

Notes from January 27, 2018 Planning Meeting  
10 a.m. until 2 p.m.  
George Fox Room  
Crosslands  
Kennett Square, PA

Jennifer Levy-Tatum opened the meeting and welcomed everyone. Jennifer stated that the goal was to review the positions and programs of League of Women Voters Chester County and those of the National League and Pennsylvania.

Everyone was referred to Membership Directory and Handbook, pages 22 to 34 which summarized and outlined the positions of each League. Everyone was encouraged to read and understand the League positions. Jennifer answered questions and explained how the Chester County League related to the national and state positions.

Jennifer gave an explanation of the Leagues process and terminology. Issues are designated as either national issues, state issues, or county issues. Our Chester County League has been involved in formulation of state issues.

Jennifer spoke about the difference between programs and positions explaining the differences.

Positions at the State League are developed at state when there is an expressed interested in an issue. A committee is developed for the topic that researches and studies the issue. This committee compiles the consensus information into a binder, (now it is online). It is sent out to all the local leagues and they are asked to hold a meeting to present them, and to give feedback to the committee. After receiving all the feedback, the committee develops a statement. At this point, it becomes a position of the League.

Programs are the action(s) taken to promote or support each position. Typically it requires LWVCC educating the public regarding the issue by holding educational forums. Also, LWVCC contacts our legislators to understand their position. This is the manner in which we address particular issues that concern us.

Jennifer reiterated that there a numerous positions and the LVWCC has limited resources. Therefore, the goal will be to focus on those issues in which a difference can be made.

Below are the summaries of the discussions:

#### LWVCC COUNTY POSITIONS

1. County Government. The LWVCC has sponsored programs inviting the public to meet our elected officials. The officials have presented their work and answered the questions of their constituents. The programs were well received and attended.

2. County Health Department. In the past the LWVCC assisted with the creation of the Chester County Health Department. Not all counties have health departments. LWVCC continues to support the work of this department.
3. County Library System. The LWVCC has a positive relationship with the Chester County Library System. We have held programs and meetings at their locations. They willingly accept our information to post.
4. Magisterial District Justices. Gretchen Cole and Pamela Gray have been attending the Chester County Prison Meetings. The LWVCC is working on the issue of requiring people in jail to deposit money in order to make a phone call or to receive other services. The goal is to eliminate this policy.
5. Constables. This was rolled into Criminal Justice.
6. Land Use. Alma Forsyth has attended many meetings with Chester County Supervisors and other officials to remind folks that though development can be good for the county, there are limits on the natural resources available in this area and planning needs to carefully consider environmentally sound practices.
7. Solid Waste. The League continues to support this position though there is no active program at present.
8. Energy. (Did not have any notes.)
9. Housing. Gretchen Cole, Valerie Thomas agreed to work on the issue of adequate housing for low and moderate housing in Chester County.
10. Juvenile Justice. There is separate house for juveniles in Chester County prison. There were questions regarding separation of adjudicated juveniles from those who were not convicted. Gretchen Cole agreed to ask the question about housing at the next Chester County Prison Meeting and to share our position.
11. Vocational Education. The LWVCC supports good quality vocational education including assisting with the understanding of the public to appreciating vocational education as an equal status with a college education.
12. Health Care. The LWVCC supports the National Position of providing access to a basic level of quality care for all U.S, residents and controlling the health care costs.
13. Public Access TV. (Did not have any notes.)
14. Criminal Justice. LWVCC sponsored and co-sponsored several educational forums this past year regarding Criminal Justice including one in November held at the Cornerstone Church in which the Secretary of Corrections for Pennsylvania, John Wetzel, spoke about Pennsylvania's status and his views on criminal justice. Secretary Wetzel was a member of a panel that included the chief Public Defender of Montgomery County. It was an excellent presentation and very well attended.

Our positions are aligned with the National and State positions. Below is a summary.

#### LWVPA STATE POSITIONS

1. Apportionment and Redistricting. The PA Supreme Court overturned the current map. The government is going to appeal. Much credit goes to Fair Districts PA and the LVW for this progress. There is much more to be accomplished in order to have effective change.

2. Election Laws. The LWVCC supports this position by conducting debates among candidates who run for office. Jennifer encouraged members to become involved in the election process. For example, Jennifer Levy-Tatum was elected as the Judge of Elections in her precinct. This role determines that the appropriate process is followed in all precinct elections.  
The state is working to update its position regarding the election process during primaries, whether to maintain closed primaries or change to some other format. Though the study has been completed, there was no conclusion. Currently the state position endorses closed primaries.
3. Initiative and Referendum. The League supports a change to the PA constitution to allow an independent non-partisan body draw lines for voting districts and supports the work of Fair Districts to end gerrymandering.

A question was asked, "How can we be more effective in getting elected officials to hear us?" The response was that it is important to get to know the elected officials by visiting them, asking appropriate questions. Members were encouraged to clearly understand the League positions so that productive conversations can occur with the elected officials. It is also crucial to be versed on the principles of government such as the constitutional requirement, checks and balances, and to learn about League activities.

4. Judiciary. The League supports a judicial system that appoints judges to the bench who have the appropriate skills. Judges should not be elected because they need to raise money for those elections and that may influence their judgements.
5. Legislature. (Did not have any notes.)
6. Municipal Government. LWVCC has sponsored education forums by local officials. Officials had the opportunity to share their issues and to listen to their constituents. The officials are pleased to participate and all the events have been well attended.
7. Criminal Justice. In addition to the forums that the LWVCC sponsored, the league will review several films with consideration of sponsoring them to the general public. The time, date and location for the review is 6:30 p.m., February 16, at Gretchen Cole's home. We will send out for pizza.
8. Land Use. In support of the state position, LWVCC is actively encouraging all citizens in PA understand that public utilities need to follow the land use rules of the local governments. These municipalities have carefully studied the land use issues in their jurisdictions and should not be undermined by large corporations. Alma Forsyth has been active in attending the Delaware River Valley Authority. Alma has also taken the issue to the county and will take it to the state to be sure they understand that the Commonwealth is the trustee and the state needs to uphold the rights of the municipalities. LWVCC encourages its members to attend meetings with the consumer groups. A memorandum has been presented.  
A question was raised about the possibility of posting the memorandum on the web. Since, LWVCC is an all-volunteer organization, it is difficult to post information. A comment was made that large corporations have a commitment to assist the public in better use of technology, and that the League should ask if any of its members work for one of the larger tech firms. If a person is identified, ask the individual to research the possibility of assistance from that firm.

9. Natural Gas Extraction from Marcellus Shale. LWVCC and the state support comprehensive lands use. As stated previously, LWVCC supports adherence to local comprehensive plans and the development of a comprehensive plan for the state.
10. Pipelines. As above.
11. Child Health and Welfare and Juvenile Justice. As outlined in LWVCC Juvenile Justice.
12. Collective Bargaining in the Public Sector. LWVCC supports this position and does not have an active program.
13. Education. LWVCC supports the position and does not have an active program.
14. Fiscal Policy. LWVCC supports the position and does not have an active program.
15. Gambling. LWVCC supports the position and does not have an active program.
16. Transportation. LWVCC supports the position and does not have an active program.

**NATIONAL POSITIONS -- LWVCC supports each of these position. Only current programs are noted.**

1. Voting Rights. LWVCC conducts numerous voter sign up events and produces several educational materials and with projects that include The Voter Newsletter, Legislative Directory, Voters Guide, Website, Facebook, and emails.
2. DC Self-Government and Full Voting Representation. National has been advocating for voting rights since 1938. 700,000 people living in D.C. have no voting representative and no senator. These citizens paid highest federal taxes per capita in the nation in 2016. 86% of population do not work for federal government. For more information or to sign petition, go online [LWVDC1920@gmail.com](mailto:LWVDC1920@gmail.com). Put Statehood in subject line.
3. Election Process.
  - a. Apportionment: LWVCC supports Fair Districts.
4. Citizen Rights
  - a. Citizen's Right to Know/Citizen Participation: LWVCC supports this position with a strong programs that education interested citizens.
  - b. Individual Liberties: LWVCC supports this position with all of its programs and attention to these important issues.
5. Congress and the Presidency.
  - a. Congress: LWVCC supports this position and works to educate the public about accountability in Congress through it voting rights programs.
  - b. The Presidency: LWVCC supports this position and works to educate the public about government through its voting rights programs.
6. Natural Resources.
  - a. Natural Resources: LWVCC supports this position, and, as outlined in the LWVCC programs is actively working to promote the management of natural resources.
  - b. Resource Management: LWVCC supports this position and as outlined in the LWVCC programs, is actively working to promote the management of natural resources.
7. Environmental Protection and Pollution Control. As stated previously in several county and state positions.
8. Public Participation. As stated previously in several county and state positions.
9. Agricultural Policy. As stated previously in several county and state positions.
10. Federal Agriculture Policies. As stated previously in several county and state positions.

11. Immigration. As stated previously. LWVCC sponsored an Immigration Forum in 2017 which was well received and attended by the public.
12. Housing Supply. As stated previously in several county and state positions. LWVCC is forming a committee to work on these issues in Chester County.

Other items:

- 1) Jessica \_\_\_\_\_ told members that her high school has internships and that there might be a possibility that the interns could be helpful in digitizing information for the LWVCC.
- 2) The movie, Backpack Full of Cash, a documentary will be shown by WCU.

Respectively submitted,

Lorraine Deisinger