

## President's Message

# Make a voting plan – and know what's on your ballot

As you read this, early voting has begun in Peoria, Tazewell and Woodford Counties. You can check early voting hours and locations, view sample ballots and check what district you are in for local, state and federal races by checking Election Commission or County Clerk websites. Your voter registration card also lists this information, as well as the location of your voting

precinct. In Peoria County, all elections sites are set up to accommodate any eligible voter registered in Peoria County, not just their assigned location.



There are several Advisory Questions on the November 2024 ballots: Should the IL Constitution be amended to place additional 3% property tax on income over \$1,000,000; election worker protection and candidate accountability; and

whether medically appropriate reproductive care should be covered by health insurance. In Peoria Township, voters will be asked to consider Rank Choice Voting as an alternate method to vote for candidates in some elections.

So, make a plan to vote for the candidates who will best represent you: attend a candidate forum or check out candidate websites or Facebook, review sample ballots, and make a plan to vote. One Voice, One Vote!

A shout out to League members who have been working many hours over the past several months to Get Out The Vote by registering voters, holding forums and mock elections!

————— Connie Romanus, LWVGP president

### **Important Dates:**

- Tues., Oct. 1 and Thurs., Oct. 3:** Mock Elections at Peoria Central & Peoria Richwoods high schools  
**6 p.m. Tues., Oct. 8:** Rank Choice Voting forum at Peoria Lincoln Branch Library, 1312 Lincoln Ave., presented by Rebecca Williams, Fair Vote IL  
**4 p.m. Mon., Oct. 14:** LWVGP Board Meeting (via Zoom)
- 6 p.m., Mon., Oct. 14:** Candidate Forum, 46<sup>th</sup> IL Senate at ISU Bone Student Center, Old Main Room.  
Live-streamed to LWVGP Facebook and on-air via WCBU & WGLT
- 5:30 p.m. (social), 6 p.m. (presentation), Wed., Oct. 16:** Drinks & Dialogue at Lariat Steakhouse, 2232 W. Glen Ave., topic and speaker to be announced  
**Mon., Nov. 4:** Final day of early voting  
**Tues., Nov. 5:** Election Day
- 10:30 a.m., Sat., Jan. 13, 2025:** LWVGP Program Planning Meeting for members, location TBD. Save the Date!

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## **LWVIL: HOW TO IDENTIFY MIS / DISINFORMATION**

**The proliferation of misinformation and disinformation has emerged as a significant threat to our democratic processes and informed decision-making of the electorate.**

We make important decisions based on what we hear on social media and in the news. When we are unable to distinguish between truth and mis/disinformation, it can cause confusion and misunderstandings, leaving a generalized sense that “you can’t believe anything anymore.”

**What’s the difference?**

**Misinformation:**

*Inadvertently* sharing false information *without* the intent to harm

**Disinformation:**

*Intentionally* sharing false information *with* the intent to harm

## How to spot mis/disinformation

We're all susceptible to mis/disinformation, but the following steps will help you identify it:

1. **Research the source:** Who's sharing this information? If it's online, does the website sound familiar or have any political affiliations? If it's in-person, does this individual tend to exaggerate, or do they have a job/experience that would give them insider info?
2. **Check the date:** It's easy to get incensed over an article being shared on social media...only to realize it was published years ago and has become irrelevant.
3. **Cross-check:** Are reliable news sources reporting the same information? If not, it's unlikely that your smaller source just happened to get a super-exclusive, juicy scoop.
4. **Read past the headline:** You know how tabloids post scandalous headlines and follow them with articles that are relatively mundane? Unfortunately, political outlets do that too. It's easy to take a snippet out of context to make an article look like it will be more dramatic than it actually is.
5. **Question emotionally charged content:** Is the person or outlet sharing this information using emotionally manipulative language to get you upset or excited? That's a red flag. Reliable sources let the facts fuel your response, not emotional language. Check out some [examples of loaded language](#).
6. **STOP THE SPREAD**
7. When we see or hear mis/disinformation, our first instinct is to argue and present correct information. This is almost always a bad idea, especially online. Why?
8. Every time you post a comment, or "like" another person's comment, or click the "angry" emoji, you are helping to spread the original post to more and more viewers. Responses on social media are exactly what bad actors need to achieve their goals.
9. When you debate online, you are usually debating with strangers and chatbots, and you are not likely to persuade them. In-person discussions can also backfire, especially if they turn into arguments, accusations and anger. It takes preparation, empathy and mutual respect to change someone's mind about misinformation.

## MEMBERSHIP

If you have not had a chance to renew your membership, please do so online at <https://www.lwvgp.org/store/p3/join.html>

If you would prefer to mail your membership renewal, you can print the form from the same site and mail it to the address provided. We also accept membership renewals at our monthly events.

———— Theresa Koehler, Chairperson

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## PEORIA COUNTY BOARD: Sept. 12

The Peoria County Board held its Sept. 12 meeting with all members present.

Following an unexpected 30-minute executive session, the board in regular business approved a resolution on a 12-5 vote to lease the remainder of the building currently utilized by the Peoria County Election Commission. Capital improvements were unanimously approved including \$186K for the IT computer room air conditioning system and carpeting replacement in locations throughout the courthouse in an amount not to exceed \$65K. Zoning cases in Jubilee and Kickapoo townships were approved without opposition. Action on a restated agreement concerning the Peoria City – County Landfill #3 was deferred.

Eight citizens' remarks were received concerning proposed wind energy towers in western Peoria County near Brimfield with four speaking in favor of the towers and four opposed. No action on the towers was on the agenda since the proposal has not yet been addressed by the Zoning Board or the County Land Use Committee.

The following were unanimously approved in the consent agenda:

- 4.7% Cost of Living Adjustments for the County Sheriff and County Public Defender;
- Two Worker's Compensation settlements in amounts not to exceed \$40K and \$105K, respectively;

- A preliminary engineering contract in the amount of \$151K for resurfacing Glasford Road from the southern edge of Glasford to its intersection with U.S. Rt. 24;
- 2025 employer and employees medical health premiums and subsidy;
- Two capital improvements at the jail in the amounts of \$55K and \$40K, and renovation of Conference Room #402 in the amount of \$45K;
- A \$428K contract with Terra Engineering for public space improvements in the Courthouse Plaza;
- An agreement between the Sheriff's Department and Brimfield for intermittent police patrols;
- An intergovernmental agreement between the county and the Regional Office of Education to supply all truancy services for the county in the amount of \$392K.

**Link to the meeting agenda and packet is [here](#) and the video is [here](#).**

———— Jim Runyon, Observer

### **PEORIA COUNTY BOARD (SPECIAL): Sept. 24**

The Peoria County Board held a special meeting Sept. 24 with all members present except Linda Daley. The sole agenda item was a resolution recommending approval of a new agreement on Landfill #3. The board approved the resolution on a 15-1-1 vote with Member Rob Reneau opposing and Member Paul Rosenbohm abstaining due to a business relationship with GFL. Before the agreement can be finalized, two additional votes are required – one by the Peoria City Council and another by the Landfill Committee.

The agreement delays the construction of Landfill #3 to no later than 2035 subject to permitting by the Illinois EPA. During the period between the closure of Landfill #2 and the opening of Landfill #3, GFL will construct a transfer station near Pottstown that is expected to be operational no later than March 31, 2026. One benefit to residents of unincorporated county areas will be a new monthly rate of \$42.50 for

weekly garbage and biweekly curbside recycling services. More details can be found [here](#).

———— Jim Runyon, Observer

### **PEORIA COUNTY ELECTION COMMISSION: Aug. 20**

The Peoria County Board of Election Commissioners met Sept. 10 for their monthly meeting with all present except for Commissioner Ryan Brady. The public test of the voting equipment will be held on Sept. 18 at 9:00 am. Both political parties and the press have been invited.

The commission will be holding a contest, open to the public, for a new “I voted” sticker. There will be two categories: over and under 18 years of age. The contest will run from Sept. 13 through Nov. 1, with information and templates available on the Commission website: <https://www.peoriaelections.gov/>

Early voting begins Sept. 26. 19,000 ballots will be mailed for Vote by Mail. Early voting for next year’s primary will begin on Jan. 16.

———— Irene Pritzker, Observer

### **PEORIA CITY COUNCIL: Aug. 27**

Dates set for public hearings regarding proposed annexation of 9910 N. Orange Prairie Road and proposed annexation of 6500 W. Rte. 150. Meetings will be held at Peoria City Hall, Room 400, on Sept. 24 at 6:00 p.m.

Mayor Rita Ali recognized Chief Craig Harper, leader the of Peoria Native American Tribe from Oklahoma and presented him with keys to the city. Chief Harper was in Peoria related to exhibit showcasing art of crafting duck decoys at the Peoria Riverfront Museum.

Council action:

- Approved appointment of Chester (Chet) Tomczyk as City Treasurer to fill unexpired term of Stephen Morris through May of 2025;
- Approved consent agenda without discussion;

- Adopted special use ordinance for temporary art display at Niagara Parking Deck, 111 SW Adams for five years. This is part of strategic plan for public art in locally and Big Picture Peoria.

City Manager Patrick Urich updated Council members on ongoing discussions with GFL Waste Management on relocation of transfer station, new landfill plan, reduction in disposal rates, establishing host benefit rates, and perpetual care fund. In addition, a plan to schedule household hazardous waste events has been discussed. City will work to finalize agreement and get approval of both Peoria County Board and City Council. Item was withdrawn from agenda.

Thirteen citizens addressed the council on recent actions on liquor license, homelessness, and the conflict in Gaza.

Councilors then went into closed session and adjourned at 7:55 p.m. Next Council meeting is scheduled for Sept. 10 at 6:00 p.m.

————— Connie Romanus, Observer

### **PEORIA CITY COUNCIL: Sept. 10**

A quorum was present for Council meeting. Consent agenda approved by Omnibus vote with recommendations as outlined, with item 24-264, an agreement with Wagner Properties and CHIC Flats, 1001 SW Adams St. for commercial and residential development, deferred for two weeks.

Council accepted Organized Retail Crime Grant from IL Office of Attorney General in amount of \$90,000.00 to increase capacity of city to have access to cameras on private property with consent of home and business owners using the FUSES system online portal. The system is cloud based and uses encrypted software compatible with Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority (ICJIA). Peoria Police Chief Eric Echavarria and Lt. Eric Esser discussed program and use in investigating crime.

Accepted co-responder grant from ICJIA for \$2,876,250 and approved Memorandum of Understanding between City of Peoria and Carle Health Services under co-responder unit for one year in amount of \$1,068,989.

Under New Business, Councilor Zach Oyler reported financial irregularities were discovered by the Peoria City/County Health Department (PCCHD) with funds distributed by city with the Cure Violence Program to House of Hope. Mike Kennedy,

President of the Peoria City /County Health Dept. and Benjamin Brewer, Secretary, gave an overview of findings of an unauthorized fund withdrawal and efforts to recover funds. The PCCHD has severed relationship with House of Hope and hired an independent auditor. The matter has been reported to the Peoria Police Department and the Peoria County State's Attorney.

Agenda, minutes and video available on city website: <https://peoriagov.civicweb.net/Portal/MeetingInformation.aspx?Org=Cal&Id=174>

————— Connie Romanus, Observer

### **DUNLAP DISTRICT 323 SCHOOL BOARD: Sept. 18**

The regular school board meeting was called to order at 6:01 p.m. on Sept. 18, with six members present, one via cell phone.

Superintendent Scott Dearman clarified the FY 2025 Financial Report. In part of his report he compared Dunlap to other area school districts in relation to salaries, student achievement, budget, transportation, etc.

The District Financial Officer continued with explanation of FY 2025 Budget. School Board President Abby Humbles said that she was glad that it was a balanced budget.

Public hearing of the FY 2025 was opened and closed immediately after presentation.

Dr. Dearman announced October 3-5 Homecoming activities.

2025-26 school calendar proposals are due Oct. 23.

He said the training center committee put out a Request For Quote (RFQ) for architectural services for the new training center. There were two responses: one local and one not. They are still negotiating a contract. Also, they are contacting construction management services. During public participation one woman expressed concern that local firms were not given a chance for the project. Dr. Dearman said that local services have had an opportunity to take on the project but are not able to do so for various reasons. ESTES services, though not local, is willing.

FY 2025 Budget Option 1 was approved unanimously.



Construction Management \$300,000 Contract with ESTES Construction for the Dunlap Training Center was approved with a vote of 5 yes and 1 no.

Open Session was closed at 7:45 p.m.

———— Dottie Strickler, Observer

## **ILLINOIS CENTRAL COLLEGE BOARD OF TRUSTEES: Sept. 19**

All trustees were in attendance except Ron Budzynski. The trustees approved the Consent Agenda, Treasurer's Report, Discrimination and Harassment Policy Update, and President's Employment Agreement 10<sup>th</sup> addendum.

Discussion of the consent agenda included questions from trustees Diane Lamb and Gale Thedford who requested a more detailed explanation of the purchase of digital marketing with Clarus for enrollment efforts. Staff members explained digital marketing reaches students and its use is consistent with past efforts. The amount of \$250K is the entire year's budget; in the previous year, digital marketing expenditures have been reported incrementally throughout the year. Thedford requested periodic reports on spending on digital marketing.

Executive VP of Finance Bruce Budde reported that the college is only two months into the budget year; to date, expenditures are trending favorably. Revenues are on target except for Corporate Personal Property Replacement Tax (CPPRT) estimates from the State for FY 25. The state's projection for the college's portion of CPPRT is \$4.4 million, which is a \$1.5 million reduction from the budget of \$5.9 million.

The President's employment agreement was extended for one additional year to June 30, 2028. The President's annual salary for the period from July 1, 2024, through June 30, 2025, will be increased by 3.5% to \$311,887.61.

### **Informational Highlights:**

The board recognized students and advisors from the Skills USA program who attended the National Skills and Leadership Conference. Ten ICC students including students from other community high schools enrolled in dual credit were awarded many medals. Participating students reported on the value of the program to retaining students at ICC and supported them in their technical education, training, and employment.

Staff reported on the success of the Student Orientation and First Semester Experience. The program hopes to engage students at enrollment which is important in student retention and success.

The board was provided a detailed report on the Diagnostic Medical Sonography Program. Due to accreditation standards requiring one Sonographer for every program student, the DMS program capacity is limited to 18. However, representatives from ICC, OSF and Carle Health met last month to discuss ways to work together. All are committed to collaborate on strategies to continue to build the workforce pipeline.

The Fall 2024 enrollment has increased, bringing student enrollment up to 2020 levels. Trustees acknowledged the staff's efforts to increase enrollment. The trustees had a robust discussion about the connection between the spending on enrollment efforts, marketing, the need to continue tracking student enrollment and marketing in ZIP codes where enrollment is low.

The College seeks approval to discontinue the Legal Studies Associate in Applied Science (AAS) degree program and Library Technical Assistant Certificate. Both recommendations are supported by decreased enrollment and changes in the job market for related positions. An appropriate teach-out plan will be provided for students who are enrolled in these programs.

Link to the full meeting packet: <https://icc.edu/about/board-trustees/meeting-materials/>

————— Monica Freaner, Observer

## **SPRINGDALE CEMETERY BOARD: Sept. 16**

The Springdale Cemetery Management Authority held its monthly regular meeting Sept. 16 with all nine members present.

During the General Manager's Report, the authority held two unanimous votes — the first requesting further information from the Heyl Royster law firm on the "Decoration Trust Fund" that the authority has been attempting to secure and add to its existing endowment fund since 2005. Nearly \$270K is held in the "Decoration Trust Fund," and nearly \$200K is already held in the cemetery endowment fund. The authority wants to ensure that all steps in securing the decoration funds have been followed appropriately, and that they are free to merge the funds. The second vote was to secure CliftonLarsonAllen to conduct the 2024 financial audit. The

five-year agreement will cost \$23K in the initial year and grow to \$27K for the 2028 audit.

General Manager Mark Matuszak praised the cemetery staff for their work to clear debris and make other repairs following the July 17 storm. He did report that the oldest private mausoleum erected by the Zotz family was damaged and that repairs were beyond the abilities of cemetery staff. The authority encouraged the general manager to pursue an insurance claim for the damage and secure an estimate for repairs. The authority and general manager agreed that repairs needed to be completed as soon as possible to prevent further damage from water or animals.

In further news, the “South Center North” area is being developed to provide 300 new burial lots, and additional columbarium benches for cremains in the Prairie Garden have been secured. The Screaming Pumpkin Race will again be held in the cemetery on Oct. 28.

At the conclusion of the meeting, the authority went into executive session to receive an updated report on the search for the new general manager slated to replace Mark Matuszak in 2025.

———— Jim Runyon, Observer, substituting for Joan Wojcikewych, Observer

## **TAZEWELL COUNTY BOARD: Aug. 28**

Solar farms were once again the primary point of discussion for members of the Tazewell County Board when members met for 97 minutes on Aug. 28.

While members approved 16-2 the extension of a special-use permit for a 2-mega-watt solar farm in Delavan Township, they rejected a solar farm proposed for three segments of land at Morton's western edge along Birchwood Street on an 8-10 vote. Both the county ZBA and Land Use Committee had recommended denial in the face of objections from Morton, which foresees growth in its nearby industrial park. The only three public comments came in regard to this subject, with one speaker opposed and the others, representing the developer of the project, in favor.

As has been the case at prior meetings when denial is probable and a lawsuit may follow, board members entered executive session to discuss probable litigation. In this instance, at 44 minutes that accounted for nearly half the meeting's running time.

Separately, the budget and tax levy for the Heritage Lake Special Service Area were referred back to the Executive Committee because of outstanding questions related to the bond and are expected to return in September.

On the consent agenda, members unanimously approved purchasing a generator for the building at 1800 Broadway in Pekin being renovated to hold some Health Department functions. They also supported changes to the county's professional development reimbursement policy, now providing up to a \$5,000 remittance to employees upon successful completion of coursework.

———— Chris Kaergard, Observer



League of Women Voters  
of Greater Peoria

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**League of Women Voters of Greater Peoria Board of Directors  
2024-25**

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