



Volume 75 Issue 1

January 2022

## President's Message

# Onward!!

Happy New Year! Now seems an appropriate time to look ahead. If you look at just a partial list of LWVGP activities, the next few months will be busy.

We will:

- Start up the new Communications Committee authorized by the Executive Board in November. We've already begun to look for a chairperson and members.
- Hold a Program Planning meeting on January 29th to map out goals for the coming year. This will be a Zoom meeting starting at 9 a.m.
- Plan our Annual Dinner/Fundraiser — usually slated for early spring — in the hope that COVID restrictions ease enough to make that possible.
- Conduct a retreat for the Board and members to consider long-term goals and strategies, most likely in March or April.
- Elect officers/Board members and approve a budget/program at our annual meeting in May.
- Moderate candidate forums before the June primaries so voters can learn more about the people who propose to represent them.

Organizational projects have been suggested, as well. Executive Board member Tim Howard has begun compiling a book of our past minutes. We plan to prepare a booklet on Board members' roles and responsibilities, which includes a master calendar of annual deadlines. And we want to organize our records and files, since our assets are pretty scattered.

This list seems daunting, but with the support of the Board and our committed members, I know we will prepare the LWVGP for the challenges ahead.

I am looking for volunteers. How about you?

———— Terry Kohlbuss, LWVGP president

### Important Dates (all ZOOM):

**4 p.m. Mon., Jan. 10:** LWVGP Executive Board.  
**9-10:30 a.m. Sat., Jan. 29:** Program Planning meeting for 2022.

## MEET YOUR BOARD MEMBERS



### **Terry Bibo Knight**

This photo was shot by Marine photographer Bruce Brown and taken alongside fellow journalist Ed Hammond while we were all covering the Race for the Cure.

The Race was not considered a particularly prestigious story at the time, but it sure was fun. That day seems like another lifetime after more than a decade of cutbacks in local journalism.

I won a newspaper scholarship with the Peoria Journal Star as a senior at Peoria High School. Aside from an 11-month foray into advertising after graduation from The University of Iowa, the paper was my only full-time employer. Imagine that. Now I call myself a freelance author — emphasis on ‘free’ — who took a 40-year detour into journalism.

Before, during and after my reporting career, reading and writing have been two constants. The oldest of six children, I grew up at the McClure Branch Library. Partly to get some quiet. Partly to check out the maximum 10 books a day and top the chart for the summer reading program.

Twining the two sides of literacy won me some awards and paid the mortgage. More importantly, they enabled me to meet a lot of fabulous people. Not just the cranks in the newsroom, either, though they were awesome. Governors. Mayors. A future president. A few 100-year-old ladies and a lot of down-on-their-luck families.

You see, the other constant in my life is a yearning for fairness and democracy and freedom of speech. Maybe I was born a nerd. Maybe the Girl Scouts imprinted me at an early age. Maybe it was Dad’s tenure on the Peoria City Council. Whatever. I spent more than a few hours in the council chambers as a child. It was more fun as an adult with a pen who could laugh out loud at politicians’ often-goofy antics.

Those politicians look pretty good, in retrospect. Now, with journalism and democracy both on fire, the League of Women Voters provides a way to counter some of the current crazy. And that, too, can be fun.

## **DRINKS & DIALOGUE . . .**

. . . is on hiatus until Feb. 16. We're making extra time for you to participate in the Program Planning meeting. See note below!

————— Katie Kelly, D&D chair

### **2022 PROGRAM PLANNING MEETING**

Join President Terry Kohlbus on Zoom from 9 to 10:30 a.m., Sat., Jan. 29, to create the framework for our local priorities in the coming year. (Note: Change in original date.)

We will make recommendations on current LWVIL positions listed in the 2021-2023 edition of Where We Stand (Retain, Revise or Drop). A copy can be found on [www.lwvil.org](http://www.lwvil.org) under Issues and Advocacy, Where We Stand.

In addition, we will make recommendations for New Studies and Action Focus Items. Local studies are important in all Leagues; they can excite, challenge and launch action in local communities. Consider the following criteria:

Is the subject a current concern in the community?

Is it an issue in which the League could make an impact?

Is it an issue important enough to League members to generate a commitment of time and energy?

Is it an issue requiring governmental action? Is action even possible?

So, grab a cup of coffee and join us for this conversation on the topics members' feel strongly about. Help shape our focus for 2022!

Join Zoom Meeting:

[https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88026667766?](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88026667766?pwd=OUhZL2EwY3Fmc2lYQmhHbzhOcJkQT09)

pwd=OUhZL2EwY3Fmc2lYQmhHbzhOcJkQT09

Meeting ID: 880 2666 7766

Passcode: 333973

## MEMBERSHIP

As of December 6, 2021, we have 126 members. A bit short of a 10% increase.

We sent 24 email messages:

4 paid dues

3 moved from Peoria – 2 of them joined the Greater Phoenix LWV

1 not joining due to health reasons and involvement in retirement community

1 said he was passing on the League this year

5 said they would mail dues – have received 0 of those

10 did not respond

No more calls or emails to this group. Some have been members for several years, but after three or more contacts, we're finished on this end.

I do think that recruitment of new members is easier when there is a person-to-person contact so I would encourage us to work toward that goal.

Jan Deissler – 635-1872

[jandeissler77@gmail.com](mailto:jandeissler77@gmail.com)

## VOTER SERVICES

2022 will be a big election cycle for the League.

With the new year comes the timeframe for candidates to start circulating petitions for the June 28 primary election. Petitions must be filed by March 14. With this being the first election after the census, there will be a large number of offices on the ballot. All members of the Illinois House and Senate, several statewide elected officials, county board members and more.

Our plans are to do as many candidate forums as we can in the contested races. We are working now to be sure we can pull off forums that have both an in-person and virtual option for members of the community. Several of you offered to help us with forums, candidate surveys and other programs when you completed the survey in the fall. I believe I have reached out to all of you who provided an email address with some information on the help we will need.

If you are interested in the forums and you have not gotten an email from me, please don't hesitate to contact me at [robertamparks7513@gmail.com](mailto:robertamparks7513@gmail.com) or 309.231.1724. We will need all the help we can get to pull this off!

Roles range from being a timer to collecting questions from the live or virtual audience to being a moderator or coordinating a forum yourself.

Have a wonderful 2022 and get active in the League to help us educate voters about the candidates!

—— Roberta Parks, Chair

## **PEORIA CITY COUNCIL: Dec. 14**

Public hearing was held regarding disconnection of property which was annexed to the city in 1993 with the Charter Oak development.

Michael Fleming, attorney for property owners, asked for parcels that remain undeveloped and without access to roads be disconnected from city of Peoria and allow land to fall under county authorization. City staff have recommended to deny this request. After discussion, Council members voted to defer to January 11.

There was a first reading of a new ordinance amending City code regarding automated traffic violations. This is prompted by request from Peoria Public Schools who have seen increase in motorists driving around school busses when stopped and stop arm out. Buses equipped with camera on stop arm; photos can be shared with Peoria Police Department and violation ticket issued.

Councilors voted 9 to 2 to remove the 4 a.m. liquor license zone in Warehouse District, with exception of existing license for Status night club. Councilor Denise Jackson expressed concern regarding checkered past of this business with fights and shooting; she requested background information from Legal Counsel on this issue.

It is noted that \$4,038,664 for funding Pension Obligations and an assignment of \$500,000 was assigned from the General Fund for 2022 and 2023 was identified for potential due diligence on the Purchase of the water local system.

Under new business, Councilor Tim Riegenbach commended Mayor Rita Ali for her leadership in reaching out to Representatives Jehan Gordon-Booth and Ryan Spain to engage in discussion on Public Safety Pension System in Illinois. This would include asking cities such as Rockford, Springfield and Bloomington to unite to encourage state to modify the current structure.

December 28 meeting canceled; next Council meeting January 11. Minutes and video of meeting available at [www.peoriagov.org](http://www.peoriagov.org)

—— Connie Romanus, Observer

## **PEORIA COUNTY BOARD SPECIAL MEETING: Nov. 30**

Peoria County Board held a special meeting November 30 with all present except Members Kate Pastucha and Matt Windish. Member Rachel Reliford participated via phone.

The sole agenda item was final approval of the draft redistricting map based on the 2020 Census and that will be in place for the next decade. Former members Allen Mayer and Stephen Morris worked with the county IT and GIS departments to determine population gain/loss in each census track and then drafted a map that

reflected these changes but also retained substantially same populations—the 18 districts vary in size by no more than 124 people. In general, heritage neighborhoods within the City of Peoria lost population while the Route 6 Corridor saw significant growth compared to the 2010 Census. All 18 members will be elected in 2022.

Members thanked Mayer and Morris for their bipartisanship and generosity for volunteering their time and expertise.

The map was approved unanimously on a 16-0 vote. The interactive map is available on the County website under the Departments/GIS tab.

During Citizen's Remarks, Sheriff Brian Asbell surprised the board by announcing he would not stand for election in 2022. He cited unspecified policy disagreements with the board over the past year for his decision not to run again.

———— Jim Runyon, Observer

## **PEORIA COUNTY BOARD: Dec. 9**

The Peoria County Board held its regular meeting Dec. 9 with all present except Chairman Andrew Rand and Member Rachel Reliford.

During Citizen's Remarks, Tim Howard, LWVGP Vice President and Board member, read a letter on behalf of the organization thanking the County Board, its Redistricting Committee, and past board members Allen Mayer and Stephen Morris for their excellent redistricting process and resulting districts map.

The Consent agenda passed without discussion. Among items approved were:

- Appropriation to cover unanticipated expenses related to COVID-19 in the amount of \$95,000 to the Peoria County Sheriff's Office.
- Transfer of \$45,000 to the PCAPS budget for replacement of one animal control vehicle.
- Approval of two bids to cash rent Peoria County owned farms for the next three growing seasons.
- Appropriations and expenditures associated with commercial kitchen equipment for the Juvenile Detention Center.

The regular agenda consisted of only five items and all were approved:

- Special use zoning case to subdivide a parcel in Logan Township.
- Quotations for County Highway Maintenance materials for 2022.
- Review of Executive Minutes
- Suspension of the Rules to permit extension of the Declaration of Emergency due to COVID-19 in the county.

———— Jim Runyon, Observer

## **PEORIA ELECTION COMMISSION: Dec. 14**

The Peoria County Election Commissioners held their regular monthly meeting on Dec. 14, with Mark Ketterer sitting in for Chairman Jim Manning, who was absent.

There were a few public comments covering some of the topics that were later discussed.

The Board voted to approve the ability of the Executive Director to negotiate and enter a contract, with the advice of the Peoria County State's Attorney's Office, on updates to the ePollbook system.

This would include services, license and support, warranty, and maintenance. The contract would include 130 poll books, 120 printers, and 10 years of support for the Microsoft software. Costs would be \$326,734 for the first year and \$26,700 to \$30,000 for the next nine years.

According to Director Tom Bride, it would be cheaper to do "on demand" ballots rather than print many (differing) preprinted paper ballots. The new system will also make set-up much easier. This expenditure should be approved by the County Board at its January meeting.

Director Bride presented two bids for the purchase of voting booths.

One from Elite was for \$41,697: they would have to build a sample, since they do not have any in stock that meet the Commission's specs. Elite projected 90 to 120 days until delivery, but their booths are made overseas. This could be a problem if there is any delay in delivery.

A second bid came from Election Source for \$58,618.41: It included freight. The projected delivery was 24 weeks, but everything is made in the U.S.

The Board chose the bid from Election Source, but requested any contract include possible penalties if there is late delivery.

A back-up plan for the June election is in the works.

Staff is working on creating new precincts. The State passed a law in November requiring precincts to contain approximately 1,200 voters each. This will mean a number of current precincts will be combined and others will be made smaller.

The question of whether the Commission should pay return postage for Vote by Mail was tabled until all members of the Commission are present.

—— Irene Pritzker, Observer



## **PEORIA HOUSING AUTHORITY: Dec. 6**

The Peoria Housing Authority Board of Commissioners met electronically on Dec. 6, with all Commissioners present.

Three residents graduated from the PHA Family Self Sufficiency program. This program has allowed the three women to complete educational and financial goals, as well as become home owners. This program can take up to five years for an individual to complete.

Minutes of November regular meeting and special meeting were approved. Reports were approved by consent agenda. Resolutions were approved to submit FY2022 Public Housing Budget, as well as Operating Budgets for Housing Choice Voucher Program and Mainstream Voucher Budget to Housing and Urban Development (HUD). The Board also voted to appoint additional board members to the Committee to select Chief Executive Officer. Board approved 3-year collective bargaining agreement with AFSCME membership.

The PHA Board of Commissioners meets the first Monday of each month electronically. Information available at [www.peoriahousingauthority.com](http://www.peoriahousingauthority.com)

———— Connie Romanus, Observer

### **Peoria Women's Civic Federation (PWCF)**

Did you know the LWVGP is a member of the Peoria Women's Civic Federation? This group was founded in 1905 by delegates from twenty women's clubs meeting at the Peoria Women's Club in Peoria. Currently, this coordinating organization represents members of forty-one local groups. Meetings are held monthly to inform delegates about happenings in the community and encourages and promotes projects for improving the Peoria area. Meetings are on held at 9:30 a.m. on the third Wednesday of each month at St. Paul Lutheran Church, 1427 West Lake Street. The position for LWVGP delegate is open for 2022 year. I hope you will consider participating in this group. It is rewarding, requires little time and is a great way to meet other local delegates.

Contact Connie Romanus if you are interested: 309-264-9113 or [cro-manus1249@yahoo.com](mailto:cro-manus1249@yahoo.com).





**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  
2021-2022**

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