



Volume 73 Issue 9

September 2020

### President's Message

## LWVG works on Election 2020

Only 64 days until the November 3, 2020 Election . . .

In the words of the late John Lewis, "The vote is the most powerful non-violent change agent you have in a democratic society. You must use it because it is not guaranteed. You can lose it."

While the League of Women Voters is non-partisan, we are definitely political. We register voters. We hold forums. We educate voters about candidates, in part by supporting [IllinoisVoterguide.org](https://IllinoisVoterguide.org).

All these efforts reinforce our mission: Make democracy work!

So ask your friends and neighbors who have changed their address or name if they have updated voter registration information with their Election Commission.

Hopefully, many of you saw the news coverage on 50-year League member Hettie Beers being sworn in as an election judge recently by Tazewell County Clerk John Ackerman. Hettie will perform her duties at the assisted living center where she resides. Congratulations to Hettie! She is Democracy in Action!!

We also have a new 50-year member: Irene Pritzker. Irene is a past LWVGP President and Committee Chair, as well as a past LWVIL Director and co-chair of the Study on Cumulative Voting. She serves in Local Government Observers and the Voter Services Committee. Thanks for all you do, Irene!

Full disclosure from last month: While the League has applied for 501(c)3 status, it has not been approved yet. Tim Howard has completed and filed all the paperwork for this and we hope to be approved before the end of the calendar year.

———— Constance Romanus, LWVGP President



## We've got a lot going on this month

### IMPORTANT DATES:

**8 a.m.- 12 p.m. Sat. Sept. 5, 12, 19, 26.** Voter registration at Peoria Riverfront Market.

**7 p.m. Sept. 8, 10, 16.** Voter Outreach: V is for Voting, via Zoom. Sept. 8, Dunlap & Alpha Park Libraries; Sept. 10, Chillicothe & Brimfield libraries; Sept. 16, Peoria Public Library. Check your local library Facebook page for details on how to sign up.

**6 p.m. Thurs. Sept. 9.** LWVIL Criminal Justice Update Study Questions 1-5, via Zoom.

**12:30 p.m. Mon., Sept. 14.** LWVGP Board Meeting, via Zoom.

**5:30 p.m. Wed., Sept. 16.** Drinks & Dialogue on Fair Income Tax, via Zoom.

**12 p.m.-1 p.m. Thurs., Sept. 24.** Panel discussion on "Power the Vote" during virtual fundraiser for LWVIL Education Fund. Register online at [lwwil.org](http://lwwil.org).

**Thurs., Sept. 24.** Early voting begins.

## **DRINKS & DIALOGUE, Sept. 16**

Learn more about what is wrong with Illinois' current tax system, how to change it and what you can do to help.

LWVIL experts Ann Courter and Jean Pierce will lead discussion of the Fair Tax Proposal at 5:45 p.m. Wed., Sept. 16, via Zoom.

Jean Pierce serves as the LWVIL Issues and Advocacy co-chair. Ann Courter is an LWVIL issue specialist for Education and Fiscal Policy. She is on the steering committee of the Vote Yes for Fair Tax ballot committee.

On the ballot Nov. 3, this proposal is our chance to fix the state constitution to finally allow a Graduated Rate Income Tax — something the LWV has been trying to do for almost 50 years.

With the fair tax proposal, only people earning more than \$250,000 will pay higher taxes, while everyone else will pay lower or the same taxes. Yet the state will gain billions in revenues for education and health care.

Click here for a fun teaser: <https://youtu.be/GvC-zIkqNQY>

We hope to see you for 5:30 p.m. for a brief social time, and the session will begin at 5:45 p.m. You can access the event details and login information at our Facebook page or join our group on Meetup at <https://www.meetup.com/League-of-Women-Voters-Greater-Peoria/>

—— Kathleen Kelly



### **Spread the word: Vote informed**

The League of Women Voters of Illinois invites everyone in Illinois to use our Illinois Voter Guide. You can register to vote, check your registration status, or apply to vote by mail. After Sept. 16, check the "Find out what is on YOUR ballot" section for information on your candidates. LWVGP sent questions for the local and state candidates. If candidates responded, their answers will be at this website. Their websites or Facebook pages will be listed. This is a nonpartisan effort, paid for with your dues. We want YOU to vote. We want you to vote informed.

—— Cheryl Budzinski, Director LWVIL

## MEMBERSHIP REPORT

Welcome to Month Six of the COVID-19 virus! Sometimes it seems it will never end. However, the League of Women Voters of Greater Peoria is 'out there' doing the work which needs to be done.

A special thank you to all who have renewed your membership. If you have not done so – please do, or send an email to let us know you will not be renewing.

We are encouraged as 90% of our 2019-2020 members have renewed and more have indicated their intention to do so.

These numbers might be of interest:

- 112 total members – just one short of last year
- 13 new members, or members who sat out a year or two and have renewed
- 35 members renewed at a higher level – approximately 30%
- Some made smaller donations

New members since the August VOTER are:

- |                  |                 |
|------------------|-----------------|
| • Maria Kief     | Erica Phillips  |
| • Angela Kilduff | Jim Runyon      |
| • Beth Koch      | Connie Wong     |
| • Joyce Kohlbuss | James Zaleschek |
| • Rebecca Pence  |                 |

Welcome! If you're looking for a committee on which to serve or an issue to study, please contact a board member or one of the membership chairs listed below. We want you to be involved.

Members joining at a higher level since the August VOTER are:

**Carrie Chapman Catt - 1**

- Rebecca Sisk

**Ida B. Wells – formerly Susan B. Anthony - 14**

- |                              |                  |
|------------------------------|------------------|
| • Patricia Barton            | Kathie Raiborn   |
| • Marianne & Shelley Epstein | Joy Rennich      |
| • Ryan Hidden                | Jim Runyon       |
| • Kathleen Kelly             | Jamila Wilson    |
| • Terry & Joyce Kohlbuss     | Karen Zichterman |
| • Terry & Larry Matthews     |                  |

Let's build an even stronger League together. Invite one friend or family member to make Democracy work. Contact Jan Deissler, 635-1872 or [jandeissler@gmail.com](mailto:jandeissler@gmail.com), or Linda Millen, 645-2542 or [tchkids2@sbcglobal.net](mailto:tchkids2@sbcglobal.net)

—— Jan Deissler

## **VOTER SERVICES**

Your Voter Service committee has been busy!

On Aug. 3, in partnership with the Fondulac District Library, we hosted a Facebook Live forum on voting in the November 2020 election. Panelists were Tom Bride, Executive Director of the Peoria County Election Commission, and John Ackerman, Tazewell County Clerk.

They took questions from the audience and questions that were sent in advance. Many of the forum questions focused on vote by mail but all kinds of topics relative to voting in the upcoming election were covered. We had 50 people who watched all or part of it live that evening!

We are doing voter registration at the Peoria Riverfront Farmers Market every Saturday from Aug. 29 through the close of the market on Sept. 26. Hours will be from 8 a.m. until noon each Saturday. So come down, get some fresh fruit and veggies and register to vote all at the same place.

We are also working on scheduling some candidate forums for September and early October, but no dates are finalized yet. Watch for additional emails or check our website for dates, times, and races.

Finally, kudos to Hettie Beers a 50-year member of this League who at 93 years young reached out to John Ackerman, Tazewell County Clerk, about being an election judge this November at the assisted living facility where she lives. Once a League member, always a League member!

———— Roberta Parks

## **PEORIA CITY/COUNTY LANDFILL, Aug. 19**

The Peoria City/County Landfill Committee met Aug. 19, via Zoom or phone access, which was posted on the city Solid Waste Landfill Committee website ahead of the meeting.

Chairman Steve Morris called the meeting to order and a quorum was present. Board member Zach Oyler was absent. The June 17 meeting minutes were approved and there was no meeting held in July. There were no public comments during the citizens opportunity to address the committee at the beginning of the meeting.

The Foth Infrastructure and Environment, LLC, engineering report was presented by Josh Gabehart. One non-special waste approval was needed for sludge materials from the Midwest-Generation Powerton power plant and was approved. Four other pre-approved wastes were reported and Mr. Gabehart commented that changes Landfill Committee made last year to increase the pre-approval tonnages have made a positive difference in adding to landfill revenues. Two landfill gas flare shut-downs were reported related to storms and power outages. However,

equipment worked as designed and there were no gas releases to the environment.

Good weather has helped planned repair projects to proceed. About 50,000 gallons of landfill leachate were transported to off-site treatment for June and July and the solar sumps are doing their job with some minor repairs as needed.

Total landfill waste received is down 1,735 tons compared to this point last year. However, the comment was this is what is being seen at landfills across the country due to impacts from the pandemic. Foth is monitoring the tonnage and revenues but there are no recommendations for any budget or other changes at this point.

A two-year extension for a local resident was approved for hunting and fishing permission on a landfill parcel. There was a question about taxes on the parcel and the State's Attorney's office will look into it. Bill Lewis, City of Peoria Public Works, discussed landfill receipts for the last two months and July was slightly over \$10,000 less than for June.

The Waste Management (WM) operations report by Ian Johnson included that the random waste load checks found no problems. Chris Coulter gave the PDC report and gave an update on plans for wetlands and dam work at the landfill as part of mitigation needed ahead of construction beginning for the new Landfill #3.

PDC has hired Hanson Professional Services Engineering for the projects and will connect with Foth and others for Zoom and site meetings ahead. Mr. Coulter said they would like to present an informational program on the wetlands project and asked if a larger meeting area, such as the Gateway Building, could be used.

A new business item was a request for discussion regarding the current state Pollution Control Board review of coal ash regulations and what that might mean to the landfill and if the committee might consider a comment letter.

WM said that coal ash should not be mixed with municipal solid waste as it interferes with methane gas production and has other problem. Since the current WM landfill is filling its last area, any plans for coal ash would need to focus on the new Landfill #3. PDC agreed that coal ash needs to be in a monofill. Chairman Morris asked what would be a typical tonnage for coal ash from a power plant. Mr. Coulter commented that at other locations from ½ million to 2 million tons capacity was needed. Foth Engineering will look into this and have some figures for the next meeting. Committee member Sharon Williams asked for a refresher on coal ash and issues with it and that will also be planned. Foth did a screen share of a comment letter the Landfill Committee had done several years ago. Committee member Rick Fox said he would consider the current situation similar to what the Committee did before and asked that this topic be on the agenda for the September Committee meeting. The meeting was adjourned about 3:40 p.m.

——— Joyce Blumenshine, Observer

## **PEORIA COUNTY BOARD, Aug. 13**

The Peoria County Board met Aug. 13 with Vice Chairman James Fennell presiding in the absence of Chairman Andrew Rand.

Member Matt Windish also was absent. A quorum was present. Board members and staff were sitting with social distancing and COVID masks in the County Building board room. Members Phil Salzer and Linda Daley participated by phone. Members of the public could watch the meeting live via Facebook or YouTube and at different times on Cable Access 22. Public comments can be sent to the County Clerk by 3 p.m. on the day of the board meeting and will be read into the record.

County Clerk Rachael Parker read public comments from in support of the the Hanna City Trail: 1) from Roberta English, Wildlife Prairie Park, trail will enhance the park and be a benefit to the county; 2) Tri-County Regional Planning Commission, benefits of the proposed trail include recreation, added property value, tourism regional attraction; 3) Heart of Illinois Group Sierra Club, Rock Island Trail shows economic values and growth from trails including preservation of a green corridor; 4) Brett Baker, Bike Peoria, petition with 1,719 signatures in support of the trail and urging that funding be secured.

The July meeting minutes were approved. Two proclamations were given: 60th Anniversary of the Community Workshop and Training Center; recognition of LeColis Reed for his dedication and long-time volunteer service on the Peoria County Board of Election Commissioners and as a City of Peoria Election Commissioner since 2006. The Consent Agenda had 12 items listed; all were approved unanimously without discussion.

Two zoning cases were approved: 1) a Special Use for a pet grooming business in Medina Township employing two people not residing at a private residence. The business will be located in accessory structure, which zoning normally specifies is for storage only, and it will open an hour earlier (8 a.m.) than existing zoning specifies. 2) a variance for the height of a cell tower which zoning states is not to exceed 75 feet when in a residential area and the USCOC of Central Illinois tower wants to be 195 ft. high in a rural residentially zoned area. The lot line setback is to be 50% of the height and a variance was approved for a shorter 82 ft. setback.

Top item was the Intergovernmental Agreement between Peoria County, the City of Farmington, Fulton County, and Village of Hanna City for the formation of the Hanna City Trail Negotiation Commission.

County Administrator Scott Sorrel explained the main purpose was establishing a body that could proceed with grant applications. The project would acquire 24.7 miles of right-of-way that has been rail-banked for years. The Federal Government has said this is the last chance for the trail section to be purchased as pre-

vious extensions of time have been approved. If the project cannot go forward the land will be released from rail-banking and sold. The goal is to apply for federal grant funding which will cover 80% of the purchase. Twenty per cent is to be a local match and state grants could pay up to half of that. The Board would allocate \$170,225.80 as its pledge for the funding to come from the Keystone Fund, which is used exclusively for economic development purposes.

Mr. Sorrel said trail projects are classic examples of economic development.

Board member Paul Rosenbohm, District 18, said he had a call from a member of a subdivision council near Wildlife Prairie Park who urged support. District 1 representative Sharon Williams also received supportive calls and communications. She has worked on the project since joining the board and would be the board's representative on the negotiation commission. Fellow member Jim Dillon, District 7, thanked Mrs. Williams for her persistence on this project and gave his support. District 14's Brian Elsasser and District 9's Kate Pastucha both said it is a worthy project. Vice Chairman Fennell said he had calls in support and others spoke to strong support. The trail negotiation commission resolution passed unanimously.

Finally, the board discussed hiring a software consultant to evaluate and integrate the three legacy County software systems used for a range of work from finances, budget, banking, and accounts receivable.

Mr. Sorrel explained one of the systems is being phased out and there will not be any support or upgrades. The consultant would find a single source software solution for replacing the three systems. He explained it is a very complex process requiring mapping of all business processes that are currently handled by the three different programs. This project will help negotiate the best replacement and ensure the system fits the county needs.

Board members questioned why a consultant has to be hired. District 10 member Rob Renau explained the work to get the right software is essential before money is spent and what is purchased turns out to not do what is needed or has other problems. District 15 member Steven Rieker said from his experience such systems cannot risk being poorly done and it has to be planned right to begin with. It is a good investment up front. The resolution passed unanimously.

There were a variety of comments and announcements, including congratulations to Linda Daley for her honor from the Peoria Historical Society. Sharon Williams thanked the Board for its support on the trail issue. Jim Dillon noted Fiber Welding has a contract from clothing company Ralph Lauren and this is an example of new opportunities for the community. A motion was passed to continue the County COVID emergency declaration to enable being qualified for any possible federal or state funding support. The meeting was adjourned at 7:05 p.m.

——— Joyce Blumenshine, Observer



### **PEORIA HOUSING AUTHORITY, Aug. 3**

The Board of Commissioners of PHA met August 3, 2020 via Zoom. The meeting started on time and a quorum of members was present. Roll call was taken and community comments were requested. Hearing none, Chairman Carl Cannon moved forward with the meeting. Minutes of the July 6 meeting were approved.

Chief Executive Officer Jackie Newman reported on activities to bring the organization's programs in compliance with COVID-19 required precautions. Ms. Newman said employees were working hard to create safe environments for families and staff, whether in the office or out in the community. Safety equipment and materials are being well stocked and appropriate precautions are being taken as preparation extending to the end of the year. They await directions to prepare for continuous compliance for safety. Ms. Newman also referred to the grants awarded for affordable housing dollars as a process or journey that will be long but of great benefit to the community.

Following are resolutions approved by the Board.

- o Participation in a University of Illinois at Springfield study through the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation for racial equity in the Housing Grant Program.

- o A contract for window caulk replacement and new door weather-stripping, new steel storm door purchases and installation, all at older Harrison Homes units.

- o Confidentiality of closed session minutes. The Resolution was passed with no discussion.

- o Amendments to language in the Family Self-Sufficiency Action Plan to meet new regulations.

- o Updates to the Financial Management Plan. Staff requested the amount available be changed from \$1,000 to \$5,000.

- o Approved required changes to protect staff and families from the COVID-19 threat. That includes the purchase of furniture that will be easily disinfected and replacement of carpet with a hard washable flooring in the Administrative Building. Resident Safety Committee Meetings will be scheduled soon.

This was followed by Closed Executive Session.

—— Kathie Raiborn, Observer

### **PEORIA COUNTY ELECTION COMMISSION, Aug. 11**

The Peoria County Board of Election Commissioners held its annual meeting on August 11. The first order of business was to swear in new member Dr. Arun Pinto, who has replaced retiring member LaColis Reed. Board officers were elect-

ed, including the reelection of Matt Bartolo as Chairman.

During the previous week, the State's Attorney's office held a meeting to determine if several Libertarian candidates would be on the ballot. In spite of objections by a County citizen, the three candidates were found to have valid petitions with 344 of a needed 335 signatures.

Many of the expenses for the November election will be reimbursed by the State of Illinois. These include COVID costs like face masks/shields, hand sanitizer, and single finger covers for the voting machines. The state will also reimburse for part of the expense of judges, even though there should be fewer needed.

As of Aug. 11, almost 14,000 applications for Vote By Mail had been received. There will be another mailing from the Secretary of State later this month, so there will probably be more applications received after that.

When Director Tom Bride was asked about requiring face masks at polling places, he deferred to the State's Attorney. Some individual polling places may have their own requirements. The State's Attorney recommended a talk with the health department. This topic will be discussed again next month.

The Board also discussed the 2021 budget request that needs to be approved by the County Board. Expenses next year should be lower, since there will only be local elections. A big expense coming in 2022 will be a new voting system. The one currently in use is 16 years old. The board asked Director Bride to put a half-time position back into the budget.

———— Irene Pritzker, Observer

### **SPRINGDALE CEMETERY AUTHORITY, Aug. 18**

This Observer was finally able to master the Webex system and view the Springdale Cemetery Authority Board August Meeting. This is the first report since the February 18 meeting. I must thank Chair Person Linda Daley and Cemetery Staff for their hands-on approach facilitating my attendance. Operator Error on my part!

Mark Matuszak gave his Manager's Report. The number of burials and cremations are up considerably from last year. This increase is credited to the Scattering Garden option that is now available at the Cemetery.

CloudPoint/QuickBooks vs AXIOM Systems conversion will be completed very soon. Quick Books will be replacing the AXIOM equivalent. The process has gone smoothly and AXIOM representatives have been extremely helpful during this process. October 1 is the proposed completion of the conversion. The maintenance cost will then begin and will be half of the maintenance cost that was being paid monthly to AXIOM.

A new “substantial” family monument and lot purchase opportunity is in process. There have been a number of large Family Monument and Lot additions to the Cemetery over the last few years. There are also 3 additional monument and lot locations be negotiated at this time. Mr. Matuszak will keep the Board updated.

Mr. Matuszak also discussed the unusual weather events this spring and summer and the effect they had on the cemetery grounds. First, there were two deluges of rain and wind – May 26 and July 31. The grounds were not only difficult to maintain because of weather but approximately 12 trees were uprooted and needed to be removed from the grounds. Some of these trees were between 100 and 200 years old and were very large. There were three roads that had to be closed two to three days during clean up. Cleanup continues and it may be a few more weeks before the grounds are back to a well-maintained appearance. Secondly, the annual work release labor commitment was cut short by the pandemic causing a shortage of labor. There are also three longtime volunteers who mow a large part of the cemetery. One recently decided to retire and the other two volunteers have served many years and could follow suit at any time. There is a concern about the need for volunteers.

There was discussion regarding the possibility of Mr. Matuszak posting “A letter from our Manager” on the website. The board discussed the concept and agreed that it would provide a great opportunity to be transparent and informative about the activities and volunteer needs associated with the Springdale Cemetery operations and may encourage community involvement.

The Board will not be meeting in September but instead will be attending ad hoc working committees — Financial Responsibility, Public Awareness, Capital Investment and Bylaws Committees will meet. They will not be open to the public and there was discussion regarding whether or not these meetings would be subject to the Illinois Open Meetings Act. Bob Manning said he would check with the city attorney regarding this and report back to board members within the week.

The Springdale Foundation Board is in the process of scheduling a cleanup date and will keep in touch with Mr. Matuszak about the date. The Foundation Board has decided to have committee meetings every other month. These committees are the Events/Fund Endowment, and Restoration/News Letter. There was also an invitation to Authority Board Members to serve on one of these Committees.

Under New Business, the R.K. Dixon proposed lease agreement was discussed and approved. No other business was addressed by the Board and the meeting was adjourned.

———— Kathie Raiborn, Observer

## **CRIMINAL JUSTICE UPDATE STUDY LWVIL**

The timeline and overall purpose of state and local positions was described at our Aug. 19 meeting. Our meeting at 6 p.m. Wed., Sept. 9 will include our Resources talking about the background for each of these five topics below and answering your questions. Overall there are 14 questions in this study and we are looking at the first five questions on Sept 9. We hope you will join us in educating ourselves towards our consensus meeting in January 2021. To agree as an organization, we all need to be educated on these issues.

The comprehensive report on these questions is available for you to read including the background information for the Pros and Cons included below: <https://www.lwvil.org/criminal-justice-position-update.html>

Video resources including other Leagues' meetings regarding these same questions are available at: [https://www.lwvil.org/uploads/1/2/3/7/123745968/video\\_resources\\_6-12.pdf](https://www.lwvil.org/uploads/1/2/3/7/123745968/video_resources_6-12.pdf)

### **Questions 1 - 5**

1. Investing in Communities to reduce crime and violence  
Existing Position: none

Consensus Question: To reduce crime and violence, should there be investment in underserved and/or impoverished communities?

PRO: When the Illinois State Commission on Criminal Justice and Sentencing Reform began its work in 2015, it was faced with the fact that nearly half of all prisoners released from prison and returning to their communities would be re-incarcerated within three years.

CON: Private companies will not invest in poverty areas because there is no effective demand for their products and services and it is too dangerous to do so.

2. Bias in The Criminal Justice System  
Existing position: NONE

Consensus Question: Should there be periodic training for individuals working in the criminal justice system to recognize implicit racial and ethnic bias in order to more adequately work toward the goal of equal treatment under the law?

PRO: The 5th recommendation of the Illinois State Commission on Criminal Justice and Sentencing Reform states: "Require periodic training on recognizing implicit racial and ethnic bias for individuals working in the criminal justice system, including but not limited to law enforcement officers, prosecutors, public defenders, probation officers, judges, and correctional staff." Because our criminal justice system is predicated on the importance of equal treatment under the law, it is

imperative that the significant racial disparities that exist in the justice system be addressed.

Con: Broad-based training detracts from the work that employees are hired to do. This training is sometimes ineffective and therefore not worth the expense.

### 3. Gender-Responsive Approach for All Offenders

Consensus Question: Should a Gender-Responsive Approach be used for all offenders with the goal of equitable and appropriate treatment?

PRO: We had originally intended to focus on the needs of incarcerated women, taking our cue from the Illinois State Commission on Criminal Justice and Sentencing Reform which in its fourth recommendation called for a Gender-Responsive Approach for Female Offenders. However, other populations also have special needs and concerns, for example, transgender people. Our rationale focuses on these two populations, but our consensus question is broad in order to include any and all populations with special needs and concerns.

CON: Some inmates would object to transgendered people being transferred to their prison. There is a safety issue and cost issue in accommodating transgendered people.

### 4. Data Collection and Transparency

Existing Position: None

Consensus Question: Are efficient data collection, data sharing, and transparency critical in an impartial and unbiased criminal justice system?

PRO: Measurement is essential in order to know whether desired results are achieved, and to help identify and share best practices. Openly sharing data supports the interests of all stakeholders, including those within the criminal justice system, state and local officials, and when appropriate the general public. Recommendation 6 of The Illinois State Commission on Criminal Justice and Sentencing

Con: Jurisdictions throughout Illinois operate on different computer platforms: operating systems, hardware, and software. To enable them all to communicate with one another would be a major expenditure of time and money. This then could also involve privacy and security issues, with data shared inappropriately—e.g. social security numbers

### 5. Criminal Justice Coordinating Councils

Existing Position: None

Consensus Questions:

5a. Should Criminal Justice Coordinating Councils (CJCCs) be created throughout the state?

PRO: “Most states, including Illinois, operate criminal justice systems at the county level and with little coordination between them. Illinois’ 102 counties and 24 judicial circuits have unique issues and needs with varying resources and support. Each department of the criminal justice system, from police to parole, is indi-

vidually funded with impact and success defined within the narrow scope of each organization. Criminal justice coordinating councils (CJCCs) offer a way for these agencies to collaboratively address county criminal justice issues.”

Con: All justice is local, including elected mayors, community boards and sheriffs. Communities do not want increased mandates from the state that are not funded and the local community cannot pay for it.

5b. Should CJCCs include a wide representation from local justice systems agencies, other government bodies, service providers, and the community?

Pro: In 2017, the Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority (ICJIA) awarded five counties -Lake, McHenry, McLean, Winnebago and St.Clair Counties technical assistance grants to establish CJCCs. One of the first CJCCs was started in McLean County in central Illinois, in 2011, to address chronic overcrowding at the county jail. McLean ranked highest in the state of the 20 largest counties in the number of drug defendants sent to state prisons. Through the CJCC, the county sheriff worked to put more emphasis on the release of low-level offenders at bond hearings. There was increased participation in pre-trial release programs and reform measures. These may include substance use and mental health treatment providers; victim’s advocates; those offering housing resources; workforce training or educational assistance; veteran’s advocates; members of faith-based groups; offender rights group representatives; and former offenders.

CON: Local criminal justice professionals represent all who live in the community. Their role is to keep the community safe and punish those who threaten public safety. Additional organizations may dilute the mandate of the criminal justice departments.

5c. Should incentives and support be provided for the establishment of local CJCCs to assist them as they develop strategic plans to address crime and corrections policy?

PRO: The third recommendation of the Illinois State Commission on Criminal Justice and Sentencing Reform (CJSR) states: “Provide incentives and support for the establishment of local Criminal Justice Coordinating Councils to develop plans to address crime and corrections policy.” The report goes on, “Historically there has been insufficient coordination and cooperation between the State and local agencies when it comes to criminal justice planning. The State provides funding for local criminal justice issues from a variety of sources directed toward a variety of local entities, but there is no coordinating mechanism that allows the State to learn how this funding fits in with a local jurisdiction’s overall criminal justice needs, nor is there a coordinated way for local governments to learn from the experiences and data in the hands of the State. Most crime is local, and the needs of local law enforcement, governments, and the community often vary by region. The

result is an insular approach to funding local needs, and as a result, State spending on criminal justice is often misaligned.”

CON: The incentives and support must be adequate to not increase the costs to the local community. Local communities are overwhelmed with high expenses and demands and cannot afford to begin a new project that will cost the community more financially and with limited personnel.

5d. Should there be cooperation and coordination between the State and CJCCs in order to share experience and data with the goal of improving plans to address crime and corrections policy both locally and statewide?

PRO: CJCCs will create a coordinated way for both the state and local communities to share data and experiences. Criminal justice tends to be insular. By sharing goals/problems, all parties may find more cost-effective and efficient ways to address local problems which may lead to savings in financial and human capital and improved outcomes regarding recidivism and behavior change.

CON: Most crime is local. Local communities do not need the state to direct them on what needs to be done in their communities.

—— Cheryl Budzinski, study group co-leader



**League of Women Voters  
of Greater Peoria**

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ON THE WEB: [www.lwvgp.org](http://www.lwvgp.org)

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

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**League of Women Voters of Greater Peoria Board of Directors  
2020-2021**

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