

# ***NONPARTISAN POLICY STATEMENT***

**“The league may take action on governmental measures and policies in the public interest. It shall not support or oppose any political party or any candidate.”  
(LWVUS Bylaws. Article II. Section 2. Add comment about LWVUS guidance)**

The reputation and credibility of the League are dependent upon the clear understanding of the community, the League members, and the Board members of our Nonpartisan Policy. The political activities of a spouse or relative of a Board member shall be considered separate and distinct from the activities of the Board members. In order to avoid public confusion of Board member activities with those of the League, the Board of the LWVMC adopts the following guidelines for Board members:

1. A member of the Board may not run for a Federal, state, county, or city elective office, or any ~~local~~ office that may jeopardize the League’s nonpartisan policy.
2. The President and the Voters Service Directors shall not take any active role in any partisan or nonpartisan election campaign for a candidate or on issues on which LWVMC has not taken a position.
3. Each Board member should bring to the Board questions of intended political activity. The final discretionary power in maintaining the League’s nonpartisanship shall be the Board’s responsibility.
4. A Board member may not publicly support an issue that the League opposes, nor oppose an issue that the League supports.
5. Board members must resign if they find themselves in conflict with League Nonpartisan Policy.
6. Board or non-Board members may serve on other Boards and Commissions whether or not they relate to League programs. Board approval is necessary for members (Board or otherwise) to accept or resign an appointment to serve as an official League representative on committees or commissions. Members considered for such appointments shall be advised they must support League positions and if unable to do so, shall not be appointed nor accept appointment.
7. A Board member should not be assigned a League portfolio in which there is a conflict of interest. It is inappropriate for someone who visibly supports one political viewpoint to serve on the nonpartisan Board of the League. Guidelines include:
  - The sensitivity of specific Board portfolios.
  - The extent to which the public identifies a Board member’s activities with those of the League.
  - The visibility associated with a specific political activity. (A wide range exists from attendance at party caucuses to being a campaign manager or vocal spokesperson.)
8. The LWVMC Nonpartisan Policy shall be reviewed at the first meeting of each new year. The policy may be subject to interim review at the request of the majority of the Board.

# ***BOARD POLICIES***

## **1. League Meetings**

- a. League meetings shall be conducted in such a way as to maintain neutrality among candidates before, during, and after all League meetings.
- b. Only those petitions pertaining to League activities may be circulated at League meetings. The permission of the President will be obtained before circulating a petition.
- c. Only those announcements pertaining to League activities may be made at League meetings, placed on the LWVMC web site, or placed in the LWVMC *Voter*.

## **2. Executive Committee:**

- a. The executive committee shall notify the entire board by email prior to taking action. This notification shall include the nature of the emergency and possible actions to be taken by the committee. Any board member may contribute to the discussion, provided that such input is received by the executive committee in a timely manner.

## **3. Board:**

- a. The president, vice president, and secretary shall assume office at the conclusion of the annual meeting. The term of the treasurer shall be July 1 through June 30. This coincides with the League's fiscal year.
- b. Every effort shall be made to ensure that the Board has the same proportion of Members from the Monterey and Salinas Valley areas as does the membership as a whole. The percentages of Members from each area shall be established by the membership count used by the LWVUS for its annual Per Member Payment (PMP) calculation. In any case, there shall be at least one director from the Salinas Valley Area and at least one director from the Monterey Area.

## **4. Observers**

- a. Observers shall not publicly commit themselves to a candidate or to an issue related to the organization being observed.
- b. Observer reports are for League use only.
- c. Observer may not comment at the meeting they are observing.

## **5. Publications and Public Statements**

- a. Any public statement, or official letter relating to League business shall be approved by the Board or by the Executive Committee acting for the board.

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- b. It shall be the responsibility of the Board members to inform the Public Relations Director concerning all information being released to the media.
- c. Letters to government bodies and public agencies shall generally bear authorized signature of the President; however, on a case by case basis, the President may designate another Board member as the official signatory of the letter.
- d. League members asked to make a presentation statement on behalf of the League shall clear the request with the President and/or the Executive Committee.
- e. **The VOTER:**
  - i. No article appearing in the VOTER shall criticize any public official.
  - ii. Only material pertinent to League issues or positions shall be printed in the VOTER.
  - iii. All VOTER material shall be reviewed by the President.
  - iv. League positions relating to ballot propositions shall be published in the VOTER.
- f. Social media announcements shall be consistent with other league public statements.

### 6. Membership

- a. Membership lists are for League use only.

### 7. Finances/Expenses

- a. The LWVMC will pay childcare expenses for all members to attend meetings and workshops within the prescribed limits specified by the Board.
- b. Public officials may be solicited for contributions to the League.
- c. Board authorized travel shall be authorized at the standard IRS business rate per mile.
- d. Registration fees will be reimbursed to those members authorized to attend workshops.
- e. Mileage for speakers may be reimbursed at the standard IRS business rate per mile with prior approval of the Board.
- f. Lunches for guest speakers will be provided. Honoraria for the speakers may be approved by the board.
- g. Convention expenses will be reimbursed for delegates authorized to attend convention. Authorized expenses include registration fees and convention meals, travel and accommodations within budgetary guidelines.
- h. No member may write a check to themselves.
- i. Local, State and Federal Reporting. The Treasurer shall prepare and submit the following forms to the proper agencies:
  - i. California Form RRF-1 (Annual Registration Renewal Fee Report), due October 15th.
  - ii. Form 199N (California Exempt Organization Annual Information Return), due November 15th.

- iii. Form 990 N (Return of Organization Exempt from Income Tax), due November 15th.
- iv. Any other forms required by local, state or Federal entities.

#### **8. Board Policy Review**

- a. The LWVMC Board Policies shall be reviewed at the first meeting of each new Board. Board policies may be subject to interim review at the request of the majority of the Board.

#### **9. Conflict of Interest**

- a. In order to maintain League credibility as a public interest organization, any member with the potential for conflict of interest may be proscribed by the LWVMC Board from serving on the LWVMC Board or on League committees which are charged with recommending action on League positions. The LWVMC Board may also take steps reasonably necessary to promote the freedom and confidentiality of discussions at League Board and committee meetings.

#### **10. Membership Scholarships**

- a. The Board may provide for membership scholarships to subsidize dues payment of selected League members. The President and Membership Chair will evaluate and approve scholarship awards.

#### **11. Investment Fund and Financial Planning Committee**

- a. The primary objective of the Investment Fund is to preserve and protect the assets of the Fund (derived from gifts, bequests, investment income, and other), while generating income to be used in the Operating Fund (together with membership dues and other income).
- b. The Investment Fund (hereafter "Fund") is managed by the Financial Planning Committee (hereafter "Committee") as agents for the Board of Directors (hereafter "Board").
- c. Investments will be made and funds will be held only in vehicles which are reasonably liquid and whose values are publicly known, such as mutual funds, Federally insured certificates of deposit, or publicly traded stocks and bonds. As an exception to the above, assets donated to the LWVMC may continue to be held in the form donated (stocks, bonds, insurance policies, real property, etc.). Other exceptions may be authorized by the Board.  
Although the Committee manages the Fund on an ongoing basis, the Board:
  - i. Continues to have full responsibility for and full authority over the Fund.
  - ii. Appoints the members of the Committee annually, giving full consideration to both the values of continuity of membership and turnover; the President and the Treasurer are members ex officio.

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- iii. Advises the Committee, in a timely manner, of the cash distribution requirements from the Fund and may require the use of the principle when warranted.
- iv. Approves changes in investment advisors and asset allocation.
- v. Gives signature authority to Committee members; dual-signature in all cases and not to include anyone who has signature authority for the Operating Fund.
- d. The Committee, as part of its management of the Fund, will monitor the investments, adjust them to better meet the goals and objectives of the Fund, review the service of the investment advisory firm, and (with the assistance of the Treasurer and the investment advisor) prepare at least quarterly statements for the Board and LWVMC membership, detailing information to include investment performance, asset allocation, future investment strategies, and any other matters of interest.
- e. Financial statements for the Fund and a budget for the Fund will be prepared and distributed together with those for the Operating Fund.
- f. The Committee shall consist of at least three and not more than five appointed members.

### **12. Maintenance of Records**

- a. The Secretary shall keep or cause to be kept, at the principal office, or such other place as the Board may order, and at one other location, electronic backup copies and paper copies of the most recent versions of:
  - i. The Bylaws,
  - ii. The Board Policies,
  - iii. The Nonpartisan Policy Statement,
  - iv. The LWVMC local positions,
  - v. The LWVMC Handbook, and
  - vi. Any other important documentation that the Board may deem necessary.
  - vii. All minutes
- b. The Secretary shall insure that any one requesting access to these electronic versions or paper copies shall be provided with an additional copy, not one of the two backup copies.
- c. The Secretary shall insure that all such electronic backup records and paper copies contain within each document the date on which it was adopted or revised.

### **13. Appointments:**

- a. The League of Women Voters of Monterey County will recommend for appointment to community boards, committees and commissions, individuals whom the Board of Directors feels will fill the position responsibly and effectively.

**14. Candidate Programs:**

- a. The Voter Service Chair shall review annually Federal Election Commission rules and California state laws regarding Candidate Forums, recognizing different rules for federal, state, and local elections as made available by the League of Women Voters of California and League of Women Voters of the United States and shall make rules and regulations known to the Board prior to election.
- b. Non-Partisan Local Elections: In the event only one of the candidates for an office is present, the event will be cancelled.
- c. Federal or State, or Local Elections: The League may not stage a candidate forum unless two candidates for federal, or state, or local office will appear at the event.
- d. Federal or State, or Local Elections: No substitute speakers may appear for candidates.
- e. Candidates and members of the audience may not distribute ~~or display~~ campaign materials of any type at the location where the forum is being held, but may do so at League sponsored candidate fairs.
- f. Candidates' forums shall be conducted in the English language unless it has been determined in advance that another language shall be used. The need for interpreters will be evaluated in advance and provided by the League also if available.

**15. Education Fund:**

- a. Reimbursement for expenditures will be submitted by the LWVMC Treasurer to the LWVC EF for approval and payment based upon the state EF guidelines.

**16. Board Attendance:**

- a. Board members who have three consecutive or four total unexcused absences in a year from Board meetings may be asked to relinquish their positions.

**17. Dues:**

- a. The Florence Curlee scholarship fund provides assistance with paying membership dues. Any member or prospective member may contact any Board member to discuss possible arrangements for assistance with payment of dues. Treasurer will determine and implement any Florence Curlee Fund scholarships.
- b. Any member who joins January 1 through April 30 shall pay one-half the annual dues and shall be notified by the Membership Chair that full annual dues will be payable June 1. New members joining in May shall pay dues for one year. These dues will be effective through the subsequent year.

**18. Committees:**

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- a. All committee reports shall be for League Board use only.
- b. Nominating Committee
  - i. The nominating committee shall consist of five members, two of whom shall be directors. Every effort shall be made to ensure that the committee has the same proportion of members from each area as does the membership as a whole. In any case, there shall be at least one member from the Salinas Valley area and at least one member from the Monterey area.

### **19. Area and Definitions**

- a. The League is made up of two areas: the Monterey Area encompassing western portion of Monterey County and the Salinas area – encompassing the eastern portion of Monterey County and San Benito County. The division is roughly along the ridge of the Santa Lucia Range in the south and approximately northward from the ridgeline to the northern boarder of Monterey County, west of Prundale.

### **20. Distribution of Funds on Separation of the Monterey and Salinas Valley Areas.**

- a. At the time of the merger of the Monterey Peninsula and Salinas Valley Leagues in May 2013, there was a large amount (more than \$120,000 as of May 2013) held by the Monterey Peninsula chapter in an investment account with the Vanguard Wellington Fund. In the event of the separation of the Monterey and Salinas Valley Areas for any reason, any funding remaining in that investment account (or other account to which it was transferred) shall be paid to the Monterey Peninsula area League.