

**LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF THE RIVERTOWNS**  
**NONPARTISAN POLICY**  
Adopted September 2016

The League of Women Voters, a nonpartisan political organization, encourages the informed and active participation of citizens in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy. The League does not support or oppose any political party or candidate; it is political in that it takes positions on selected governmental issues, which is done only after members study and reach agreement.

Nonpartisanship toward candidates and political parties is critical to the effectiveness of the League's citizen information and voter service aims. It is crucial that the public and legislators believe the League's conclusions on legislation and ballot proposals are based on merit rather than politics. Therefore, Board members have a special responsibility to see that their activities do not create a partisan impression. If there is a question, a Board member should ascertain in advance from the Board whether or not a particular activity may compromise nonpartisanship of the League in any way.

The League recognizes the role of political parties in our form of government and believes that participation in the activities of political parties is an essential ingredient of citizen responsibility. While the League urges its member to be politically active, certain constraints are necessary in order to maintain the nonpartisanship of the organization. The Board of Directors of the League of Women Voters of the Rivertowns has established the guidelines below. This is a general guide and the Board of Directors should discuss individual cases as necessary. This policy is subject to annual review and adoption by each new Board.

- A. The President(s), First Vice-President and Voter Service Chair(s) may not take an active visible role in a campaign for a political candidate and may not engage in any partisan, political activities that will cause them to be publicly identified as supporting any political party or candidate.
- B. A League member who holds ELECTED political office shall be ineligible to serve on the League Board. Board members may serve on APPOINTED Boards and Councils.
- C. A Board member who is a candidate for elected political office must resign from the Board. If unsuccessful, the member shall be ineligible to serve on the Board for four months after election.
- D. Board members shall not hold office in a political club or party or engage in partisan political activity, including social media posts that will compromise the nonpartisanship of the League.

- E. Board members may not serve on local campaign committees.
- F. A Board member, except the President(s), First Vice-President and Voter Service Chair(s) may serve as Inspector of Elections.
- G. Board members may sign, but not circulate, nominating petitions.
- H. Board members may attend candidates' forums to become informed but should also try to attend those of opposing candidates . Board members may not host parties for candidates.
- I. The political activities of a spouse or relative of a Board member should be considered as separate and distinct from the activities of the Board member. However, it is the responsibility of a Board member to resign when the partisan political activity of a close family member is such that it will cause the public to doubt the nonpartisanship of the League. The entire Board should discuss such a situation and decide whether to accept the resignation.
- J. Official observers to Village government bodies and School Boards are in a unique position. They attend meetings to OBSERVE, to report back to the Board on possible future action, and to prepare a report of the meeting. Observers ask questions for clarification only but may not make comments at a meeting, unless authorized by the Board to do so.
- K. Only League-sponsored petitions should be circulated at any League of Women Voters meeting.
- L. Board members should use discretion whenever speaking publicly on controversial issues. Major statements on consensus items or current program items should be cleared by the Board. When dealing with non-League issues, Board members may voice their opinions at public meetings or in print, as long as they do not identify themselves as a League member. Board members should not speak publicly or write letters for publications in opposition to a position adopted by the League of Women Voters as a whole or regarding candidates for public office. Public statements by the league should be signed or co-signed by the league president.
- M. Board members may make contributions to candidates or political parties in sums below the reporting requirement threshold.
- N. Any conflict arising from the application of these policies shall be resolved by decision of the Board. If a Board member resigns because of a conflict with this nonpartisan policy, his or her resignation should be effective immediately and a public statement made announcing the resignation.

