



Volume 76 Issue 5

May 2023

President's Message

A look back at the last two years

When I became President, I announced several goals. I wanted the LWVGP to be more visible, more engaged and more effective in shaping local public policy.

The decline of local media, coupled with my belief that our region is facing increasing challenges, were and are the factors driving those goals. The persistence of COVID distancing strategies made accountability in local government more difficult. There was a growing vacuum the LWVGP is uniquely suited to fill.

Candor compels me to confess I have not been as successful as I wanted. When our Board of Directors authorized a new Communications Committee, I naively hoped that committee would generate more content about LWVGP activities and get that content out to more people. Instead, the Committee quickly found our channels of communication were sorely in need of updating. With Katie Kelly leading determined committee members, considerable progress was made.

However, as longstanding members stepped away, we also found a need for help with the technical aspects. That need was filled just recently. We are now set to communicate more to more people with greater impact on local public affairs.

Looking back, I wish I had been more energetic in getting us here, but the need for LWVGP to step up is still there. At our Annual Meeting on May 17, the members will elect new leaders. They will need and deserve our support in whatever new goals they set.

Finally, I want to convey my sincere thanks for the opportunity to work with some truly remarkable members of the LWVGP over the past two years.

——— Terry Kohlbus, LWVGP president

Important Dates:

4 p.m. Mon., May 8: LWVGP Executive Board via Zoom.

5:30 p.m. Wed., May 17: Annual Meeting@Lariat Steakhouse, 2232 W. Glen. (No Drinks & Dialogue.)

June 9-11: LWVIL Convention, via Zoom.

MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE

What an exciting time to be a member of the League of Women Voters! The candidate forums were well attended and candidates appreciated the opportunity to be heard by the voters. Membership is 145 and we're hoping to get to 150, so bring your friends and relatives – only two months to go.

The Membership Committee met April 26 to prepare the mailing for the Summer Social and to prepare the mailing for Summer Events. A huge thank you to the eight members who labored for about two hours. So far, these are events for which you should mark your calendar:

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

July 19 – Annual Membership Social at Oliver's North, 3300 W. Willow Knolls Drive

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

A door prize will be awarded to new members joining at the Farmers' Market.

———— Jan Deissler, Membership Chair

VOTER SERVICES

Perhaps the Voter Services Committee's favorite function is registering new voters on the day they become citizens. More than 200 people from 60 different countries became citizens during a ceremony conducted by U.S. District Judge James Shadid at Bradley University on April 14. League members were able to register 70 of these newly-minted Americans. Information on how and where to get registered was provided to others who didn't have the necessary paperwork to complete their registration.



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

LWVGP Annual Meeting is May 17

Mark your calendars! Come to The Lariat! We value your input and need your support. Please review the budget & slate of officers.

Topics for 2023-24 Programs

A. Local Programs

1. Summer Social
2. Drinks and Dialogue
3. Annual Dinner
4. Member Program Planning Meeting
5. Annual Meeting of LWVGP Members

B. Areas of Focus

1. Climate Change Policies of Local Governments
2. Investor-Owned Water Public Systems
3. Transparency in Local Government- Expanding LOGO
4. Candidate Forums
5. Voter Registration
6. External and Internal LWVGP Communications

C. Study Issues (To Be Determined)

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	\$600.00
		Printing		\$120.00	\$310.00	\$350.00	\$873.00	\$873.00	\$873.00
		Website		\$900.00	\$768.60	\$645.00	\$113.00	\$115.00	\$800.00
		Zoom expense					\$500.00	\$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	\$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 & Activi/h20**		\$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
							2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024
							\$16,115.00	\$16,115.00	\$16,665.00
							\$ 15,356.00	\$16,738.00	\$21,523.00

PROPOSED SLATE OF OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS 2023-2025

Position	Name	Term
President	Connie Romanus	2023-2025
1 st VP	Roberta Parks	2023-2025
2 nd 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 Kohlbuss	2023-2024

2023-2024 Directors to be appointed at June Board Meeting

Jan Deissler

Joan Wojcikewych

CLIMATE CHANGE COMMITTEE

Earth Day Activities. The gazillion small white objects floating wind-blown in all directions at Forest Park Nature Center on the morning of Earth Day, April 22, could have been fragments from the flowering shrubs that dot the Nature Center's landscape.

They could have been such welcome petals -- but unfortunately they were not. Instead, they were pellets of ice and frozen rain that periodically swept across the booths set up for Earth Day, including the booth created and staffed by members of the LWVGP Climate Change Committee. The theme of the LWVGP booth was "Solar Power Plays in Peoria," and it contained pictures of solar arrays that provide electricity to homes and businesses large and small. Visitors were also encouraged to take a quiz about solar power, with the answer sheets serving as entry forms for a random drawing for two Peoria Park District \$20 gift certificates. Visi-

tors large and small also had a chance to see some toys that were propelled by energy generated by the sun's rays.

Adverse weather conditions required the hearty and committed LWVGP volunteers to close up shop earlier than planned, but not before many of those attending Earth Day had a chance to view the exhibit, to learn more about solar power, and to enter their answers to the quiz in the drawing.



Our photo shows the booth set-up team of John Fendrich, Ruth Urbanc, and Jim Runyon.

They were among several very brave – and frigid – LWVGP volunteers who participated in the event. Thanks to all who staffed the booth and to those who visited and learned more about solar energy.

Pending Legislation. There are many, many items of proposed legislation currently pending before our representatives in Springfield. There were almost 20 different bills with an environmental impact that were before different House and Senate committees the week of April 24 alone. They covered such diverse topics as pesticide use in schools and micro-plastics.

LWV members from the local league and from around the state participated remotely in a hearing held in Springfield on April 24, on Illinois HB 3119. This

proposed new law would create the “Carbon Dioxide Transport and Storage Protections Act.”

Currently, there are significant regulatory gaps concerning carbon dioxide transportation and storage. 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 CO2 migration under a non-consenting landowners property; and require the developer — not the State of Illinois 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.

There are two proposed CO2 pipelines that would impact thousands of residents in central Illinois, so this proposed legislation could have significant importance to those of us living in central Illinois.

LWV members have also been active in promoting passage of SB100/HB2376 by the Illinois legislature. These bills seek to eliminate the use of polystyrene (foam) containers from the restaurant industry. There are different expectations for large franchise businesses from smaller, low-income businesses. Generally, retail establishments would not be able to use a disposable food service container that is composed in whole or in part of polystyrene foam. Polystyrene is likely a carcinogen, its use creates health risks in its production, use, and disposal. Eight states currently ban the use of these foam containers.

Action to curtail use of polystyrene containers is consistent with the LWV’s position on environmental issues, which, in part, provides that: “... consumption of nonrenewable resources should be minimized. Management of land as a finite resource not as a commodity, since land ownership, whether public or private, carries responsibility for stewardship.

—— John T. Brady, Climate Change Committee Chair

PEORIA COUNTY BOARD: April 13

Peoria County Board met April 13 regular meeting with all members present except for Chairman James Dillon and Member Brian Elsasser. Vice Chair Sharon Williams led the meeting.

Regular business included approval of revisions to the county’s zoning code related to solar and wind facilities. A recently enacted state law requires that all counties bring their codes into alignment with the state code. Two zoning cases in Jubilee Township were also approved. The final three items addressed PCAPS:

- o Termination of a labor agreement with the Laborers' International Union of North America.
- o Acceptance of a \$25,000 grant from the Humane Society for a spay/neuter unit.
- o Acceptance of a lowest bid for purchase of a mobile veterinary spay/neuter unit.

Proclamations were read recognizing the 50th Anniversary of Northwoods Mall, the 100th anniversary of the George Washington Carver Community Center, and the 125th anniversary of the Peoria Symphony Orchestra. April was recognized as National County Government Month, and two weeks in May were recognized for Correctional Officers and for Police. The Peoria County Farm Bureau recognized the county board with its "Allies in Agriculture" award. The Gift of Hope award recognized the Coroner's staff for their efforts to secure organ and tissue donations.

There was one citizen's remark by Joyce Blumenshine on behalf of the Sierra Club recognizing the county's intent to intervene in a proposed CO2 pipeline, and encouraging the board to consider a county-wide moratorium on CO2 pipelines.

Among items unanimously approved on the Consent Agenda:

- o A jurisdictional transfer of Glen Avenue between Sheridan Road and Illinois Route 40 (Knoxville Avenue) from the county to the City of Peoria.
- o An improvement project on the Hanna City-Glasford Road between Smithville and Lancaster Roads.
- o An amendment to the county code permitting trap/neuter/vaccinate/return (TNVR) within the county.
- o Grants from Walmart (\$250) and Best Friends Animal Society (\$50,000) to PCAPS for the spay/neuter mobile vehicle mentioned previously and for related supplies.

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

———— Jim Runyon, Observer

PEORIA COUNTY BOARD SPECIAL: April 19

The Peoria County Board held a special meeting on April 19 to amend its budget. All members were present.

A Health Committee meeting immediately preceded the full board meeting since the budget amendment was related to the construction of a new Health and Human Services Campus. County Administrator Scott Sorrell and Public Health Administrator Monica Hendrickson led the board through a slide presentation re-

viewing the steps leading to the decision to build a new health and human service building at the current location on Sheridan Ave, and the need for a budget amendment to cover the higher than originally anticipated costs. [A link to the full presentation](#) can be found here.

The anticipated full cost of the new building with all equipment and furnishings is \$22,389,416. More than \$14 million is provided through federal American Rescue Plan (ARPA) funds with the remainder provided primarily through Health Department funds and the General Funds. A budget amendment was necessary due to increased costs associated with inflation. The resolution asked for an additional \$7.8 million above the previously budgeted amount. There will be no need for the county to buy bonds to cover the construction costs.

The budget amendment passed in the 13 member Health Committee on a vote of 11-2 with members Rieker and Elsasser casting “no” votes. With committee approval the amendment then went to the full board where a two-thirds vote — 12 “yes” votes — were necessary for passage. Following board discussion and comments by Coroner Jamie Harwood and Regional Superintendent Beth Crider, the full board approved the budget amendment on a vote of 15-3 with Members Steven Rieker, Brian Elsasser and Paul Rosenbohm casting “no” votes. The board thanked Member Terry Ruhland for acting as the board’s representative throughout the design phase, and he indicated he would remain in that role during the demolition and construction phases.

———— Jim Runyon, Observer

PEORIA CITY COUNCIL: March 28

Council members approved consent agenda, after removing two items for discussion. A Professional Services Agreement with Roadway Asset Services in the amount of \$109,778 for pavement condition index update 2023 was deferred to April 11 to allow time for additional information to be presented.

Councilors approved an intergovernmental agreement between the city and Greater Peoria Sanitary District in support of Pringle technologies for Haven on Farm Development with two abstentions (At-large members Sid Ruckriegel and Kiran Velpula) for conflict of interest.

Members of the Greater Peoria Leadership Council gave a presentation on talent attraction strategy. Doug Oberhelman, Misty Dykema and Laura Cullinan spoke on mission and history of Gilmore Foundation, identifying community part-

ners and focus on recruitment and retention of talent. A website is being developed to communicate information and identify resources.

The 2022 annual report on Joint Commission on Racial Justice was presented by Chairman Tim Bertschy and Co-Chair Mary Peterson. They identified need to accelerate efforts for racial justice and equity and cited data collected by members of commission in areas of economic development and jobs, quality of life issues and impact on the community, as well as environmental justice in 61602, 61603, and 61605 zip codes. Plan for 2023 is to create historical record key indicators, Racial Equity Impact Assessment tool (REIA), collaborate with community partners, develop data driven strategic plan. A website is being developed to post information.

Director of Community Development Joe Dulen and Peoria Park District Executive Director Emily Cahill gave a presentation on use of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Funds for rehabilitation of Logan Park and Morton Square Park to provide more accessible playground area, basketball hoops, as well as access to free activities for qualified families for summer fun passes to Zoo, Children's Museum, and Aquatic Center. Focus is improving quality of life in these neighborhoods. Council approved \$875,000 in CBGB funds for these two projects.

Public Works Director Rick Powers requested approval of a professional services agreement with Cloudpoint Geospatial, Inc. for assessment management system to provide a holistic approach to planning infrastructure priorities over three-year period. Presentation made by Jonathon Hodel, representative of Cloudpoint Geospatial. Council approved funding in amount of \$78,000 for 2023, \$134,000 for 2024 and \$13,000 for 2025.

Council approved temporary amendments to reduce fees and allow additional locations for mobile food vehicles and street and sidewalk vendors. Vote was 8-3, with Councilors Denis Cyr, Zach Oyler and Ruckriegel against.

In new business, Councilor Beth Jensen asked city staff to prepare resolution with opposition, as well as moratorium on proposed CO2 pipeline near southside of city. Councilor Denise Jackson expressed her concerns on this issue, as well, and asked for due diligence before any decisions made.

The Peoria City Council meets at 6 p.m. on second and fourth Tuesdays at City Hall. Meeting can also be viewed on Channel 22 cable access and video available online at city website.

For more information, check www.peoriagov.org

——— Connie Romanus, Observer

PEORIA CITY COUNCIL: April 11

Meeting opened with public hearing to approve 2023-2024 budget for the Town of the City of Peoria, as well as appropriation ordinance for 2023-2024. Township has reserves to cover 15 months' expenses, slightly more than \$3,000,000. Township provides General Assistance to 60 people and Emergency Services to 150-175 households. A resolution was passed to make donations to Friendship House, Tri-County Urban League, Center for Prevention of Abuse and Heartland Clinic for specified services. A change in outside independent auditors was due to favorable bid by Clifton, Larson, Allen, LLP. The 2024 Annual Meeting of Town of City of Peoria was set for April 19.

Other highlights of agenda:

- o Presentation on ShotSpotter program was made by representatives of the company, which has recently rebranded as Sound Thinking. Updates include sending data to communication center, officers, identifying schools and neighborhoods at risk, and gain insight to help develop strategies to reduce gun violence. Consideration for one year contract to be discussed at next council meeting. Note: during citizen's opportunity to comment, resident of East Bluff spoke in opposition of this program and its effectiveness.

- o Adopted ordinance on cannabis business to limit dispensaries to six, with three being social equity licenses, prohibit onsite consumption and reduce wait time for application to one year. Social equity applicants need to provide annual proof of status, may not be located closer than 1,500 ft. from another dispensary, and limits on transfer of license.

- o Presentation on proposed carbon dioxide pipeline by City Corporation Counsel Hayes. Detailed report on Item 23-128 available on Agenda link. Mayor Rita Ali, City Manager Patrick Urich, and Councilors Jackson and Oyler met recently with Biourja to discuss CO2 pipeline. Corporation Council Patrick Hayes' presentation included Mount Simon pipeline hub north of Decatur, existing pipelines in Peoria County, pipeline safety and risks of concentrated CO2. Council asked for additional information.

- o Updated University-War Memorial Drive TIF

- o Approved agreement with Berry Dunn McNeil and Parker, LLC for development of strategic plan not to exceed \$74,900 plus reimbursable expenses.

————— Connie Romanus, Observer

ELECTION COMMISSION: April 11

Peoria County Board of Election Commissioners met for their regular monthly meeting on April 11. During public comments, several citizens noted problems with the use of a stylus during the April 4 election. Most of the speakers were either election judges or poll watchers. They had trouble with verification of signatures and preferred the use of pen and paper. The commission will be getting feedback from the judges in a presentation at a later date.

There was an approximately 16% turnout for that election. There were more ballots mailed than cast in person. About 8,200 people voted on election day, and 2,800 voted early. Certification was set for April 19, and Martha Ross is expected to win the District 1 School Board election in Peoria.

—— Irene Pritzker, Observer

LWVIL 61st Biennium Convention

The League of Women Voters of Illinois' Biennium Convention scheduled for June 9-11, 2023 will be virtual. The convention is our member meeting where we conduct important League business like amending our bylaws, approving our budget, voting on updated positions, determining LWVIL program priorities, and electing the new officers and directors. Convention materials will be posted to lwvil.org website.

Individual members of local leagues can sign up to attend on-line once information is available. Fee is \$5.00 for observing convention; deadline to register as observer is June 1 at lwvil.org.

LWVGP has budgeted some funds for convention and will be registering six delegates to attend this event; delegates vote on business items.

If you are interested, contact Terry Kohlbuss at terrykohlbuss@sbcglobal.net or Connie Romanus at 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**

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

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