

President's Message

## Meet the candidates

In this next-to-last message of my time as President, I want to harken back to two earlier messages.

In June 2021, I expressed profound appreciation for Connie Romanus and her service as President before me. I am even more grateful for what Connie has done as Vice President over the past 22+ months. She has carried a very substantial part of the leadership load by filling gaps and keeping things moving. I have leaned on her too much. When you can, please let her know that you are grateful for all of the contributions she makes to the LWVGP.

Second, last December I listed a number of unfilled committee assignments and asked members to consider volunteering. That met with limited success. As Connie is slated to again take on the Presidency, I want to reinforce that request. An organization can't be effective without an engaged membership. Now is the time when an energized membership is critically important. So, please let Connie know if you can take on a committee assignment or some other part of the leadership workload.

With the excellent attendance at our February Drinks & Dialogue event and at the recent Candidate Forums, there is good reason to believe the LWVGP will be at least as important in shaping local public policy as before COVID.

Lastly, please put our May 17 Annual Meeting on your calendar. Our by-laws require participation. And that is when we will adopt a slate of new officers and Board, a budget and a program to guide us into the coming program year.

———— Terry Kohlbus, LWVGP president

### Important Dates:

**4 p.m. Mon., April 10:** LWVGP Executive Board via Zoom.  
**5:30-7 p.m. Wed., April 19:** Drinks & Dialogue at The Lariat Steakhouse.  
**5:30 p.m. Wed., May 17:** Annual Meeting  
**June 9-11:** LWVIL Convention, via Zoom.

\*LWVGP has budgeted funds and will register delegates. For more information, contact Terry Kohlbus at [terrykohlbus@sbcglobal.net](mailto:terrykohlbus@sbcglobal.net) or Connie Romanus at [cromanus1249@yahoo.com](mailto:cromanus1249@yahoo.com)

## **DRINKS & DIALOGUE: April 19**

Last year we had a D&D program on Illinois' Safe-T law. The program focused on the benefits of the legislation. There are, however, a variety of views on its overall effects. In the interest of fairness and balance, on April 19th we will hear from Tazewell County State's Attorney Kevin Johnson about his opposition to some of the provisions of the law.

Safe-T's future is currently in the hands of the Illinois Supreme Court. On December 31, 2022, the Supreme Court issued a temporary stay on the provision ending cash bail pending the Court's review, "in order to maintain consistent pretrial procedures throughout Illinois."

A more complete ruling is expected later this year.

The program is from 6 to 7 p.m. Wed., April 19, at the Lariat Steakhouse, 2232 W. Glen Ave. in Peoria. Social time starts at 5:30 p.m.

———— Terry Kohlbus

## **MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE**

Spring is here! (At least on some days.)

With spring comes new life and the League, like so many other programs, plants and people has a great opportunity to grow and have more life! It is you, the members who can make this happen! We currently have 139 members – 9 new since last month. Keep up the good work!

Mark your calendars for:

**April 19** – Drinks & Dialogue – Lariat Steak House – Social at 5:30 p.m. and program at 6 p.m.

**June 24** – Riverfront Market – recruitment booth from 8 a.m. until noon.

**July 19** – Annual Membership Social at Oliver's North – 3300 West Willow Knolls Drive

**Aug. 12** – Riverfront Market – recruitment booth from 8 a.m. until noon.

At the Riverfront Market there will be an opportunity for people to join and enter for a drawing to be held following the close of the market each day! What a deal! (New members only.)

The social is exactly that. However, we will be recognizing Terry Kohlbus for his term serving as President and welcoming Connie Romanus back as the President. A huge thanks to both for their dedication to the League.

Remember "Each One Bring One!" If you have any questions, contact me at [jandeissler77@gmail.com](mailto:jandeissler77@gmail.com).

———— Jan Deissler, Membership Chair

Here is the 2023-24 budget and your slate of officers:

2021/2022 Financial Report			2019-2020	2019-20	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024
			Budget	Actual	Budget	Budget	Budget	Budget
INCOME:								
	Membership Dues		\$7,775.00	\$5,326.05	\$6,800.00	\$7,550.00	\$7,550.00	\$8,100.00
		Brought forward from last year						
	Fundraising Activities							
		Annual Dinner				\$4,400.00	\$4,400.00	\$4,400.00
		Raffle	\$2,000.00	\$1,340.51	\$1,500.00	\$1,500.00	\$1,500.00	\$1,500.00
		New from Fundraising	\$1,136.00		\$1,340.00	\$1,340.00	\$1,340.00	\$1,340.00
	Contributions/Donations		\$1,150.00		\$1,150.00	\$1,150.00	\$1,150.00	\$1,150.00
		Contributions in excess of dues		\$300.00				
	Interest		\$70.00	\$197.53	\$175.00	\$175.00	\$175.00	\$175.00
	Other	Extra Ordinary Dividend		\$150.00				
	TOTAL INCOME		\$12,131.00	\$7,314.09	\$10,965.00	\$16,115.00	\$16,115.00	\$16,665.00
EXPENSES:								
	Affiliations:							
		50% of LWVUS PMP	\$1,768.00	\$1,504.00	\$1,504.00	\$3,392.00	\$3,664.00	\$3,664.00
		75% of LWVIL PMP	\$2,689.00	\$2,292.00	\$2,560.00	\$3,445.00	\$3,680.00	\$3,680.00
		UMR	\$25.00			\$25.00	\$25.00	\$25.00
		Peoria Women's Civic Federation					\$15.00	\$15.00
		Total Affiliations Expenses	\$4,482.00	\$3,796.00	\$4,064.00	\$6,862.00	\$7,384.00	\$7,384.00
	Board & Administration							
		Fundraising Expense	\$2,000.00		\$500.00	\$500.00	\$500.00	\$500.00
		Supplies	\$100.00	\$75.52	\$100.00	\$100.00	\$100.00	\$100.00
		Postage	\$100.00	\$18.00	\$100.00	\$100.00	\$100.00	\$100.00
		P.O. Box				\$350.00	\$350.00	\$350.00
		Storage					\$600.00	\$600.00
		Printing	\$120.00	\$310.00	\$350.00	\$873.00	\$873.00	\$873.00
		Website	\$900.00	\$768.60	\$645.00	\$115.00	\$115.00	\$800.00
		Zoom expense					\$500.00	\$500.00
		Insurance	\$115.00	\$115.00	\$115.00	\$75.00	\$75.00	\$75.00
		Misc. & Affiliation	\$50.00	\$59.00	\$75.00	\$135.00	\$135.00	\$135.00
		FaceBook ads	\$135.00		\$135.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
		Anniversary Expense			\$400.00	\$240.00		
		Stripe expenses	\$45.00		\$100.00	\$100.00	\$100.00	\$100.00
		Total B&A expenses	\$3,565.00	\$1,346.12	\$2,520.00	\$2,588.00	\$3,448.00	\$4,133.00
	Newsletter							
		Printing	\$75.00		\$100.00	\$50.00	\$50.00	\$50.00
		Postage	\$200.00	\$254.00	\$100.00	\$50.00	\$50.00	\$50.00
		Total Newsletter Expenses	\$275.00	\$254.00	\$200.00	\$ 100.00	\$ 100.00	\$ 100.00
	Delegates & Travel							
		Conventions	\$2,000.00	\$305.08	\$2,000.00	\$2,000.00	\$2,000.00	\$2,000.00
		Observer Corps	\$26.00		\$26.00	\$26.00	\$26.00	\$26.00
		Miscellaneous Meetings	\$120.00	\$67.78	\$120.00	\$120.00	\$120.00	\$120.00
		Total D & T Expenses	\$2,146.00	\$372.86	\$2,146.00	\$ 2,146.00	\$ 2,146.00	\$ 2,146.00
	Programs and Activities							
		Programs & Activ/H2O**	\$300.00		\$300.00	\$30.00	\$30.00	\$30.00
		History Project LWVGP*	\$1,000.00	\$2,000.00	\$250.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
		Voter Service	\$300.00		\$300.00	\$300.00	\$300.00	\$300.00
		Public Relations	\$330.00		\$330.00	\$330.00	\$330.00	\$330.00
		Communication & Public Awareness						\$3,600.00
		Membership Recruiting				\$600.00	\$600.00	\$1,100.00
		Annual Dinner Expense	\$600.00		\$600.00	\$2,400.00	\$2,400.00	\$2,400.00
		Total P & A Expenses	\$2,530.00	\$2,000.00	\$1,780.00	\$3,660.00	\$3,660.00	\$7,760.00
	TOTAL EXPENSES		\$12,998.00	\$7,768.98	\$10,710.00	\$15,356.00	\$16,738.00	\$21,523.00

## **PROPOSED SLATE OF OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS 2023-2025**

<b>Position</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Term</b>
President	Connie Romanus	2023-2025
1 <sup>st</sup> VP	Roberta Parks	2023-2025
2 <sup>nd</sup> VP	Jim Runyon	2023-2024
Treasurer	Sean Koors	2023-2025
Secretary	Jim Runyon	2022-2024
Director	Andy Diaz	2022-2024
Director	Hind Abi-akar	2022-2024
Director	Kim Armstrong	2022-2024
Director	Dottie Strickler	2022-2024
Director	Beth Jensen	2023-2025
Director	Brooke Sommerville	2023-2025
Director	Christopher Kaergard	2023-2025
Director	Eileen Steed	2023-2025
Past President	Terry Kohlbus	2023-2024

**2023-2024 Directors to be appointed at June Board Meeting**

Jan Deissler

Joan Wojcikewych

## **VOTER SERVICES**

Here's a recap of our February and March 2023 Candidate Forums, which were a smashing success. Thanks to all who participated and all who attended. Remember, if you were unable to be there in person, you can still view most of the proceedings on the LWVGP Facebook page.

### **Peoria Park District Central District, Feb. 28, First Baptist Church in Peoria**

Four candidates participated, vying for three seats.

In-person, 20; live-stream viewers, 118, average duration 5:58 minutes.

### **Peoria City Council At Large, March 7, Peoria North Branch Library**

Ten candidates participated, vying for five seats.

We live-streamed the opening remarks, statements and two questions. Candidates then rotated between the 10 tables and audience members asked them questions. No closing remarks.

In-person, 65; live-stream viewers, 53, average duration 4:42 minutes.

### **Pekin City Council At Large, March 9, Pekin Public Library**

Eight candidates participated, vying for three seats.

Standing room only! In person 120; live-stream, 647, average duration 10:59 minutes.

### **Pekin Mayoral, March 9, Pekin Public Library**

Three candidates vying for the top job.

Standing room only! In-person, 120; Live Stream viewers, 552, average duration 17:58 minutes.

### **Illinois Central College Trustees, March 11, Peoria North Branch Library**

Four candidates participated, vying for three seats.

In-person, 12; live-stream viewers, 146, average duration 3:25 minutes.

### **Peoria Heights Trustees, March 15, Peoria Heights Public Library**

Two of four candidates attended, vying for three seats. In-person, 15; live-stream, 3, average duration 33:25 minutes.

**District 150 School Board Forum was cancelled due to non responsiveness on behalf of the candidates.**

Two additional requests for forums were turned down due to the unavailability of Voter Servers support teams to coordinate the events.

———— Rob Parks and Eileen Steed, Voter Services Co-chairs

## CLIMATE CHANGE COMMITTEE

When the topic of conversation turns to the legislative process, eyes tend to glaze over. But having appropriate laws and regulations is an important component of addressing climate change, sustainability, and economic justice. So, at the risk of inducing glazed looks in readers' eyes, here's an update on what's happening ... and information on how you can help.

First, what's been passed: Commercial wind energy facilities and commercial solar energy facilities are now regulated by an amendment to the Illinois "Counties Code." The Act regulates distances from occupied buildings and other property for commercial wind energy and solar energy facilities.

And, what's being debated in Springfield:

- o Along with more than 45 other climate advocates, the state LWV is opposed to pending HB1616, which relates to using chemical and physical means to turn plastic into other compounds, often resulting in turning plastic into fuel that is burned.

- o Senate Bill 100 and House Bills 2376 and 3865 would significantly diminish the use of single-use disposable polystyrene containers for carry-out foods.

- o House Bill 3119, "The Carbon Dioxide Transport and Storage Protections Act," deserves everyone's attention and comment. Carbon capture, utilization and storage ("CCUS") removes carbon dioxide created by burning fossil fuels. Typically, the process also involves using high pressure to turn the CO<sub>2</sub> gas into a liquid, and then transporting the CO<sub>2</sub> liquid by pipeline to be stored underground elsewhere, typically hundreds of miles away. While a reduction in atmospheric CO<sub>2</sub> is a positive, the CCUS process itself is largely unproven, additional fossil fuel is used in the process, and the transport of the liquified CO<sub>2</sub> underground for hundreds of miles can have significant negative impacts.

Last month, two helpful articles about CO<sub>2</sub> pipelines appeared in the New York Times: google Eden Weingart's "How Does Carbon Capture Work?" was published on March 19, and/or Mitch Smith's "A Different Kind of Pipeline Project Scrambles Midwest Politics" for more information.

Additionally, the state League has background information on CO<sub>2</sub> pipelines, and reasons to oppose them at: <https://www.lwvil.org/issues-briefing-2023-1/june-sekera-9fsj7>

Currently, there are significant regulatory gaps concerning "CCUS" and how this technology would impact property owners, groundwater resources, and climate goals. House Bill 3119, would establish safeguards to fill these regulatory gaps. It would eliminate a pipeline developer's eminent domain powers, and require a developer to: identify life-cycle impact; show that it is net-carbon negative; evaluate less-harmful alternatives; hold the developer liable for CO<sub>2</sub> migration under a non-consenting landowners property; and require the developer – not the State of Illi-

nois and all of us as taxpayers - to be responsible for long-term post closure monitoring and care. Importantly, the law would shield the state and its citizens from financial loss and liability risks.

In addition, HB 3119 would also establish meaningful setbacks from CO2 pipelines, provide funding for emergency response training and equipment, and require a developer to hold public information meetings before filing for approval with the Illinois Commerce Commission (ICC), so that the public would be informed about the process and attendant risks.

Why is such legislation important to readers of The Voter? There are two proposed CO2 pipelines that would impact thousands of residents in central Illinois. One of them, the Navigator Heartland Greenway CO2 Ventures' project, is nearly 1,400 miles long, including over 300 miles through 14 Illinois counties. The second, the Wolf Carbon Solutions/ADM "Mt. Simon Hub" project, would be about 280 miles long, and transport CO2 from Cedar Rapids, Iowa, through portions of ten Illinois counties, including Peoria.

Townpeople and farmers from various central Illinois counties have been organizing in opposition to these CO2 pipelines. As a result, McDonough, Sangamon, Hancock, and Christian Counties have each voted to intervene before the ICC in Navigator's petition to construct its pipeline, which was filed in February. Five counties have adopted moratoriums on pipeline construction. Citizen groups are continuing to appear before county and township boards, so there may be additional counties who sign on to intervene before the ICC. In Peoria County, Tracy Fox appeared at the County Board meeting on Feb. 9, and provided County Board members with information about CO2 pipelines. (You can see her remarks at [https://www.peoriacounty.gov/AgendaCenter/ViewFile/Agenda/\\_02092023-1367](https://www.peoriacounty.gov/AgendaCenter/ViewFile/Agenda/_02092023-1367).)

And what's up next: Here's the important part, and reason for the lengthy discussion: Decisions about whether CO2 pipelines will crisscross Illinois will depend on decisions that our elected officials make. And those decisions are often influenced by what they hear from their constituents – that's you and me! The county board actions described above happened because citizens mobilized and organized. Each of these proposed laws can directly impact our families and communities. Contact your elected officials, and tell them that you oppose any effort that would contribute to climate change, reduce efforts at sustainability, pose a safety hazard, and interfere with clean air and safe water.

"We don't have to engage in grand, heroic actions to participate in the process of change. Small acts, when multiplied by millions of people, can transform the world." (Howard Zinn)

Thanks to each of you who have taken Howard Zinn's words to heart for your efforts to create a better world for all of us.

—— John T. Brady, Climate Change Committee Chair



## **PEORIA COUNTY BOARD: March 9**

Peoria County Board met March 9 with all members present.

Regular business focused on approval of solar project developments and power purchase agreements between Peoria County and Hawk-Attollo, LLC.

If proposed federal and state tax credit applications are approved, Hawk-Attollo would build, operate and maintain solar arrays at the County Highway Department site and the Juvenile Detention Center. The county would buy electrical power back at a greatly reduced rate, and have options to purchase the arrays at specified times if desired.

The tax credits are specific to projects located within designated environmental justice communities, which is true of the juvenile center and highway department. These projects are aligned with the county's efforts to reduce its carbon footprint. Future projects are also envisioned for the jail and the yet-to-be constructed health and human service campus roof.

Proclamations were read recognizing the 125th anniversary of Bradley University and recognizing March 12-18 as Multiple Sclerosis Awareness Week.

There were three citizen' remarks — all critical of an exclusion within the county employee health plan that excludes gender-affirming care from coverage within the plan. All urged the board to learn more about gender-affirming care and to remove this exclusion in future health plans.

Among items approved/accepted from the Consent Agenda:

- o A grant agreement with the Illinois Department of Human Services to improve residential lighting on Glen Ave between Sheridan and Knoxville
- o The 2023 Landfill budget
- o Road and bridge projects on Pulsifer and Old Galena roads
- o Sealcoating and tilling work on roads within a number of rural townships, 60 new radios for the Highway Department and
- o An extension of the pavement management program between Bradley University and the county.

You can link to the agenda and video here: [Agenda & Video](#)

———— Jim Runyon, Observer

## **PEORIA CITY COUNCIL: Feb. 28**

Council met for a marathon session of over four hours. Some of highlights:

- o Public Hearing regarding annexation of land parcel in Medina Township with several citizens expressing concerns. Later in meeting, this item was approved by councilors. It will allow property owner to access sewer services to subdivide land for four residential properties.



o Fire Chief Shawn Sollberger and City Manager Patrick Ulrich presented overview of program establishing process to work with insurance companies to collect fire recovery fees for services provided by Peoria Fire Department. This will apply to non-residents of the city of Peoria. Any funds recovered will go to the city's general funds.

o Voted to direct city staff to draft ordinance to issue \$20 million bond to fund remaining capital expenses needed for Civic Center operations, including new ice plant. City Manager Ulrich explained debt service plan to include interest payments through 2028. A portion of Hotel-Restaurant-Amusement (HRA) taxes will be used.

o Community Development Director Joseph Dulin presented a thorough report on city efforts related to housing quality and affordable housing. Councilors commended Director Dulin on the scope and innovative methods city is implementing for quality and affordable housing, including development of Land Bank with Peoria County.

o Approved real estate transfer for 3917 S.W. Adams and inter-government agreement between City of Peoria, Pleasure Driveway, and Peoria Park District to establish a Freedom and Remembrance memorial to recognize over 2,600 citizens buried in area near Griswold and Adams streets, including Revolutionary and Civil War soldiers, the first black person freed by attorney Abraham Lincoln, Nance Legins-Costley, and members of the Moffit family to name a few. Historical signage and markers will be installed.

For more information, check [www.peoriagov.org](http://www.peoriagov.org)

—— Connie Romanus, Observer

### **PEORIA CITY COUNCIL: March 14**

Consent agenda approved with minimal discussion. Council heard presentation from Greg Craus, federal program officer of National Telecommunication and Information Administration (NTIA). He discussed \$65 million federal funding for underserved communities. Digital Equity Act prioritizes underserved areas in communities, determines access needs, as well as digital skill use and literacy. Illinois Office of Broadband representative, Alicia Ross, will work with city to identify local needs and funding level by June 30.

Council voted 7-4 to deny approval of special use zoning for single family residential district for solar utility facility at 3901 Reservoir Blvd. This initiative is a partnership with St. Paul's Episcopal Church and Hawk-Attollo, a solar utilities developer. Privilege of the floor was given to several residents of condo opposed to planned solar facility and those in favor of the project. City staff had recommended

approval. Residents voiced concerns regarding current infrastructure of Ameren and frequency of power outages.

Council unanimously approved ordinance to issue general obligation bonds, not to exceed \$20.5 million to finance certain capital improvements of the Civic Center. Finance Director Kyle Cratty clarified bond would not affect current debt obligation of the city due to structure of debt. Eligible projects are items with 20 year useful life, such as roofing, mechanicals, and ice plant.

Council deferred discussion on operating cannabis business and licensing and regulating cannabis businesses. Meeting scheduled for March 21. Video of this meeting is available on city website: [www.peoriagov.org](http://www.peoriagov.org)

Peoria City Council meets at 6 p.m. on second and fourth Tuesdays.

———— Connie Romanus, Observer

### **ELECTION COMMISSION: February 14**

Peoria County Board of Election Commissioners met March 14, with Commissioners Jeanne Williamson and Valerie Timmes absent.

During Public Comments, questions were raised about proof of address for college students and possible problems arising from the use of a stylus for signature identification.

The only unusual expenditure was the purchase of several printers for use on election day. Several broke after the November election when they fell in the truck returning them to the Election Commission.

The general election is moving along smoothly. Judge training is almost completed. There have already been over 200 early voters, which matches the 2019 election, and over 3,000 mail in ballots have already been received.

Peoria County is looking into purchasing the building that houses the Election Commission.

———— Irene Pritzker, Observer

### **LWVIL 61st Biennium Convention**

The state League Convention scheduled for June 9-11 will be virtual. It includes important League business like amending our bylaws, approving our budget, voting on updated positions, determining program priorities, and electing the new officers and directors. LWVGP has budgeted funds and will be registering delegates to attend.

If you are interested, contact Terry Kohlbus at [terrykohlbus@sbcbglobal.net](mailto:terrykohlbus@sbcbglobal.net) or Connie Romanus at [romanusacromanus1249@yahoo.com](mailto:romanusacromanus1249@yahoo.com)



**League of Women Voters  
of Greater Peoria**

P.O. Box 9786, Peoria, IL 61612-9786

**League of Women Voters of Greater Peoria Board of Directors  
2021-2022**

Terry Kolbuss, President  
[president@lwgo.org](mailto:president@lwgo.org)

Connie Romanus, 1st V-P  
Sean Koors, Treasurer  
Jim Runyan, Secretary

Hind Abi-akar Kim Armstrong Terry Bibo Knight John Brady Jan Deissler Andy Diaz Kathleen Kelly Cathy Molchin Roberta Parks  
Kathie Raiborn Sokonie Reed Couri Thomas

**Newsletter**

Terry Bibo Knight  
[terry.bibo.freelance@gmail.com](mailto:terry.bibo.freelance@gmail.com)