basic services as outlined in the position, including design, construction, equipment, any necessary property acquisition and debt service, shall be supported through property tax, income tax and general fund revenue, government funding, private grants and user fees as appropriate.

The League also believes the city should improve its SCMR (street construction, maintenance and reconstruction) and long-range planning, find ways to enhance the city's economic base and continually promote good working relations among the public, the city administration and Kent State University.

RECOMMENDATION: Retain

(4) Portage County Justice System

The League supports an integrated approach to solving jail-related problems through cooperation among the county's judicial, executive and law enforcement branches.

Position History:

The League's position on this issue was developed by the Leagues of Woman Voters of Northern Portage County and the League of Women Voters of Kent and was adopted in 1984 and updated in 1997 to change the name to "Portage County Justice System." The position was updated in 2018.

The League supports:

- An integrated approach to solving jail-related problems through cooperation among the county's judicial, executive and law enforcement branches.
- Financing for the jail and all recommended services from government funds and private grants.
- The use of alternative sentencing for nonviolent offenders, including the expansion of both the mental health and drug courts.

Transparency:

- Records documenting the use of funds seized through civil forfeiture and the auditing of such funds should be available to the public.
- Collection of local demographic data in order to identify trends in arrests, arraignments, convictions and incarceration and the provision of such data to national databases.

Comprehensive Health Care:

- Provision of a medical evaluation upon intake.
- Clear and available documentation of medical and behavioral health assessments and treatments maintained in readily accessible files for further use by the system and community-based healthcare/treatment facilities.
- Licensed health care professionals shall determine and meet the healthcare needs of those jailed.
- Behavioral health assessment and treatment by appropriately trained personnel from arrest through release from the justice system. This would include development and implementation of wrap-around services post-discharge from the jail or from mental health or drug specialty dockets.
- Provision of evidence-based treatment for both physical and behavioral health needs.
- Continuation of prescribed medication in jail, including Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT) to treat addiction.

POSITIONS

- Communication between the jail's health care providers and primary care providers in the community to facilitate care coordination.
- Development and implementation of an ombudsman program for families and those jailed.
- Evaluation of contracted health services by community stakeholders.

A Well-Trained Police Force Reflective of the Community Served:

- Continuing and mandating Crisis Intervention Team training.
- Enhancing community interaction of police officers with an emphasis on their role as peacekeepers.
- Critical incident debriefing and the provision of treatment if indicated.
- Periodic psychological screening of law enforcement officers.
- The composition of the police forces in Portage County should reflect the diversity of the community served.

Fair, Equitable and Minimal Imposition of Bail:

- Minimization of the use of bail and the use of evidence-based tools when setting bail is deemed necessary.

Affordable Court Costs:

- Payment of court costs and fines through alternatives such as community service, enrollment in education or training programs, and participation in treatment/counseling.
- Sufficient time to pay fines and court costs assessed on a sliding scale based on personal resources.
- The use of funds seized through civil forfeiture and auditing of such funds should be publicly available.

RECOMMENDATION: Retain

(5) Parks and Recreation

The League supports adequate park facilities in Kent and Portage County.

Position History:

The League's position on this issue was adopted in 1965 and updated in 1968, 1985, 2006 and 2023.

The League supports:

- Adequate park facilities and programs for all ages and abilities in Portage County.
- Providing adequate funding to maintain these programs. Property tax levies, program and developers' fees are appropriate revenue sources for park and recreation funds.
- Park planning that includes—when geographically feasible—accommodations for serving underserved people including those with low incomes, limited transportation, mobility challenges, etc.
- Encouraging local communities to balance new development with parks and recreation facilities by requiring developers to contribute to local communities' park systems.
- Regulations to allow developers' fees to more closely reflect current land market values in lieu of land for parks.
- Continued cooperation between the Kent Parks and Recreation Department and the Kent City School System to ensure adequate gymnasium and meeting space for Kent City recreation programming in addition to the continued operation of the community pool at Kent Roosevelt High School.
- The use of federal/state funds and programs to develop and maintain both city and county parks and programs.
- Support funding for the Portage Park District that provides the conservation of environmentally sensitive natural areas; a system of greenways and hike/bike trails connecting communities and parkland throughout Portage County; partnerships with townships and municipalities in land conservation projects; expansion of environmental education programs. Specific broad-based sources of funding could be a county park levy, designated developers' fees, transfer tax allocations or other viable options.
- Robust public input to planning and implementing park strategies and programs.
- Active planning and collaborative efforts among regional governmental units such as the Portage County Commissioners, townships, municipalities and Portage Park District to enhance the conservation and protection of the natural heritage of Portage County, which might include watersheds, wetlands, forests, and other environmentally sensitive areas.

RECOMMENDATION: Retain

(6) Land Use and Zoning

The League supports the development of a countywide comprehensive plan that incorporates principles of sustainable growth and is consistent with existing land use plans of local governmental subdivisions.

Position History:

The League's position on this issue was adopted in 1959 and was updated in 1985 and 1996. A third update began in 1999 and was completed in 2003. A fourth update began in 2018. The League of Women Voters of Northern Portage County and the League of Women Voters of Kent collaborated to update their land use positions with the goal of creating a combined Portage County position, which would enable the two Leagues to take unified action locally. The position update by both Leagues was completed in April 2021. The resulting position was adopted by the boards of Northern Portage and Kent also in April 2021.

The Leagues support **decisions on land use** by local governmental entities that:

- Limit land use that degrades land to the point where it cannot support flora, fauna and fungi. (e.g., strip mining and fracking).
- Preserve local ecosystems; minimize air pollution and stormwater runoff; avoid reduction of habitats and/or natural food sources for wildlife.
- Conserve available farmland to ensure a robust local foodshed.
- Conserve undeveloped lands, especially those that support a robust, diverse ecosystem
- Encourage repurposing of previously developed land over developing undeveloped land.
- Encourage designated high-density areas for new buildings, homes and other development.
- Encourage a wide range of housing for different demographic needs (e.g., age, income, accessibility, developmental ability, grand-families).

The Leagues support consultation of the following **stakeholders** by local governmental entities when making decisions about land use:

- Cities, Villages and Townships should regularly review zoning codes with robust citizen involvement.
- Landowners should have direct opportunities to influence neighboring land use that might have a long-term negative impact on their land.
- Citizens should have direct opportunities to influence land use zoning decisions that have a long-term, wide-ranging impact.

The Leagues support development of a **countywide comprehensive land use plan** that:

- Includes protection of wetlands, water tables, wildlife habitats, tree canopy, farmland and any other features that create local resilience.
- Discourages land use that creates pollution, erosion, and greenhouse gases.

POSITIONS

- Includes affordable housing for different demographic needs (e.g. age, income, accessibility, developmental ability, grand-families).
- Includes input from: residents; the city, village and township governments; local farmers and their organizations; the park districts; the Soil and Conservation District; local environmental groups; local groups representing historically marginalized communities (e.g., NAACP, Family and Community Services); local health agencies; local businesses and industry; and local colleges and universities.

The Leagues support governmental agencies **prioritizing certain uses of land** (e.g., via zoning, landbanking, tax incentives):

- Land that already has infrastructure such as water, wastewater treatment and utilities should be preferred for new development.
- Affordable housing for different demographic needs (e.g., age, income, accessibility, developmental ability, grand-families).
- Land that is part of the local foodshed, watershed, and ecosystems should be preserved
- through easements, transfer of development rights, conservancy initiatives, and the allocation of public monies.
- Land that has historical or archeological significance should be preserved through easements, transfer of development rights, conservancy initiatives, and the allocation of public monies.

The Leagues support governmental agencies' support of the following **public or community services**:

- Intermodal transportation systems that connect local communities with each other and with wider transportation systems.
- Rail-to-Trail and other walking and biking corridors between and within local communities.
- Mass transit options, such as buses and light rail.
- Affordable and/or subsidized housing.

RECOMMENDATION: Retain

(7 Kent City Schools

The League of Women Voters of Kent strongly supports public school systems which are empowered by and responsive to the communities they serve. The League supports school systems that strive to provide students with a quality, comprehensive education and exhibit financial responsibility and stability. A system's ability to be a model educational institution stems from its dedicated, well-trained staff and fine physical facilities that are made possible through voter and community support.

Position History

The League's position on this issue was adopted in 1986 and updated and condensed in 1999. The following is a statement of the condensed position adopted at the 1999 annual meeting. The position was updated in 2003 and 2017.

Citizen Participation

The League supports:

- Ongoing citizen participation in the planning, development and review of all areas of Kent education programs. The League believes that active citizen participation is critical to ensure that the district is responsive to the changing needs of the Kent community that supports it.
- Encouragement of Kent citizens' substantive and continuous input through easy access to available information concerning the health, accomplishments, strengths, and weaknesses of the school system. It is the school system's responsibility to provide an aggressive and open public information program that is scheduled into the school calendar, advertised and accessible to all who wish to participate. This can further be accomplished through use of the district's website, small group meetings with District staff members, and printed communication.
- Increased citizen participation through implementation of citizen advisory councils in each building, advertised public hearings, and the appointment of ad hoc committees to address specific concerns, such as facilities planning, curriculum changes, and financial planning.

Financial Accountability

The League recommends:

- Bond issues be considered for capital projects and major improvement projects. The limited use of current operating funds for minor capital improvements is acceptable.
- The District continues efforts to explain its needs for additional funds to potential voters on its own website and in its newsletter, in the local paper, and through any other means.

Planning

The League recommends:

- The District actively and aggressively seek public input on policy and planning issues—including long-range financial planning and facilities planning—before decisions are made on these matters.
- The District actively share the long range plans it has adopted with the community. If members of the community have concerns about planning issues, we encourage them to communicate directly with the administration or the Board of Education.
- Ad hoc committees should have clearly stated goals and time frames that are understood by all who participate. The district should value the results of such efforts and seriously consider any recommendations that are offered and provide feedback on the manner in which the recommendations were addressed.
- The ongoing efforts by the District to use feedback should be encouraged on all levels, national, state and/or local, to establish planning that will guide and move the district toward improvement.

Curriculum Development

The League supports:

- The continued focus on increased instructional time for all students from preschool through high school.
- Opportunities for individual creativity in writing and a continuing emphasis on critical thinking skills, problem solving and decision-making skills.
- A well-integrated reading and language arts program that incorporates strategies designed to meet individual learning styles and abilities. The League further supports expansion of learning experiences across the spectrum of student capabilities and needs, including the continual growth of gifted educational services and the longstanding Six District Educational Compact in which Kent participates.
- The continuing availability and expansion of technology for students and staff. Continuing integration of technology into curricular instruction is recommended along with additional opportunities for distance learning. The Kent City School District should continue to provide appropriate technical staff, which is crucial for the efficient and effective use of technology.
- The wide variety of curriculum and co-curricular offerings at the secondary level.
- The District's remediation programs that enable students, at all levels, to stay in school and reach their full potential.
- The continued incorporation of strategies and curricular content which promotes emotional well-being, social competence and emotional intelligence at every grade level.

RECOMMENDATION: Retain

NOMINATIONS

To Replace for Two-Year Terms 2024/2026

<i>Position</i>	<i>Current</i>	<i>Agreed to Run</i>
Vice President	Janice Hutchinson	None
Treasurer	Gail Pytel	Brian Bialik
Directors	Amie Cajka	Amie Cajka
	William Wilen	William Wilen
	Renee Ruchotzke	Renee Ruchotzke
	Kim Grunwald	Kate White

Non-Board Members for Next Year's Nominating Committee

- Chris Schjeldahl, Chair
- Jennifer Kinney
- Mary Myers

Ongoing Elected Board Members (Two-Year Term Ending June 30, 2025)

- Sherry Rose, President
- Jackie Peck, Vice President
- Marianne Martens, Secretary

Elected Directors

- Karen Carmany
- Jill Hazelton
- Rhonda Richardson

Submitted by the 2023-2024 Nominating Committee

- *Chris Schjeldahl, Chair*
- *Sara Ashley-Cook*
- *Marianne Martens*
- *Mary Myers*
- *Renee Ruchotzke*

Many thanks to our mentor, Roberta O'Keefe!