



Workbook

2015 Annual Meeting League of Women Voters of the Austin Area

Tuesday, May 19, 2015, 6:00 p.m.

Trinity United Methodist Church, 4001 Speedway

This year's Annual Meeting is dedicated to Judy Clack. She has been the tie that has bound us together since June 2011, when she joined the LWVAA board as *Voter* editor AND as Organization VP, or Office Manager. In addition, she sends time-sensitive email blasts to members and the public. In these vital roles, Judy has worked tirelessly, setting remarkably high standards. An eagle-eye editor, Judy has expanded the contents and enhanced the quality of the *Voter*. She solicits material, sends deadline reminders, edits, and publishes on time.

Judy's keen organizational skills are equally evident in the League office, as our corps of some 20 volunteers will confirm. Judy trains each new volunteer and emails everyone weekly reminders of work schedules and timely office duties. Office instructional materials and notes abound, supplies are well stocked, and machines are in working order. Judy has always been on call for questions that volunteers encounter.

You've seen Judy busily involved in nearly every LWVAA event. Because she "loves to learn stuff," she has joined almost all the LWVAA study committees. She is equally committed to voter service, and has helped with voter registration and candidate forums each year. She was co-chair of volunteers for the LWVTX convention in Austin.

Judy has been a League member since 1976, when she joined the LWV Chemung County, in Elmira, NY. She immediately joined the Recycling Committee. A year later, she began a three-year stint as president. Judy says the skills she learned in the League prepared her for a career in college administration. She was also a high school math teacher for six years.

In May, Judy will move to the Pittsburgh, PA, area to be closer to her grandchildren. We extend our special thanks to Judy for her friendship, dedication, and contributions to the LWVAA. She will always be a part of our League family.

League of Women Voters of the Austin Area
ANNUAL MEETING, Tuesday, May 19, 2015, 6:00 p.m.
Trinity United Methodist Church, 4001 Speedway

AGENDA

- 6:00 Bring a covered dish or a donation of \$10.00 (dish preferred).
- 6:45 Call to order. A quorum is required.
- 6:46 Welcome and introduction of officers and directors–Carol Olewin
- 6:50 Dedication of Annual Meeting to Judy Clack
- 6:55 Recognition of lifetime members and introduction of new members–Judy Parken
- 7:05 Recognition of Office Corps–Jo Reichler
- 7:15 Appointment of the Minutes Review Committee, Parliamentarian, and Timekeeper–Jaci Collins
- 7:17 Adoption of Roberts Rules of Order for Annual Meeting
- 7:19 Approve Minutes of 2014 Annual Meeting. Copies available at the meeting.
- 7:24 Treasurer’s report–Gwen Santiago
- 7:34 President’s annual report to the membership–Carol Olewin
- 7:44 Presentation and vote on proposed addition to Position Statement on “City Government”–
Frances McIntyre
- 7:54 Presentation and adoption of the proposed local program–Mary Cullinane
- 8:05 Presentation and adoption of proposed bylaws changes–Maxine Barkan
- 8:07 Presentation and adoption of the proposed budget–Dianne Wheeler
- 8:17 Recognition of outgoing board members–Carol Olewin
- 8:27 Report of the Nominating Committee–Margit Orange
 - Nominations from the floor
 - Election of officers and directors
 - Election of two members for the Nominating Committee
- 8:37 Dream time: “I Wish the League would...” (Use cards provided to write down your dreams.)
- 8:50 Announcements
- 9:00 Adjourn

Please bring this *Annual Meeting Workbook* to the meeting.

PRESIDENTS' REPORT

Dear Fellow League Members:

Welcome to the Austin League's 2015 Annual Meeting. While we conduct essential business at this event, we also hope to capture your views about many very important topics. This is one of the League's full-membership events where you have a say in how your League operates.

We are a better organization because of members' participation and input. This year we are honoring Judy Clack, who has served as vice-president of Organization for the past four years and has been a major part of the "glue" that keeps us working together. Judy ran the LWV Austin office and led the team of Office Corps workers; served as the *Voter* editor, producing the League's monthly newsletter; answered all of the League emails; composed and sent email blasts that announced League events and functions; and performed many other tasks that kept the League organized and operating. We want to acknowledge and thank Judy for her leadership and participation by dedicating this year's *Workbook* to her.

Here's a recap of our fiscal years activities:

- The State of the City meeting was a wonderful success, as we heard from the newly elected mayor of Austin, Steve Adler. We had 112 attendees at Green Pastures Restaurant and raised \$4,995 from both the live and silent auction items to help fund our education outreach programs.
- The League's "Making Democracy Work Award" was given to the *Austin American- Statesman* for their support in printing and distributing over 120,000 copies of the *Voters Guide* during the November 2014 local elections.
- The Austin Legislative Capitol Corps got off to a start with the 85th Texas Legislature under the leadership of Cinde Weatherby. They coordinated bills and testimony in cooperation with the LWV-Texas issue chairs from across the state of Texas. The Austin League provided more than 10 people to assist in the task of delivering support, opposition, and testimony concerning bills of interest to the LWV-Texas.
- The Local Issues Committee, led by Frances McIntyre, has monitored the activities of the City of Austin, Austin ISD, and the Travis County Commissioners Court. As part of that committee, McIntyre scheduled meetings with each newly elected city council member and the mayor to introduce League members to their newly elected officials and to acquaint the council members with the LWVAA.
- The Elected Officials' Reception was held at Austin City Hall for newly elected Austin City Council members and Travis County Commissioners Court members. Over 75 people attended the reception.
- The City of Austin Ethics Review Commission presented the Austin League with a resolution thanking the League for its work on the candidate forums for the city. The League of Women Voters of the Austin Area and the City of Austin staff conducted candidate forums for the November 2014 general election attended by 78 candidates and over 1,200 members of the public. The candidates' forums were recorded by the City of Austin and made available on their television programming, as well as their website.
- An Honorary Partners award was presented to the LWVAA by Travis County Voter Registrar Bruce Elfant in recognition of the League's nonpartisan voter registration initiatives across Austin and Travis County.
- A holiday brunch and membership recognition reception was attended by over 50 members and guests. Bruce Elfant, Travis County Tax Assessor/Collector and Voter Registrar, was honored with an award for his dedication and diligence in training deputy voter registrars and for his engagement in voter registration programs.

- The LWVAA hosted LWV-US President Elizabeth MacNamara’s visit to Austin and arranged for her to be interviewed, along with Bruce Elfant, Travis County Voter Registrar, by Paul Brown on Time Warner Cable’s “Capitol Tonight” news program.

Voters Services Committee recap of activities:

- 20 candidate forums moderated for the Austin City Council, the Austin Independent School District, and Austin Community College in the months leading to the November 2014 election, featuring a total of 98 candidates.
- 56-page 2014 *Voters Guide*, in both English and Spanish.
- 120,000 copies of the *Voters Guide* distributed in the *Austin American-Statesman*.
- 38,500-plus *Voters Guide* downloads from the LWVAA, *Austin American Statesman*, and *Ahora Si!* websites, with more than 3,500 *Voters Guide* views on the LWVAA website just on election day.
- \$8,000 raised to translate the *Voters Guide* into Spanish.
- 10 voter registration outreaches.
- Partnered with *Think Voting* for the first time, to make LWVAA's *Voters Guide* information available on mobile devices through the *ThinkVoting*™ mobile app.

General membership programs:

- Kicked off our 2014-2015 business year with an informative presentation from Evan Smith, co-founder and editor-in-chief of the *Texas Tribune* and PBS host of “Overheard with Evan Smith.”
- “Public Education Funding” panel with Edna Ramon, Austin ISD; Daniel Casey, Moak, Casey & Associates; and Donna Howard, District 45 Representative of Texas House of Representatives.
- “Why and Wherefores of Public School Finance” presentation given by retired Texas State Judge John Dietz, who ruled that Texas public school financing is unconstitutional.
- “Texas Legislative Update” panel with Senator Kirk Watson, Representative Celia Israel, Representative Elliott Naishtat, and a representative from Donna Howard’s office, who led a discussion on the upcoming Texas legislative session.

We ended the year on sound financial footing and look forward to another prosperous year.

Thank you for your participation in this year many activities. We are one of the most vibrant and active Leagues in the country. Let's keep up this momentum.

Carol Olewin, President

MEMBERSHIP REPORT

Because of our numerous candidate forums and other events this past year, the Austin League attracted more new members than in many previous years. A comparison of the last two years follows:

2015 new members as of April, 2015, were 58; and

2014 new members as of April, 2014, were 42.

PMP stands for per member payment, and each League reports its total membership to the national LWV in January. This number is used in the formula for what each League pays to the LWVUS. A 2014-2015 comparison follows:

PMP reported for January 2015, 232; and

PMP reported for January 2014, 209.

Members who did not renew this year number 27, versus 41 last year. The Austin League was deeply saddened by the recent passing of Peggy Stewart, who had been serving as board secretary.

The LWVAA is especially grateful to the 109 members who joined at the sustaining membership level from May 2014 through April 2015. This compares to 92 sustainers who joined during the same period last year. Currently, dues for sustaining members are \$100 for individuals and \$150 for households. Regular dues are \$60 for individuals, \$90 for households, and \$20 for students.

The LWVAA is proud to have 9 members who have achieved Honorary status for belonging to the League for 50 years or more. Julia Marsden is our latest addition.

This year we started a new event, a holiday brunch in December for all members, with special recognition of new members. It was thoroughly enjoyed by over 50 attendees. We hope to make this an annual event.

Judy Parken, Membership Chair

VOTERS SERVICE AND ADVOCACY REPORTS

VOTERS SERVICE

In early summer, the Austin League partnered with Leadership Austin to sponsor a series of educational meetings relating to city government. The eight, Monday-night meetings included topics about city utilities, environment, the economy, land use, transportation, and housing. City department heads and staff gave presentations aimed at educating the public and the candidates for our new city council with 10 single-member-district representatives and an at-large mayor.

Also in the summer, we began our search for questions for the 10 district candidate forums and the mayoral forum. A committee was formed and went about the process of going to the districts to find out what their concerns were, then bringing those concerns back to the committee, and forming the questions unique to each district. The group also helped with the questions for the entire November *Voters Guide* (54 pages). The *Voters Guide* was also published in Spanish, and contributions paid for the translation. Voter registration was headed up by June Conway.

We held candidate forums for 10 city council districts and the mayor (a total of 78 candidates). We held forums for run-off elections for about 8 districts. Also held were candidate forums for AISD and ACC during September and October.

ADVOCACY

Since the 2014 November election, I have spoken to the Austin City Council about transparency in all governmental processes; sent a copy of the League's positions on Ethics and Campaign Finance to all council members and the mayor; spoke to the Austin Ethics Review Commission; and gave testimony written by Mary Cullinane in support of five budget requests made by the Austin-Travis County Health Department at a city council budget hearing. In addition, I sent a letter to AISD Trustees volunteering the League's help in the assessment of equity in the Austin schools. Also, a group of us has interviewed all 10 city council members and the mayor to tell them about the League, how it works, and some of our priorities. We are continuing as a committee, which meets once a month to talk about the local issues of the day.

MEMBER RECOGNITION

There are many Leaguers who have helped with advocacy, the *Voters Guide*, the Leadership Austin forums, questions for the candidate forums, and many other events. I hope I have mentioned them all. We have an amazing League with so many enthusiastic volunteers. It makes the Austin League an organization that is vibrant and engaged.

Many, many thanks to the following and any others who helped with our activities: Jaci Collins, Donna Pauler, Maria Johnson Cinde Weatherby, Judy Clack, Nancy Bene, Mary Cullinane, June Conway, Lisa Harris, Sonja Suessenbach, Betty Williamson, Laura Sheridan, Anne Clark, Gwen Santiago, Carol Olewin, Cynthia Hintikka, Carol Eckelkamp, Maxine Barkan, Jacklyn Williams, Lupe Sosa, Sara Speights, Anita Privett, Barbara and Chris Frandsen, Nancy Roland, Davida Bilgrad, Judy Parken, Anne Roussos, Margit Orange, Nan Clayton, Viki Goodwin, and Tim Mohoney.

Frances McIntyre, Advocacy Chair and *Voters Guide* Editor

PROGRAM REPORT

AN OVERVIEW OF PROGRAM ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Mary Cullinane, Program Vice-President

PROGRAM ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Recommended Goals for 2015 from Program Planning Meeting in 2014

- Continue working groups on Health Care, Education, and City Government.
- Establish working groups for Affordable Housing and Administration of Justice.
- Establish a Positions-Review working group to review and make recommendations for reorganizing existing position statements.

Health Care

Updated health care position statements were adopted at the 2014 Annual Meeting. They included those outlined in the 2014 *Workbook* (including merger and update of the Mental Health Services position in Health as a subsection), as well as a few changes that were recommended at April Unit Meetings that occurred after the *Workbook* deadline. (You can see the entire new Health position under “Position Statements, League of Women Voters of the Austin Area,” which appears in the last section of this *Workbook*.)

Those late changes follow: under Health Care, added “and/or educate about:”; #5, added, “(i.e., physicians, nurses, social workers, case managers, outreach workers, etc.)”; and added new #6, “A single county or multicounty health care district (hospital district) in Austin and/or Travis County with an appointed or elected board.” That increased the numbers of the following statements by one.

Late changes under Behavioral Health Care were: added “and/or educate about:” Late changes under Wellness and Health Promotion were: added “and/or educate about:”; and #13, deleted “Educating the public about the” and added (STIs).

The Poverty study was also approved at the Annual Meeting. It was decided by the study chairs that any other health care activity would be considered as it related to the Poverty study. When the city council was debating the budget, Mary Cullinane wrote testimony in support of five budget requests made by the Austin-Travis County Health Department. Frances McIntyre delivered the testimony at a budget hearing.

Education Work Group, Laura Sheridan, Chair

- 11/16/14—A panel about the “Funding of Public Education in Texas.” Panelists included Edna Ramon Butts with the Austin Independent School District; Daniel Casey of Moak, Casey and Associates; and Donna Howard, District 48 Representative of the Texas House of Representatives. Kimberly Reeves moderated the panel. About 50 people attended, including some school board members.

- 1/5/15–Dr. Paul Cruz attended the January board meeting to discuss some of the major issues and goals he plans to address early in his tenure. Dr. Cruz expressed an interest in working with the League in the future on issues of common interest.
- 2/8/15–Retired Texas State Judge John Dietz spoke on “The Whys and Wherefores of Public School Finance” and answered questions. The conversation covered historical and current data and how the state has not fulfilled its duty to meet its constitutional obligation. More than 50 people attended.

Poverty Study

There was no activity on the Poverty study until February 2015. A study of Affordable Housing and Administration of Justice was going to be part of the Poverty study, so no action was taken separately.

Position-Statement Review Group

The group has not been established.

PROGRAM RECOMMENDATIONS, 2015-2016

Recommended Local Program

1. **A work group to look at local income and social inequality.** Some changes were made. This effort is no longer a study because there are already position statements that cover most of what was going to be included in the study. There is now a work group, and the aim of the group is to provide educational opportunities to the membership to learn more about economic inequality in the Austin area. The group also will find policies and programs that are successfully providing pathways to the middle class. The work group renamed their endeavor “Ladders of Opportunity” to reflect an emphasis on solutions to the problem of income inequality.

Focus: What can be done to create opportunities for everyone in our community to make choices that allow them to afford the basics in life and provide for their families?

Scope:

- What proven solutions to income inequality could be implemented in Austin?
- What proven approaches to improving educational opportunities for children and adults could be implemented in Austin?
- What proven approaches to decreasing housing segregation could be implemented in Austin?

Rationale: Eighteen percent of Travis county residents live in poverty, according to the U.S. Census Bureau. Even though Austin has seen great prosperity in recent years, some of our neighbors are still struggling to get by, and a significant number are literally being squeezed out of the middle class.

Many low-income residents use safety-net services, which are consistently at risk of being reduced. Additionally, some policies have unintended consequences and actually work against low-income families and make it even harder for them to be successful.

A chair for this work group is needed.

State and National Programs, 2015-2016

2. LWV-Texas

Study of Payday and Auto Title Loans in Texas

(Recommended by Leagues in Collin County, Dallas, and Houston).

2015 LWVAA Annual Meeting Workbook

Hard-working families can get trapped in a revolving door of debt brought on by payday and auto-title loans. Payday and auto-title loans are widespread in Texas.

Focus: Explore the current regulations on payday and auto-title lenders in Texas and the accessibility and impact of these loans in the community.

Scope: Define a payday loan, an auto-title loan, and the typical borrower. Research the history of the payday/auto-title industry in Texas over the past decade and describe the impact of regulations on the industry. Determine the current demand for loans in Texas and the economic impact of these loans on communities. Determine the typical interest rate charged and the usual length of time that it takes to pay loans.

In late summer 2015, the state League will provide educational materials, a leader's guide, consensus questions, and activities to related to payday and auto title loans.

A chair for this study is needed.

3. LWV-US

Study of Money in Politics, 2016

The Money in Politics Committee will conduct an update of the League's position on campaign finance. The purpose of the study is to increase member understanding and agreement as to whether financing a political campaign is protected speech under the First Amendment. The campaign finance position will be updated through a study and consensus process to consider:

- The rights of individuals and organizations, under the First Amendment, to express their political views through independent expenditures and the finance of election campaign activities.
- How those rights, if any, should be reconciled with the interests set out in the current position?

The Money in Politics Committee will provide educational materials, a leader's guide, consensus questions, and activities to inform members and citizenry about the complex issues around money in politics.

A chair for this study is needed.

PROPOSED ADDITION TO CITY GOVERNMENT POSITION

Frances McIntyre, Advocacy Chair

At an April 6 meeting, the LWVAA board voted to recommend a proposed addition to the City Government position that was submitted by Frances McIntyre as a concurrence.* The addition will be presented for member approval and adoption at the May 19, 2015, Annual Meeting.

PROPOSED WORDING

The change would add a fourth bullet to our position under "City Government #2 Council and Elections," as follows (see the CITY GOVERNMENT section in the LWVAA's Position Statements elsewhere in this *Workbook*):

CITY GOVERNMENT

2. Council and Elections

- Support for direct election of the mayor.
- For council member elections, support for the following structures, provided that under these

structures, there are enough equal-sized geographic districts drawn to support minority opportunity districts:

- geographic-district representatives plus at-large representatives, or
- geographic-district representatives plus super geographic-district representatives, or
- geographic-district representatives only.
- Support of a campaign spending ordinance to be mandated in the City Charter.
- **Support of an Independent Citizens Redistricting Commission.**

HISTORY, EXPLANATION, AND JUSTIFICATION

At the 2012 Annual Meeting, the LWVAA adopted an update to our position on City Government that relates to city council elections. The change broadened the ways we can support single-member districts to allow us to address this important issue. At the time, there was a fledgling citizens group that was discussing single-member districts, with the aim of getting a citizens initiative on the ballot. Their general purpose was to change the Austin City Council from all at-large to single-member districts. When the citizens group, Austinites for Geographic Representation, had come to a decision on the exact method they agreed upon, they developed a petition that included the particulars of the representation and also included an Independent Citizens Redistricting Commission to draw the district lines.

The LWVAA was able to support this petition because of the change in our position. We also were able to support the Independent Citizens Redistricting Commission (ICRC) because we have a LWV-Texas position that supports redistricting commissions at the state level. The LWV-US position does not address apportionment because it is a matter for the states to deal with. The national position does say, “Based on principles, issue positions and past actions, it appears the League has some leeway on redistricting.” Then it lists some criteria, such as citizen participation, transparency, and accountability.

In November of 2012, the ballot measure passed, and the Austin City Charter was changed to incorporate the details of electing council members from 10 districts, with the mayor to be elected at-large. It also included the criteria and duties of the ICRC. The ICRC was chosen and started work in May or June of 2013. The district maps were presented in December of 2013, which gave the prospective candidates the opportunity to begin their campaigns. The November 2014 election was the first change in Austin’s governance since the 1970s. The LWV also had been advocating for single-member districts since the 1970s. Our advocacy for this method was significant in getting the measure passed.

The recommended change this year to our position is to add support for an ICRC, which is not included in our local positions.

We have enough information from the state League and some guidance from the national League that allow us to adopt support of a Citizens Independent Redistricting Commission as a concurrence* that does not need to involve a study. We did support the ballot measure that included the ICRC in 2012. I believe we need this delineated in our positions. Austin is the only municipality to have an ICRC, and we want to keep it that way.

* (“Concurrence” is adopting a position that another League has already studied.)

BYLAWS REPORT

There are no changes to the bylaws for this year.

Maxine Barkan, 2015 LWVAA Bylaws Committee Chair

BUDGET—LWVAA**Dianne Wheeler, Chair**

(The LWVAA Board of Directors recommends adoption.)

LWV of the Austin Area, Proposed 2015–2016 Budget, 6/1/15–5/31/16			
Income	2014-15	2015-16	Notes
Interest: savings/short-term investments	\$0.00	\$100.00	New Money Mkt Acct
Fundraising	2,724.00	0.00	
Individual contributions	200.00	800.00	
Honorary contributions	250.00	200.00	
State of the City dinner	0.00	6,500.00	
Dues	13,075.00	18,233.00	
Total Income	\$16,249.00	\$25,833.00	
Expenses			
From Education Fund	-3,531.00	-4,100.00	Reimburse-LWVAA expenses
Operating Expenses			
Board expenses	90.00	75.00	
Board travel	250.00	1,300.00	Delegates & Training
Computer & office supplies	800.00	1,100.00	
Email & Web page hosting, Facebook	750.00	1,100.00	
Insurance--general liability	600.00	1,400.00	Increase is E & O
Pay Pal	50.00	150.00	
Personal property taxes	20.00	20.00	
Phone & telecommunications	1,250.00	1,250.00	
Postage, shipping, delivery	300.00	350.00	
Printing & copying	0.00	100.00	
Rent	3,720.00	3,720.00	
Program Expenses/Member Services			
Advocacy	0.00	150.00	
<i>Annual Meeting Workbook</i>	150.00	150.00	
Fundraising.	300.00	100.00	
<i>Membership Directory</i>	100.00	150.00	
Membership meetings, recruitment	400.00	900.00	
Recognition gifts	0.00	200.00	
State of the City dinner	0.00	4,000.00	
<i>Voter</i> newsletter	300.00	300.00	
State PMP	4,500.00	5,063.00	
National PMP	6,200.00	7,355.00	
Capital Purchase	0.00	1,000.00	
Total Expenses	\$16,249.00	\$25,833.00	

BUDGET (continued)—EDUCATION FUND

(For information purposes only. Adopted by the LWVAA Board of Directors.)

LWVAA Education Fund Budget 2015–2016, 6/1/15–5/31/16

Income	2014-15	2015-16	Notes
Individual contributions	\$1,500.00	\$1,500.00	
Honorary/memorial contributions	600.00	400.00	
Business contributions	800.00	0.00	
Randalls, #465	140.00	200.00	
Fundraising	500.00	0.00	
Interest--money market	41.00	150.00	
<i>Voters Guide</i>	300.00	300.00	
State of the City dinner	5,000.00	0.00	Moved to AA Budget
State of the City auction	4,000.00	5,000.00	
Total Income	\$12,881.00	\$7,550.00	
Expenses			
LWVAA reimbursement	3,531.00	4,100.00	
Supplies	150.00	150.00	
Pay Pal	50.00	100.00	
<i>Voters Guide</i>	3,000.00	1,800.00	
Vote 411	800.00	400.00	
Program publications	50.00	0.00	
Elected Officials/Leg. Reception	500.00	500.00	
State of the City dinner	4,000.00	0.00	Moved to AA Budget
Program	700.00	500.00	
Capital Purchase	100.00	0.00	
Total Expenses	\$12,881.00	\$7,550.00	

NOMINATING COMMITTEE REPORT

League of Women Voters of the Austin Area, Nominating Committee Slate for 2015-2017

Elected Officers and Their Terms of Office:

President:	Carol Olewin	(2016)
1st VP (Program):	Mary Cullinane	(2016)
2nd VP (Community Relations):	Cinde Weatherby	(2017)
3rd VP (Organization):	Jaci Collins	(2017)
4th VP (Voters Service):		(2016)
Secretary:	Diane Davis	(2017)
Treasurer:	Gwen Santiago	(2016)

Five Directors Elected for One-Year Terms:

Advocacy:	Frances McIntyre	2016
Membership:	Judy Parken	2016
Membership Records:		2016
<i>Voter</i> Editor:	Donna Pauler	2016
Webmaster & Blasts:	Hal Jennings	2016

Off-Board Chairs:

Budget:		2016
Bylaws:	Maxine Barkan	2016
Development:		
Publicity:	Lea Masiello	2016
Special Events:	Eliza May	2016
<i>Voters Guide</i> , Editor:	Frances McIntyre	2016
<i>Workbook</i> Editor		
Nominating Committee:	Margit Orange	2016

Margit Orange, Nominating Committee Chair

LWVAA NONPARTISAN POLICY STATEMENT

(Adopted May 1996; updated 2002 to reflect board position; revised 2009, 2012.)

The League of Women Voters of the Austin Area endorses the position on nonpartisanship held by the League of Women Voters of the United States which states: The League may take action on governmental measures and policies in the public interest. It shall not support or oppose any political party or candidate.

Board of Directors: League board members and spokespersons shall refrain from conspicuous partisan political activities during their term of office. Conspicuous partisan activities are those which would affect the community's perception of the League's nonpartisanship. If in doubt, board members and spokespersons should consult with the board.

The political activities of a spouse or relative of a board member shall be considered as separate and distinct from the activities of the Board member.

Should a Board member wish to become a candidate for public office, she/he shall submit a written resignation in sufficient time to allow the League to publicly announce the change in status. Resignation from the board does not mean resignation from the League.

All League Members:

League Positions - Once League (local, state or national) takes a position on an issue, members may not identify themselves as League members in publicly expressing an opinion that is in opposition to a League position.

Representing the League – Members representing the League in the community should be sensitive to their responsibilities. When acting in the public as League representatives, members must not allow partisanship to be discernible. These members should be fully aware of League positions.

Serving on Commissions – Members may serve on governmental commissions at their own discretion. If the appointee represents the League, then the appointee should be fully aware of the League positions in relation to the commission's responsibilities.

League Meetings – Members in the leadership roles at unit and other public meetings have the responsibility to ensure the nonpartisanship of the meeting and its environment.

League Roster – The League of Women Voters Austin Area roster shall not be made available for non-League use without Board permission.

Board Direction – If a Board member, off-board chair, or member becomes involved in a situation in which the nonpartisan policy of the League may be jeopardized, such member shall ask for a Board decision on appropriate action.

BYLAWS, LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF THE AUSTIN AREA

(Changes adopted at 2000, 2007, 2010, 2011, 2012, and 2013 Annual Meetings.)

ARTICLE I: NAME

Section 1. The name of this organization shall be the League of Women Voters of the Austin Area. This local League is an integral part of the League of Women Voters of Texas and the League of Women Voters of the United States.

ARTICLE II: PURPOSES AND POLITICAL POLICY

Section 1. Purposes. The purposes of the League of Women Voters of the Austin Area are to promote political responsibility through informed and active participation in government and to act on selected governmental issues.

Section 2. Policy. The League of Women Voters of the Austin Area may take action on local governmental measures and policies in the public interest in conformity with the Principles of the League of Women Voters of the United States. It shall not support or oppose any political party or candidate.

ARTICLE III: MEMBERSHIPS

Section 1. Eligibility. Any person who subscribes to the purposes and policy of the League of Women Voters of the Austin Area shall be eligible for membership.

Section 2. Types of memberships. The membership of the League of Women Voters of the Austin Area shall be composed of voting members and associate members.

A. Voting members shall be citizens at least 18 years of age who have joined the LWVAA; these individuals shall be voting members of the LWVTX and of the LWVUS, as well.

1. individuals who live within an area of a local League may join that League or any other local League;
2. those who reside outside the area of any local League may join a local League or shall be state members-at-large; and
3. those who have been members of the League for 50 years or more shall be life members excused from the payment of dues.

B. Associate members shall be all others who join the League.

ARTICLE IV: BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Section 1. Number, Manner of Selection, and Term of Office. The board of directors shall consist of the officers of the League of Women Voters of the Austin Area, six (6) elected directors, and not more than six (6) appointed directors. Six (6) directors shall be elected by the general membership at each annual meeting and shall serve for a term of one year, or until their successors have been elected and qualified. The President with the advice and consent of the elected members of the board shall appoint additional directors, not exceeding six (6), as is deemed necessary to carry on the work of the League. Appointed directors shall serve from the time of appointment until the next annual meeting.

Section 2. Qualifications. No person shall be appointed or elected or shall continue to serve as an officer or director of this organization unless that person is a voting member of the League of Women Voters of the Austin Area.

Section 3. Vacancies. In the event of the absence, disability, disqualification, or death of the president, the nominating committee shall be directed to find a candidate and submit the name to the board for election by a majority vote of the board. All other vacancies occurring in the board of directors may be filled by presidential appointment for the remaining portion of the year with a majority vote of the remaining members of the board of directors. Any board member who is absent from three consecutive board meetings without valid reason shall be considered to have resigned.

Section 4. Powers and Duties. The board of directors shall have full charge of the property and business of the organization, with full power and authority to manage and conduct same, subject to the instructions of the general membership. It shall plan and direct the work necessary to carry out the program as adopted by the national convention, the state convention, and the annual meeting. The board shall create and designate such special committees as it may deem necessary.

Section 5. Meetings. There shall be at least nine regular meetings of the board of directors annually. The president may call special meetings of the board of directors and shall call a special meeting upon written request of five (5) members of the board.

Section 6. Quorum. A majority of the members of the board of directors shall constitute a quorum. Any one or more members of the Board may participate in a Special Meeting by means of electronic communication. Participation by such means shall constitute presence at said meeting. All votes taken at such Special Meetings shall be ratified at the next regular meeting of the Board of Directors.

Section 7. Executive Committee. The board may appoint an executive committee consisting of no fewer than five members of the board. The executive committee shall exercise such power and authority as may be delegated to it and shall report on all actions taken by it to the board between regular meetings of the board.

ARTICLE V: OFFICERS

Section 1. Enumeration and Election of Officers. The officers of the League of Women Voters of the Austin Area shall be a president, and/or co-presidents, a first vice-president, a second vice-president, a third vice-president, a fourth vice-president, a secretary, and a treasurer who shall be elected for terms of two years by the general membership at an annual meeting. The president, the first vice-president, the fourth vice-president, and the secretary shall be elected in even-numbered years. The second vice-president, the third vice-president, and the treasurer shall be elected in odd-numbered years.

Section 2. The President. The president shall preside at all meetings of the organization and of the board of directors; may, in the absence or disability of the treasurer, sign or endorse checks, drafts and notes; shall be, ex officio, a member of all committees except the nominating committee; shall have such usual power of supervision and management as may pertain to the office of the president and perform such other duties as may be designated by the board. The president or other officers when so authorized by the board may sign contracts and other instruments.

Section 3. Vice-presidents. The vice-presidents shall perform such duties as the president and board may designate. It shall be the duty of each vice-president to supervise and coordinate the activities of the chairs assigned to her/his jurisdiction.

Section 4. The Secretary. The secretary shall keep the minutes of the annual meetings of the League and all other meetings of the board of directors; notify all officers and directors of their election; and perform such other functions as may be incident to the office.

Section 5. The Treasurer. The treasurer shall collect and receive all monies due; be custodian of the monies and deposit them in a bank designated by the board of directors, and disburse the same only upon order of the board; present statements to the board at its regular meetings, and an annual report to the annual meeting.

ARTICLE VI: FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION

Section 1. Fiscal Year. The fiscal year of the League of Women Voters of the Austin Area shall begin on the first day of June, ending on May 31 of the following year.

Section 2. Dues. Annual dues shall be determined by the board of directors and approved as part of the budget adopted by the members attending the annual meeting. Dues shall be payable on the anniversary of the month the member joins. Any continuing member who fails to pay her/his dues within three months of the first of the anniversary month shall be dropped from the membership rolls.

Section 3. Budget. A budget for the ensuing year shall be submitted by the board of directors to the annual meeting for adoption. The budget shall include support for the work of the League as a whole.

Section 4. Budget Committee. A budget committee shall be appointed by the board of directors at least two months prior to the annual meeting to prepare a budget for the ensuing year. The proposed budget shall be sent to all members one month before the annual meeting. The treasurer shall be, ex officio, a member of the budget committee, but shall not be eligible to serve as chairman.

ARTICLE VII: MEETINGS

Section 1. Membership Meetings. There shall be at least four meetings of the general membership each year. The time and place shall be determined by the board of directors.

Section 2. Annual Meeting. An annual meeting shall be held during May, the exact date to be determined by the board of directors. The annual meeting shall:

- A. adopt a local program for the ensuing year;
- B. elect officers and directors and a nominating committee chair;
- C. adopt a budget;
- D. transact such other business as may properly come before it.

Section 3. Quorum. A quorum shall consist of ten percent (10%) of the members eligible to vote as of January 1 of the current year.

ARTICLE VIII: NOMINATIONS AND ELECTIONS

Section 1. Nominating Committee. The nominating committee shall consist of a chair, two members from the board, and two non-board members. The chair, who shall not be a member of the board, and the two non-board members shall be elected at the annual meeting; the board of directors shall appoint the members from the board. Vacancies on the committee during the year shall be filled in the same manner. Nominations for officers, directors and nominating committee chair may be sent to this committee by any voting member.

Section 2. Two members may be nominated and elected to share a single office. They will divide the duties of the office by mutual agreement. Each member shall have a vote on the board.

Section 3. Report of the Nominating Committee and Nominations from the Floor. The report of the nominating committee of its nominations for officers and directors shall be sent to all members at least one month before the date of the annual meeting. Immediately following the presentation of this report, nominations may be made from the floor by any voting member, provided the consent of the nominee shall be secured.

Section 4. Elections. The election shall be by secret ballot, except when there is only one nominee the election may be by voice vote. The election of co-nominees for a single office shall be considered a single nomination. A majority of those qualified members present and voting shall constitute an election. Absentee or proxy voting shall not be permitted. The new board members shall assume their duties June 1.

ARTICLE IX: PROGRAM

Section 1. Authorization. The governmental Principles adopted by the national convention, and supported by the League as a whole, constitute the authorization for the adoption of the program.

Section 2. Program. The program of the League of Women Voters of the Austin Area shall be chosen for study or action at the annual meeting and may include action to implement the Principles of the League of Women Voters.

Section 3. The Annual Meeting. The annual meeting shall act upon the Program using the following procedures:

- A. The board of directors shall consider the recommendations sent in by the voting members two months prior to the annual meeting and shall formulate a proposed program.
- B. The proposed program shall be sent to all members one month before the annual meeting, together with not-recommended items and reasons for their rejection by the board.
- C. A majority vote of voting members present and voting at the annual meeting shall be required for adoption of items in the proposed program as presented to the annual meeting by the board of directors.
- D. Any not-recommended program item(s) may be moved for consideration following the presentation of the recommended program. A majority vote shall place a not-recommended item before the annual meeting. Adoption of a not-recommended item requires a two-thirds vote. The program votes shall take place in the order in which items were considered.
- E. Suggestions for program at the annual meeting from the floor must meet the following criteria:
 1. the suggestion must have been presented to and approved by the president at least 24 hours prior to the annual meeting.
 2. the Annual Meeting shall order consideration by a two-thirds vote.
 3. the Annual Meeting shall adopt the item by a two-thirds vote.
- F. Changes in the program, not considered at the annual meeting, may be made provided that:
 1. information concerning the proposed change has been sent to all members at least two weeks prior to a general membership meeting at which the change is to be discussed.
 2. final action by the membership is taken at the succeeding meeting.

Section 4. Member Action. Members may act in the name of the League of Women Voters only when authorized to do so under the Policy established by the board of directors. They act only in conformity with, and not contrary to, a position taken by the League of Women Voters of the Austin Area, the League of Women Voters of Texas, and the League of Women Voters of the United States.

ARTICLE X: VOTER SERVICE

Section 1. Voter Service. Activities of the League of Women Voters of the Austin Area shall include making available to the citizens in the community information on elections and other democratic processes.

ARTICLE XI: NATIONAL CONVENTION, STATE CONVENTION AND COUNCIL

Section 1. National Convention. Delegates from the League of Women Voters of the Austin Area shall be selected by the board of directors under the provisions of the bylaws of the League of Women Voters of the United States.

Section 2. State Convention/Council. Delegates from the League of Women Voters of the Austin Area shall be selected by the board of directors under the provisions of the bylaws of the League of Women Voters of Texas.

ARTICLE XII: PARLIAMENTARY AUTHORITY

Section 1. Parliamentary Authority. The rules in “Roberts Rules of Order Newly Revised” shall govern the organization in all cases to which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with these bylaws.

ARTICLE XIII: AMENDMENTS

Section 1. Amendments. These bylaws may be amended by a two-thirds vote of the voting members present at the annual meeting, provided that the amendments were submitted to the membership in writing at least one month in advance of the meeting.

POSITION STATEMENTS, LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF THE AUSTIN AREA

EDUCATION

(Program positions were revised and amended at the 2007 Annual Meeting, based on the 2005-2007 update study and consensus; and at the 2008 Annual Meeting, based on the tax abatement consensus.)

1. Support of equality of opportunity in education.

- The Austin Independent School District (AISD) should have as its goal to meet, if not exceed, the state and federal accountability standards for achievement, attendance, dropout rates, and completion rates in each school in the district, and to reduce the disparity in performance among schools.
- To achieve this goal, the schools must have fully certified teachers in all areas, adequate resources and support systems, and community involvement in the schools.

2. Support of strong education in AISD through the following goals at all grade levels, from prekindergarten and kindergarten, through elementary, middle, and high schools:

- Varied curriculum.
- Flexibility for teachers within defined curriculum.
- Providing teachers with the necessary preparation and encouragement to improve student achievement through relevant professional development (for example, to strengthen subject-matter knowledge, classroom-management skills, use of technology); adequate planning time; mentoring for new teachers and stipends for mentors; consideration of input from teachers in policy and administrative decisions; and encouragement of two-way communication between teachers and principals.
- An incentive-based compensation plan for all teachers and campus administrators who qualify.
- Provision of appropriate textbooks, technology, and/or materials.
- Full-time librarians in each school.
- Promotion of active parental involvement.
- Offering year-round schools with shorter vacation breaks and/or summer school.
- Flexible learning environments, as in nontraditional schools and alternative learning centers within AISD, and flexible learning environments extending into traditional secondary schools, as well.
- Programs for English Language Learners (ELL) to improve achievement among non-English speaking students and to support the goal of AISD in having every student speak English fluently, along with support services for the parents of non-English speaking AISD students.
- Addressing the health care needs of the student population by providing full-time health care team coverage for every school.

3. Support of strong elementary education in AISD through grouping of mixed academic ability within a classroom, and utilizing ability groupings in math and reading with frequent re-evaluation.

4. Support of strong middle school education in AISD through: initiatives to improve student transition from 5th to 6th grade and from 8th to 9th grade; student visits to feeder schools; parent orientations and campus visits; opportunities for planning and coordination between elementary, middle, and high school principals; summer transition programs for incoming 6th graders and incoming 9th graders; a rigorous summer school program for identified incoming 9th graders; and life-skills programs in middle schools.

5. Support for strong AISD secondary education (middle and high school) through:

- Initiatives to ensure a rigorous academic environment in middle and high schools; emphasis on

critical thinking skills; advanced classes (for example, Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, dual enrollment in college); early intervention for academically at-risk students; tutoring for students who fail a section or sections of the standardized test; rigorous summer school for students who fail one or more courses; Saturday school as an option; extended day as an option; extended school year as an option; after-school programs; night courses in high school; and support services for families of students.

- An honors program with weighted grades for those students who participate in it.
- Challenging academic courses that equip students to succeed in college.
- Initiatives to improve relationships between teachers, between teachers and students, and among students; lower pupil-teacher ratios; smaller learning communities (for example, 9th grade academies); coordinated planning time for teachers and team teaching; advisories; and study groups.
- Development of curriculum to include courses geared to current workforce needs.
- Use of demonstrated competencies and skills to help assess student progress with documents such as certificates or portfolios.
- Academies or magnet programs with flexible eligibility criteria.
- More efficient use of counselor skills, with focus on academic and career counseling, as well as adjustment counseling.
- Scheduling of co- and extra-curricular activities during non-school hours as much as possible.
- A tech-prep system that allows students either to enter the workforce upon graduation or seek post-secondary education.
- Job training courses for students who want to graduate with marketable skills.
- Apprenticeship-type programs, cooperative education, or internships to ease the transition from school to work.

6. Support for educational programs in Austin Community College and in AISD designed to prepare students for employment with marketable skills by:

- Having curriculum relevant to the work world with career awareness infused throughout the system.
- Developing curriculum to include courses geared to current workforce needs.
- Having students apply problem-solving.
- Providing career exploration by the 8th grade and administering occupational assessment tests, followed by counseling with students and parents, prior to high school enrollment.
- Conducting staff development to assist teachers in making the curriculum relevant, learning new teaching techniques, and operating equipment.
- Establishing a centrally located career planning and placement center.
- Supporting employer involvement in curricular and workforce training issues.
- Assigning staff to seek outside funding sources, shared use of facilities or equipment, internship or apprenticeship positions, and mentors for students.
- Securing adequate funding, including increased taxes, as state support declines.

7. Support for career preparation in Austin Community College through:

- Coordinated education paths between high school and college-level work.
- Education and employer-supervised apprenticeships and internship opportunities.
- Access to state-of-the-art technology for technical programs.
- Communication of changing workforce needs to instructional staff, counselors, and students.

8. Support for strengthened adult education programs in Austin Community College and in AISD Community Schools.

9. Opposition to AISD's participation in any tax rebates or abatements for businesses to locate or expand in the Austin area.

AUSTIN: ITS PEOPLE AND ENVIRONMENT

1. Support of equality of opportunity in employment and housing.
2. Support for well-run community development programs with frequent administrative reviews by city government.
3. Support of preservation and development of open space and parks.

CITY GOVERNMENT

(Adopted at the 1995 Annual Meeting; updated in 2007, 2012.)

1. Form of government: Support of council-manager form of government with the City Charter as its document.
2. Council and Elections
 - Support for direct election of the mayor.
 - For council member elections, support for the following structures, provided that under these structures, there are enough equal-sized geographic districts drawn to support minority opportunity districts:
 - geographic-district representatives plus at-large representatives, or
 - geographic-district representatives plus super geographic-district representatives, or
 - geographic-district representatives only.
 - Support of a campaign spending ordinance to be mandated in the City Charter.
 - **Support of an Independent Citizens Redistricting Commission.**
3. Personnel, General Provisions, and Ethics
 - Support of an impartial board of ethics with an independent staff.
 - Support of a financial disclosure ordinance to be mandated in the City Charter.
4. Planning and City Services
 - Support for a commission in the City Charter to plan for human resources.
 - Support for independent neighborhood groups.
5. Financial
 - Support for the early setting of budget priorities by Council.
 - Electric Utility and Electric Utility Transfer:
 - Support for an *electric utility transfer* based primarily on the needs of the utility, including its bonded indebtedness, rather than on the needs of the City budget.
 - Support for an *electric rate policy* that is based on the cost of service for each class of user and that strives for a goal of 100% relative rate of return for all customer classes.
6. Annexation
 - Support for full consideration of an annexation's fiscal impact on the City before City Council action.
 - Support for flexibility in the timing of annexation based on fiscal, planning, environmental, and social factors.
 - Support for the continued use of fees to cover the cost of utility extensions and other capital

improvements necessary for new development.

- Support for homeowners in municipal utility districts' continuing to pay off the district's debt after annexation.
- Support for a strengthened subdivision ordinance covering the City's entire extraterritorial jurisdiction.

7. Planning and Growth Management

- Support for cost benefit analysis as an integral part of the planning process.
- Support for ongoing public input into long-range planning with coordination and communication between City departments, boards, and commissions.
- Support for a balanced representation of diverse interests on the Planning Commission.
- Support for a standardized, streamlined, and understandable development process with proper regard for public notification from developer application to Council decision.
- Support for City involvement with private and other governmental entities in the selective recruitment of businesses. Environmental concerns should be taken into consideration, as should employment of Austin's citizens.
- Support for tax abatements and/or tax rebates as an incentive to encourage economic development in the city. Among the criteria that should be considered by the county when determining which businesses receive tax abatements or rebates are:
 - Amount of total investment in Austin.
 - Location in the Desired Development zone.
 - Length of commitment for company to stay in Austin.
 - Demand on the community's infrastructure.
 - Competition with existing local businesses.
 - Alignment with the city's long-term economic development.
 - Environmental concerns.
 - Number of new jobs for Austin citizens.
 - Certain criteria for the newly created jobs, i.e.,
 - ✓ Health insurance
 - ✓ Diversity in hiring and promotion
 - ✓ Employee training programs
 - ✓ Livable wage
- Support for an accounting of the tax abatement/rebate incentives and their associated cost which is presented once a year, along with the Budget public hearings.

8. Drinking Water Supply

(Adopted at the 1998 Annual Meeting.)

- Support for use of factors that should be included in regional planning for: population, supply, water conservation, needs of sustainable industry, fishermen and agriculture, flood control and flood plain preservation, reservation and/or purchase of water (including water rights and interbasin transfers), privatization as an alternative, impacts on water quality, drought planning, governance, water and sewer treatment capacity, and the economic impact on the region as a whole.
- Support of a voluntary, aggressive treated water conservation plan that should become mandatory only under drought conditions.
- Support of utility-provided educational programs, water-wise programs, a system-wide water leak detection program for utility-owned pipes, residential block pricing, programs to repair leaks for low-income housing, and development of incentives for conservation, where possible.
- Support for the following factors in evaluating future funding proposals for water treatment facilities: cost of maintenance, need to respond to immediate crisis, need to meet federal requirement, existence of a master plan, environmental impact, cost effectiveness, privatization as

an alternative, and currency of technology.

9. Electric Deregulation

(Adopted at the 1998 Annual Meeting.)

- Support for the City Council consideration of all of its options regarding the *future of the electric utility*, including sale of part or all of the utility and/or merger with other entities. Factors that should be considered include: impact on rates for the various classes of consumers; maintenance of a “lifeline” rate for low-income consumers; the impact on the funding of city services (i.e. the transfer to the general fund and compensating fees and taxes); the competitive position of Austin Energy; environmental impacts; stranded debt and the ability to pay off electric utility revenue bonds; the level of local control that would exist; responsiveness and quality of customer service; and electric service reliability.
- Support for continued *energy conservation programs*, but they should be modified to be more cost effective and to have customers share more in the responsibility for programs from which they will benefit. Continue to provide:
 - Energy audits.
 - Rebates for low-income customers.
 - Rebates to encourage new or more efficient technology.
 - Lists of contractors.
 - Inspection of rehab jobs.
 - Weatherization of homes for low-income residents.
 - Consultation on new construction.
- Support for more *operating independence for the Utility*. Responsibility for purchasing, hiring, and other administrative functions should lie with Utility management. Establishment of an oversight board for the Utility, which would assume many of the policy-making powers currently held by the City Council, but would leave the powers of eminent domain, rate-making, and bond issuance with the City Council. Members of the oversight board should be selected on the basis of designated areas of expertise and should include at least one member representing the public. Change the City Charter to allow purchases without City Council (or oversight board) approval to a level commensurate with the expenditures of the Utility.

TRAVIS COUNTY GOVERNMENT

(Updated in 2007.)

1. County Budget

- Support for one budget officer, a performance/program budget prepared and made available to the public before public hearings.
- Support for budget approval before the adoption of the tax rate and before the beginning of the fiscal year.

2. Law Enforcement

- Support for increased cooperation between Austin and Travis County law enforcement officers.
- Support for increased use of interlocal contracts between the county and incorporated governmental units for effective law enforcement.

3. Wastewater Management

- Support for improved cooperation among the City, County, LCRA, and the TCEQ in the enforcement of wastewater regulations.

4. County Parks

- Support for a unified county park system organized and maintained by a master plan.

5. Tax Assessment

- Support for fair and equitable appraisal of all real property in Travis County.

6. Planning and Growth Management

- Support for tax abatements and/or tax rebates as an incentive to encourage economic development in the county. Among the criteria that should be considered by the county when determining which businesses receive tax abatements or rebates are:
 - Amount of total investment in Travis County.
 - Location in the Desired Development zone.
 - Length of commitment for company to stay in Travis County.
 - Demand on the community's infrastructure.
 - Competition with existing local businesses.
 - Alignment with the county's long-term economic development.
 - Environmental concerns.
 - Number of new jobs for Travis County citizens.
 - Certain criteria for the newly created jobs, i.e.,
 - ✓ Health insurance
 - ✓ Diversity in hiring and promotion
 - ✓ Employee training programs
 - ✓ Livable wage
- Support for an accounting of the tax abatement/rebate incentives and their associated cost, which is presented once a year, along with the Budget public hearings.

LIBRARY

(Adopted in 1995.)

1. Support of a library system for Austin and the surrounding area, which includes both traditional library services and modern information management.

2. Support of a library system that includes:

- Adequate funding, even if it means a tax increase.
- The traditional role of lending books and other material.
- A reference library with modern information technology, including CD-ROM and access to the Internet information services available in the library, by phone, and online.
- Programs and informal education for adults and especially for children.
- Homework centers and tutoring.
- Outreach to encourage reading and library use.
- Community activities and meeting rooms.
- An adequate book/materials security system

3. Support for building more library branches, first in underserved areas, and secondly, in newly developed areas or as larger regional libraries.

4. Support for bond issues that include funding for new technology and replacing rented facilities.

5. Support for the use of the Austin library by people who do not live in Austin. However, those individuals

or their communities should pay to help support the library.

6. Support for greater communication and cooperation between schools and libraries.

TRANSPORTATION

(Adopted in 1972, 1981, 1996, and 1998.)

1. Support for a community-wide system that serves the population as a whole; is publicly owned, efficient, and economical; and informs and educates the public on its use.

2. Support for the establishment and the sustainment of a permanent mass transit authority (MTA).

3. Support for the continued use of a one-cent sales tax to support the MTA.

4. Support for increased opportunities for meaningful citizen participation in the transportation planning process; and optimum cooperation and coordination in the administration, planning, and delivery of services among agencies that provide transportation.

5. Support for a balanced, intermodal Metropolitan transportation system that coordinates the use of:

- Automobiles.
- Buses.
- A fixed guide-way system (regional light rail).
- Park-and-ride facilities.
- Pedestrian and bicycle routes.
- Shuttles (or jitneys).
- Special transit services for the disabled and elderly.

6. Support for transportation-related measures that will keep the Austin Metropolitan Area in attainment of federal air quality standards (see Air Quality statement under Environmental Quality position), including:

- Carpools.
- Van pools.
- Buses.
- High-occupancy vehicle lanes
- Bicycles.
- Trip reduction.
- Walking.
- Conversion to natural gas, with more refueling centers.
- Recharge centers for (future) electric cars.
- A fixed guide-way system (light rail).
- Telecommuting.
- Home employment.
- Motor vehicle inspection.

7. Support for the following methods of transportation funding: governmental gasoline tax, the Austin Transportation Fee, and revenue from toll roads. Revenues from these sources will go toward improving city, county, and regional roads, and other transportation projects.

8. Support for multiple funding sources for the construction and operation of a fixed guide-way transportation system, including the use of bonds, federal funds, sales taxes, and user fees like gasoline

taxes and fares.

9. Support for the integration of land-use planning and transportation planning in the Austin Metropolitan Area.

10. Support for the revision of local governments' development regulations, to include site design criteria that would encourage intermodal planning, including accommodations for pedestrians, bicycle trails, and transit.

11. Support for mixed-use development to help achieve the Austin Metropolitan Area's transportation goals.

12. Support for the encouragement of the Austin Transportation Study (ATS) to maintain ongoing, independent performance reviews of the governments and agencies that provide transportation services to the ATS area to provide accountability to the citizens of the Austin Metropolitan Area.

13. Support for the use of the following criteria to assess the suitability of specific funding proposals:

- Allows for faster project completion; a project cannot be completed without it.
- Local dollars are used to leverage state and federal dollars.
- An undue burden is not placed on any socio-economic group.
- Funds are raised efficiently.
- Funds are not reallocated without the consent of the funding body.
- Balance of transportation modes is improved; the overall efficiency of the transportation system is enhanced.
- The burden is placed on those that create the most wear and tear.
- The cost of additional use of facilities is appropriately distributed.

HEALTH

(2003; in 2014, updated, added to, and absorbed old "Mental Health Services" section, which was adopted in 2008.)

Health Care

We support public funding to create, expand, and/or educate about:

1. Community-based, integrated health care services, where patients can receive primary and preventive physical and behavioral health services in the same place.
2. The use of the Medical Access Program (MAP) to pay for the health care of those who are not eligible for other forms of insurance, and a sliding-scale fee schedule for the near poor.
3. Maximizing all available state and local financing mechanisms to leverage as much federal money as possible to fund local health care services.
4. Contractual agreements with cities, counties, and other governmental entities for payment of health care delivered to non-Travis County residents.
5. Recruitment, education, and training of professional staff (i.e., physicians, nurses, social workers, case managers, outreach workers, etc.) to implement health and social service programs based on best practices.

6. A single county or multicounty health care district (hospital district) in Austin and/or Travis County with an appointed or elected board.

Behavioral Health Care

We support public funding to create, expand, and/or educate about:

7. Specialized, community-based behavioral health and substance abuse treatment services that can respond to patients at whatever their level of need (e.g., hotlines, information and referral, outpatient, crisis intervention, in-patient, long-term care/residential treatment, sobriety centers, and telemedicine), regardless of ability to pay.

8. Additional in-patient behavioral health beds in a health care facility or local hospital for crisis intervention and stabilization.

9. Programs/services (e.g., housing, transportation, employment, and other basic needs) to assist those with severe behavioral and/or physical health issues to live successfully in the community.

10. Mobile crisis outreach teams and hospital and jail-diversion projects to redirect individuals into behavioral health services and away from unnecessary incarceration or hospitalization.

11. An emphasis on preventive behavioral health programs and services.

Wellness and Health Promotion

We support public funding to create, expand, and/or educate about:

12. A system of public health and strong public health policy as a sound strategy for preventing disease, promoting health, and driving down health care costs.

13. Socioeconomic and health factors related to HIV/AIDS and sexually transmitted infections (STIs).

14. Encouraging a healthy lifestyle that includes a balanced diet taken in moderation, exercise, and self-education in healthy living.

15. Promotion and protection of women's access to health care, including all aspects of reproductive health. (LWV-Texas statement)

ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

(Reviewed in 1996; updated at the 1997 and 2009 Annual Meetings.)

1. Solid Waste

(Reaffirmed in 1996.)

- Support for recycling, reuse, and other methods of reducing the volume of waste.
- Support for long-range planning.
- Support for the improvement of our present sanitary landfill operation.

2. Support for Energy Conservation

(Reaffirmed in 1996.)

3. Water/Wastewater

(Adopted with recommended review changes in 1996; last two bullets adopted in 2009.)

- Continued support for the Barton Springs-Edwards Aquifer Conservation District and support for an underground water district for the northern Edwards Aquifer.
- To protect our water supplies, support use of: properly maintained and enforced structural controls, such as water quality ponds; properly maintained and enforced nonstructural controls, such as impervious cover limits, natural vegetation or vegetative filter strips; and best management practices.
- Support of vigorous enforcement of water quality ordinances and laws by City and County officials.
- Support of regular, formal communication between the TCEQ and the City of Austin.
- Support of regional sewage treatment plants rather than numerous small package plants.
- Support of the prohibition of sewage discharge or land treatment over aquifer recharge areas.
- Support of advanced wastewater treatment after cost benefit analysis has been done.
- Support for future development, to be addressed with more extraterritorial jurisdiction (ETJ) control; fees should reflect the services; City should take into account the water usage of new development, i.e., high-rise condos, and assess charges accordingly.
- Support of planning for infrastructure of water and wastewater (drinking water, sewage, and storm water), to include all funding streams.
 - Have scheduled repairs as needed to avoid crisis management.
 - Include recurring maintenance costs in annual budgets.
 - Reduce usage or implement other conservation programs.
 - Budget for recurring maintenance costs for new facilities.
 - Create separate budget items for emergencies and capital expenditures.
 - Schedule ongoing tests for water and wastewater leakage.

4. Municipal utility district (MUD)

(Adopted as reviewed in 1997.)

- Support of the start of the 120-day MUD review process after full documentation is received by the City.
- Support for utility line extension financing through revenue bonds rather than contract bonds.

5. Air Quality

A 1987-1988 study of Austin's air quality indicated that at present the City complies with federal air quality standards. While no consensus was taken on the report, should Austin's air quality deteriorate in the future, further study may be recommended. In 1996, Austin does not exceed federal clean air standards, but the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) has designated it as a near non-attainment area. (See the 1996 Transportation positions.)

ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE

1. Support of adequate counsel for indigents at all court levels.
2. Support of improved training and selection standards for the local law enforcement personnel.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

(Adopted at the 2001 Annual Meeting.)

Local governments have a responsibility to help assure a supply of affordable housing to their residents.

Responsibility should be exercised in the areas of ordinance making, policy making, and public education.

1. The LWVAA believes that local governmental bodies should consider the impact on the cost of housing when writing ordinances and developing policy.
2. The City should do more to educate neighborhoods about the advantages of mixed-income housing.
3. The LWVAA supports the waiver of development fees, expedited permit processing, and other incentives to developers to encourage the construction of affordable housing, but there should be strict monitoring and ready access of information to the public.
4. The LWVAA supports the concept of leasing surplus city/county property for affordable housing projects.
5. The City of Austin and Travis County should cooperate wherever possible on affordable housing and should try to work with adjoining counties and municipalities.
6. There should be more flexibility in the building and zoning codes of the City—particularly in allowing multifamily uses in commercial districts—but there should not be a wholesale move toward cumulative zoning. There could be increased residential densities along transit corridors and around the edges of single-family neighborhoods, but existing single-family neighborhoods should not be required to have increased density.