



The League of Women Voters of Greater Peoria

THE VOTER

Volume 71, Issue 6

June 2018

Board of Directors 2018-19

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Important Dates

o **Noon-1 p.m. June 11,**
LWVGP board meeting,
Peoria Public Library
Downtown.

o **5-6:30 p.m. June 20,**
Drinks & Dialogue, Lariat
Steakhouse, 2232 W. Glen.

o **5:30 -7 p.m. July 18,**
Member Social, Springdale
Cemetery

President's Message

INSPIRATION TO ACTION

Recently, I went with a friend to a Riverfront Museum exhibit, Celebrate Illinois: 200 Years in the Land of Lincoln. The exhibit displays a total of 240 historical objects as a broad representation of our state's history and notable Illinoisans. These distinguished citizens contributed not only to the great history of Illinois, but to the entire nation and the world. The names are marked indelibly in our minds- Abraham Lincoln, Everett Dirksen, Frank Lloyd Wright, Betty Friedan and the list goes on and on...

While the stories of these famous individuals fully captured my attention, one name stood out for me personally and brought back memories of youthful inspiration- Jane Addams. Growing up in close proximity to Chicago, I knew the legendary stories of Jane Addams' work to help immigrants assimilate and her efforts to promote international peace. Often referred to as the "mother" of social work, Jane Addams established the first world famous social settlement house, Hull-House, and was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1931 for her efforts in the peace movement.

Growing up, I read of her work and even visited Hull-House. Her work on behalf of families and children ultimately inspired me to study and work in the field of social work. Thinking now about Jane Addams and her influence on me, I decided that one of her own quotes best explains why she inspired me and why I hold her in such high esteem. Ms. Addams said, "Action indeed is the sole medium of expression for ethics."

As we enter into the 2018-2019 LWVGP year, the words of Jane Addams are relevant and inspirational to us because we each have multiple opportunities to express our ethics through action. As you read this month's Voter, consider what inspires you to action. Is it Voter Services? LOGO? The History Project? The Housing Study? Drinks & Dialogue? Membership? Environment? eTransparency? Social Media? Time for Action Alerts? Find your inspiration and join a committee or project or volunteer for an event!

Making Democracy Work through Inspiration to Action!

— Farrell Davies, President

DRINKS & DIALOGUE, Wednesday June 20

After a storm or snowmelt, where does the water go? Peoria is facing major problems as a result of how the water currently drains. Learn the issues and historical background of this issue at League of Women Voters Drinks and Dialogue on June 20. Andrea Klopfenstein from City of Peoria Public Works Department will give an overview of current plan to address aging infrastructure, what other communities are doing and green solutions citizens can implement.

Join us at the Lariat Steakhouse, 2232 W. Glen Ave, Peoria for discussion on this issue. Social time at 5:00 PM; presentation 5:30 PM – 6:30 PM. Bring a friend and learn more about this issue. Refreshments available for purchase.

— Connie Romanus

MEMBERSHIP REPORT

The Membership Committee is wrapping up recruitment for new members, while preparing for renewal of existing members and additional new members. We do have one new member in the past month – Carole Gilfillan. Welcome, Carole.

In this newsletter you will find an Invitation to the Membership Social, Wednesday, July 18, 5:30-7:00 p.m., at Springdale Cemetery. Also attached is a dues Invoice for the coming year. The League's membership year is July 1 – June 30. It is our hope that you will either pay your dues at the Social, pay them online, or in the mail as indicated on the form. There will be food and drink provided at the event – come join us.

We are ending the year with 139 members. Our best recruitment is done by our members, so invite your friends or neighbors or work colleagues. Let's try for a membership increase of 10 percent this year. If you have questions, please contact one of us:

Linda Millen – 645-2542
Tchkids2@sbcglobal.net

Jan Deissler – 635-1872
jdeissler@sbcglobal.net

— Jan Deissler

PEORIA COUNTY ELECTION COMMISSION, Tuesday, May 15

The Election Commission started their monthly meeting with approval of current bills. The only addition to the normal bills was the cost of the cage and lock at the Brandywine location. All the paper voter cards have already been moved there. Also at the Brandywine location, all the flooring and drywall have been taken out, thus removing any remaining asbestos. Director Tom Bride mentioned that his office will be working with the League again on mock elections. One reason for his willingness to hold these is his ability to get student judges.

— Irene Pritzker

PEORIA CITY/COUNTY LANDFILL COMMITTEE, May 16

The Peoria City County Landfill Committee met their usual third Wednesday, May 16, at 3 pm, in Room 404 at Peoria City Hall.

Public comment included a request for explanation of some of the chemicals showing up in groundwater monitoring and how some are determined not to be site related and others have continued testing.

Committee Chair Steve Morris asked that Foth Engineering address the questions during their Groundwater Update report.

Some test wells are affected by migrating landfill gases. Other things that happen are contaminants that are from the coal mining done at the site before it became a landfill or testing at the lab. If a level of concern is detected, there is a time-frame for follow-up testing, which often shows no further action is needed. If levels remain of concern, the next step is a determination of the source and assessment monitoring is done. The testing looks for a statistically significant change as they want to know if the landfill is affecting groundwater.

The annual Landfill Gases report showed 98,000 metric tons of CO2 equivalent releases for 2017 which is mostly in the form of methane. This is approximately a 16 percent increase over 2016 and is due in most part to fugitive emissions from areas where garbage is placed that do not yet have a landfill gas collection system.

Scott Reeise, City of Peoria Public Works, stated that due to an agreement related to the recently approved City waste hauling contract, Peoria Disposal Company would be paying \$450,000 up front ahead of schedule as it was originally part of the new Landfill #3 contract with PDC, which will build and operate the next landfill. The contract for engineering services with Foth was renewed for three years based on their excellent work in meeting all performance requirements and staying in budget.

The next meeting will be June 20th.

— Joyce Blumenshine

WE'D LIKE YOUR HELP TO STUDY HOUSING

At our Annual Meeting in May, members approved forming a local study committee on "Housing." Do you want to be on the committee or do you know someone who might be interested? They don't have to be a member. Terry, Ryan, Irene, Molly, Joyce R, and I are interested, as well as my friend Lyn S. And, Connie has agreed to be our League's Observer at Peoria Housing Authority monthly meetings.

What is involved in a League study?

First, the committee will identify what the scope of the study will be - what are the main issues. LWV position states: "...**the conviction that every person and family should have decent, safe and affordable housing.**" Does everyone in our community have that?

Some questions to consider:

What is the geography of the study? (City of Peoria, Peoria County, additional cities in our three county League, Tazewell County?) Two of our communities have been repeatedly in the news about the condition of housing and whether there should be inspections.

What is the condition of housing in our community?

Utilities — should water & sewer and stormwater utility be included in rent?

What is affordable housing in our area?

Is there enough housing for our adult special needs population and senior populations? And, is that safe and decent and affordable?

What is being done about the substandard size of lots in our older neighborhoods, etc.

Your questions?

One comment at our Annual Meeting is whether our position should instead state, “the conviction that every person and family should have *the opportunity to have* decent, safe, and affordable housing.”

While doing the study, the committee will look at possible positions to take or "action steps" for our League to take. Our membership will all be involved at that point.

If we have a lot of people interested, we may break the topic into subcommittees or phases.

There are studies from other local Leagues to guide us, if we so desire.

Interested in working on this issue? Contact me at c_budzinski@hotmail.com

— Cheryl Budzinski

PEORIA HOUSING AUTHORITY BOARD of COMMISSIONERS MEETING, May 24

The May 24 meeting started on time with three Board members absent. James Fassino, Chair, present. Agenda available on website; minutes of April meeting approved. These were not on website prior to meeting; March minutes available. Public comment available at beginning of meeting. Nicole Livsey, HCV FSS Coordinator, introduced PHA resident who had completed program and is entering nursing school in fall. Five members of community present; Peoria Journal Star reporter present.

Jackie Newman, Executive Director of Springfield Housing Authority, gave overview of her site visits to PHA properties. Ms. Newman is currently under contract to direct PHA for twelve months after resignation of prior PHA Director.

Financial report shows collections are up 8.7 percent over prior period; this is due to asset management staff handling collections. Other improvements reported were improved organization of warehouse, cost of labor to prepare units and occupancy of units available. Housing choice vouchers not utilized effectively and changes made to improve this. Expense for recertification of employees recognized. Bids for security in process; grant received for this expense. Modernization and development project under budget due to coordination of services in repairs with contractors.

Resolution #052418-01 Intergovernmental agreement with City of Peoria for construction and operation of splash pad at Harrison development was approved. Ground breaking 5/31/2018 at 2 PM. This project is budget neutral to PHA according to Theresa Switzer, CFO.

Regular meeting adjourned at 5:00 PM for Executive Session.

— Connie Romanus

VOTER SERVICE

Welcome to summer which isn't officially here but has been here quite intensely for a couple weeks.

Voter Service has finished off this year with an ambitious project of holding Mock Elections next September. Area students will have the opportunity (if their school opts to participate) to vote a ballot similar to their parents' ballots.

Please check your calendars and plan to help or observe with us. We will be in Brimfield, 9/4; Quest, 9/5; Notre Dame, 9/6; Farmington, 9/7; Dunlap, 9/10; Peoria Central, 9/11; Manual, 9/12; Limestone, 9/13; and Peoria Christian, 9/14. You can call Mary Jane at 674-5313 to get more information and to sign up to help. There will also be a sign-up sheet at the Summer Social. The Election Commission is partnering with us on this interesting and exciting project.

We are also looking forward to a large Naturalization Ceremony on Tuesday, Sept. 25. This is not the usual day for the ceremony, however, we will still need 20 or more registrars. If you are a registrar, please save the date! If you are thinking of becoming a registrar, please do so in the next two months and join us. I never get real details until about two weeks before the event. I will try to get more details and have them at the Summer Social with the sign-up sheet!

We are looking for a bit of rest during the summer, but we are preparing to be back on task during September!

— Mary Jane Crowell

HELP THE ENVIRONMENT

Environmental Issues small group meetings will resume in September on the 2nd Wednesday at 10 a.m. at the Panera Restaurant off of Sterling. If you have suggestions for any parking lots you would like to recommend for the citizen screening to find out if it is coal-tar based or asphalt, please email Joyce Blumenshine at joblumen@yahoo.com. We will be doing testing over the summer and compiling a list.

– Joyce Blumenshine

LWVGP ACTION COMMITTEE ON WATER

June 12 is when the Memo of Understanding (MOU) between the City of Peoria and the CEO Council regarding the \$400,000 due diligence offer is anticipated to be discussed at Council.

If this is on the agenda, we would appreciate members attending the meeting to show their support. The agenda should be on the City's website on Thursday, June 7. Please check, since this could again be delayed. And, if you haven't contacted your city councilperson, the at-large councilpersons, and mayor, you still have time to do that. E-mail me if you need their contact information.

There has been no discussion of the conflicts of interest letters that Farrell and I sent regarding Illinois American Water. We would like to hear a public discussion on the issue and whether the two consider they have a conflict of interest. Conflict of Interest is a topic that our Local Government Committee could look at for all the area governmental units. The City of Peoria does not define "conflict of interest" in their council rules and just mentions it. Roberts Rules is of little help.

I know that Peoria County defines "conflict of interest" in their Rules of Order:

"Section 8: The right of a member to address the Board on a question of personal privilege shall be limited to: A. Those cases in which the integrity, character, or motives of the member are, or have been, attacked or questioned. B. Those cases that the member believes are covered by Section 14."

"Section 14: Conflicts of Interest. Board Members shall abstain from acting on any matter that comes before the County Board that will directly or indirectly benefit any public or private entity or institution when the Board Member is an officer of or sits on the governing body of such entity or institution, or in which the Board Member or the Board Member's immediate family has a financial interest as defined in the Centralized Purchasing Ordinance of Peoria County. If a Board Member has any other conflict of interest or the appearance of a conflict of interest, the Board Member may be excused if, prior to discussion of the matter, the Board Member informs the Chairperson of his/her desire to be excused because of a potential conflict of interest or the appearance of a conflict of interest. Every member of the County Board present on the putting of a question shall vote thereon, unless excused prior to putting of the question. All members that are excused from voting will not be allowed to participate in the discussion of the matter, unless questions are directed to them by the Chairperson for informational purposes, but will be counted toward the presence of a quorum. The minutes shall record members excused from voting as being present but abstaining."

For more information, please see our Face Book page which has been very active on due diligence and other topics related to the Water issue.

— Cheryl Budzinski, Chair

**You are
invited!**

It's Happening in July!

Summer Renewal Social
Wednesday, July 18, 5:30 – 7 pm
Springdale Cemetery - 3014 North Prospect Road

Please come and bring prospective members to celebrate our League's successes this past year and hear about the exciting upcoming year. League members and their invited guests are welcome. RSVP names by July 15 by responding to this e-mail to Jan Deissler at 309-635-1872 or Linda Millen at 309-645-2542.

RENEW RENEW RENEW

Renew your League of Women Voters' membership (Due in July)

**Your membership gives the League the political
clout to make democracy work!**

3 ways to renew, plus more membership categories

Please choose the renewal option that works best for you

- 1. In person**, at the Summer Renewal Social with check or cash.
- 2. Online**, go to www.lwvgp.org and use PayPal to renew.
- 3. Mail**, use enclosed form and mail a check payable to LWVGP, P. O. Box 9786, Peoria 61612-9786.

As a member you will receive electronically our newsletter, *The Voter*, and alerts on breaking action in Illinois and Washington, D.C. You will also have opportunities to:

- Connect with and strengthen our community
- Help shape the policy decisions that affect our lives
- Learn more about and foster dialog on a broad range of issues
- Help preserve our constitutional rights and liberties

The League of Women Voters, making democracy work!



League of Women Voters
of Greater Peoria

623 W. Stratford, Peoria, IL 61614

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

ON THE WEB:

www.lwvqp.org

IMPORTANT DATES

June 11 Noon-1:00 PM, LWVGP Board Meeting, Peoria Downtown Library Conference Room A

June 20 Drinks & Dialogue, 5:00-6:30 PM, Lariat Steakhouse

June 28-July 1. National LWV Convention in Chicago

July 18 Member Social, 5:30-7:00 PM, Springdale Cemetery