

President's Message

Opportunity Abounds in Coming Year

“Democracy is not a spectator sport.” This statement is attributed to George P. Shultz and exemplifies what the League of Women Voters is about. The upcoming year promises to be one of opportunity for our local League members to be engaged with educating voters, registering voters at community events, and participating in candidate forums. The spring 2024 primary will be here before we know it!

If you are not a voter registrar, consider taking training at your county election commission. Another way to be involved is being an election judge or poll watcher. The tri-county area needs additional election judges and will be recruiting individuals for the 2024 election season.

Another way to be involved is to be an observer at local governmental meetings to promote transparency and inform the public on issues at the local level. As local newspapers have reduced staff, many governmental meetings are not covered. Local Observer Government Corps (LOGO) is a means to objectively report meetings of governmental bodies and share in our newsletter, as well as the Community Word. (Training provided.)

I will be highlighting some of the ways you can get involved over the next few months and help the League make a difference. I look forward to visiting with you at the Membership Social in July! It is a good time to meet new Board members and enjoy a pleasant evening with food and beverages!

————— Connie Romanus, LWVGP president

Important Dates:

4 p.m. Mon., June 12: LWVGP Executive Board via Zoom.

11 a.m. Fri., June 16: Naturalization Ceremony at Peoria Downtown Library

5:30 p.m. Wed., June 21: Drinks & Dialogue: Beth Crider, Superintendent of Peoria Regional Office of Education at Lariat Steakhouse

7 a.m. – noon, Sat., June 24: Register voters and sign up new members at Riverfront Farmers Market

5:30 p.m., Wed., July 19: Membership Social at Oliver's on Willow Knolls

UPCOMING EVENTS: DRINKS & DIALOGUE

Drinks & Dialogue is back after a hiatus in May for our Annual Meeting. Elizabeth Crider, the Superintendent of the Peoria County Regional Office of Education will be our guest speaker. Supt. Crider will enlighten us about the work of the Regional Office and the role of the Regional Board of School Trustees. The latter issue may be of particular interest because according to the Peoria Election Commission there were no candidates for several open seats. Perhaps the LWVGP can be of some assistance to fill those openings.

The program is from 6 to 7 p.m. Wed., June 21, at the Lariat Steakhouse, 2232 W. Glen Ave. in Peoria. Social time starts at 5:30 p.m.

MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE

What an exciting time to be a member of the League of Women Voters! Membership is 145 and we're hoping to get to 150. We had a great turnout at the recent Annual Meeting on May 19 and look forward to the annual Summer Social in July!

The Membership Committee has prepared the mailing for the Summer Social; you should be receiving an invitation soon. This is a good time to meet new members, catch up with long time members, and renew your dues for the 2023-2024 year.

Be sure to mark your calendar for these area events:

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

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

August 12 – Riverfront Farmers 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

This is a bit of a down time for the Voter Services Committee. No candidate forums to arrange until early 2024. But that doesn't mean we aren't busy. Along with the Membership Committee, we will be recruiting new members and registering people to vote at the Peoria Riverfront Market on both June 24th and August 12th from 8 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. each day. Additionally, we will be registering newly naturalized citizens on June 16th and August 18th.

Now is a good time for you to get trained to be a deputy registrar and/or an election judge. All election authorities in the area need people for both jobs. Contact the Peoria Election Commission if you live in Peoria County or the County Clerk's office if you live in Tazewell or Woodford Counties. If you become a deputy registrar, let us know and we can add you to our list of possible volunteers as registration events present themselves.

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

PEORIA COUNTY BOARD: May 11

The Peoria County Board held its May 11th regular meeting with all present except for Members Rieker and Bryant.

Regular business included approving zoning cases in Radnor and Rosefield townships, amending the Peoria Rural Enterprise Zone ordinance and agreement to cover a proposed Beck gas station on Kickapoo Edwards Road and a design variance for the same entity, and approving grants related to PCAPS and the Juvenile Redeploy program. The county board also approved a construction variance for the City of Peoria as it converts a number of downtown one-way streets to two-way streets.

Four proclamations were read recognizing the 50th anniversary of the Peoria Genealogical Society, the contributions of the Peoria Motorcycle Club over its 90 year history, the Peoria Christian Middle School 2023 Girls IESA Class 2A Volleyball State Championship, and the Limestone student body for its forty-seven years of fundraising for Easterseals resulting in more than \$1.3 million.

There were four citizens' remarks with two focused on encouraging a county-wide moratorium on CO₂ pipelines and promoting educational sessions focused on legislation pending before the Illinois General Assembly to limit CO₂ pipelines' ability to use eminent domain. Another focused on protests to the visit of Florida Governor DeSantis to Peoria, and one related to an ongoing personal dispute with States Attorney Hoos.

Among items unanimously approved on the Consent Agenda:

- Commitment of local funds to match any federal funds for construction of sidewalks and multi-use paths on Maxwell and Middle Roads.
- A three-year investment by the County in the Minority Business Development Center at \$50,000 per year.
- An agreement with Tyler Technologies to address new data collection requirements within the county probation office.

Links to the meeting agenda and video are here: [Agenda](#) & [Video](#)

———— Jim Runyon, Observer

PEORIA CITY COUNCIL: April 25

Council approved request for 2023 Annual Action Plan for grant allocation of \$2.8 million to Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

Peoria Police Chief, Eric Echevarria, gave overview of presentation on ShotSpotter program. Link to presentation can be found in meeting minutes. Jacob Moushon, Network Management Analyst, discussed ability to scan shell casings to create ballistic fingerprint and link them to multiple shootings though data obtained in existing record management system. Using the National Integrated Ballistic Information Network (NIBIN), data can identify if weapons used in other shootings, leading to identification of common suspects, vehicles and other information to provide investigative leads. The Peoria Police have used ShotSpotter program since 2013. There is another program on the market, Flock Raven Safety. Chief Echavarria related Raven program technology was not as advanced as ShotSpotter. Three-year renewal of ShotSpotter contract at \$300,984.00 pr year passed

unanimously. PPD policies regarding this program are available: www.peoria.gov/884/General-Orders-Policies-and-Procedures

Other items of interest:

- Approved resolution to name parcel at 3917 S.W. Adams Street to: Freedom and Remembrance Memorial Park. This is location of former Moffitt Cemetery.
- Approved Ordinance B, Amending Appendix A related to Medical/Adult Cannabis Dispensaries, Cultivation Centers, Craft Grower. Infusers and Processors.
- Approved agreement for federal participation with Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) to request 90% HSIP Federal funding not to exceed \$1,804,551.00 regarding one-way to two-way conversion of Adams and Jefferson Streets. Also included is authorization of City's estimated minimum local agency funding match, \$9,195,449.00, subject to IDOT approval and state motor fuel tax of \$3.200,000.00 for construction expense.
- Councilors Jensen and Ruckriegel were recognized for their service on the Council, as this was last meeting before new members sworn in.

————— Connie Romanus, Observer

PEORIA CITY COUNCIL: May 9

Mayor Ali recognized the accomplishments of former Mayor Richard Carver for his many years of public service locally and nationally and offered condolences to his family and friends. Carver passed away on May 5.

Council deferred appointment of Evonne Fleming and Irene Lewis-Wimbley to the Decennial Committee on Local Government Efficiency as requested by Township Attorney Redlingshafer until the May 23 meeting.

Regular business:

- Approved funding recommendations from Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program approved by Council in January 2022. Joe Dulin, Director of Community Development, reported capital projects submitted by six non-profit organizations were recommended to be funded by the non-profit capital program.

- Adopted ordinance to purchase real estate from Downtown Development Corporation of Peoria for development of parking facilities on SW Washington St. in the amount of \$250,000.00.

Mayor Ali announced the city would hold a two-day Strategic Planning process kick off on June 1 and 2, 2023. Meetings will be held at Peoria Civic Center and are open to all citizens who would like to be involved in finding solutions to critical issues.

Note: Council met on May 2, 2023 to swear in at-large-Councilors Gordon-Young, Kelly, Oyler, Velpula and Vespa.

————— Connie Romanus, Observer



League of Women Voters
of Greater Peoria

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2023-2024**

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