

League of Women Voters of Alameda
General Membership Meeting: Program Planning
January 26, 2019, 1-3 PM, Alameda Hospital Room A

Attending: Board members: Georgia Gates Derr (presiding), Susan Hauser, Keasha Martindill, Doris Gee, Sally Faulhaber, Kate Quick, Ken Werner, Michele Ellson. Other LWVA members: Ruth Dixon-Mueller, Kathryn Saenz Duke, Karen Guthrie, Liz Rogers, Mark Hamilton, Laura Kinley, Ashley Lorden, Lisa Hall, Andrea Carlise. Andrew Huntoon. Visitor: Amos White.

Handouts: LWVC 2017-19 Issues for Emphasis; LWVA 2018-2019 Issues for Emphasis; LWVC Notes on Ongoing Work and Opportunities; LWVC Program Planning Response Form (to be sent to LWVC as consensus recommendation of LWVA).

Introduction: Georgia Gates Derr reviewed key features of the Program Planning process and the League as a multi-level grassroots organization. Factors to be considered in recommending issues for emphasis/priorities at national, state, regional and local levels include: current League positions; resources needed for initiatives (money, volunteers, staff time); member interest; and identification of other organizations working on the issues and potential coalitions. Program Planning process dates for: **LWVC 2019-2021** – General membership mtg. Jan. 26, Board concurrence/recommendation Feb. 21, Report due Mar. 3, Convention May 31-June 2. **LWVA 2019-2020** – General membership mtg. Jan. 26, Action Com. recommendations (no date set), LWVA Board concurrence/recommendation May 16, Annual mtg. June 22.

Current Issues for Emphasis:

LWVC 2017-2019 (as adopted at June 2017 CA State Convention): Making Democracy Work; natural resources; CA response to changing federal policies and budget actions in key areas such as health care, immigration, environment, and tax reform. Georgia read from a list of LWVC's legislative accomplishments during the past year based on these priorities (<https://lwvc.org/news/hard-fought-victories-california-our-legislative-wrap>)

LWVA 2018-2019 (as adopted at June 2018 Annual Meeting): Local campaign finance, local government transparency and good governance, high school voter registration and education, Schools and Communities First campaign. Georgia summarized LWVA's accomplishments in each of these four areas, e.g., campaign finance charts in local elections, candidates and issues forums, successful voter education on Measure K city charter amendment, student registration, and the collection of over 1,000 signatures for the Schools and Communities First ballot initiative.

LWVC Ongoing Work and Opportunities: The California League's "Background Memo for Program Planning for 2019-2021" includes an ongoing focus on voter protection and mobilization, election reform, money in politics transparency, and redistricting, plus ensuring an accurate count in the 2020 Census. LWVC has also been working on the Schools and Communities First education campaign (scheduled for the Nov. 2020 ballot), increasing the supply of low- and moderate-income housing, reforming the criminal justice system, ensuring water supply and quality, and advocating policies to safeguard the environment and mitigate the effects of climate change. Each of these "opportunities for League impact" applies to local Leagues as well.

Concurrence Process and Proposals for LWVC Convention: Kate Quick explained how local Leagues initiate studies on particular public policy issues leading to proposals for new or revised state or national

positions. Three such proposals have been distributed to all local CA Leagues with requests for our concurrence (i.e., agreement, or support):

- 1) LWV Sacramento County proposes that LWVC adopt its recommended position on a fair, equitable and transparent **criminal justice** system that eliminates systemic bias, facilitates successful re-entry of incarcerated individuals, promotes safety of police and communities, etc.
- 2) LWV San Luis Obispo County proposes that LWVC adopt its recommended position on **civil discourse** that includes best practices for improving the quality of public education and advocacy on public policy issues within the current framework for promoting good government.
- 3) LWV Sacramento County proposes that LWVC adopt its recommended position on **voter representation/election process** and the principles of electoral reform to create conditions for maximum possible participation and equitable representation based on evidence and accountability, etc.

Participants suggested that links to the texts of these proposals be distributed to LWVA members via eBlast for comment prior to the Feb. 21 Board meeting. Based on an informal assessment of those present, Georgia concluded that the group needed additional information on the criminal justice and voter representation proposals in order to reach a consensus, but concurred with the civil discourse proposal.

Additional Issues for Emphasis suggested by members:

LWVC 2019-2021: No formal study recommended. In addition to the Make Democracy Work campaign, LWVA members recommended three additional areas of focus: the Schools and Communities First initiative; early childhood education; and health care.

LWVA 2019-2020: No formal study recommended. Members suggested the following issues/activities:

- 1) Campaign Finance Reform (Action Committee via email.)
- 2) Strengthen youth outreach education connections with students and faculty of local high schools and the College of Alameda in possible partnership with AAUW.
- 3) Explore civics education initiatives for schools via studio-based TV productions of short films/"game shows" and other activities in line with current standard curricula without adding to teachers' workloads.
- 4) Collaborate with schools and other community organizations to promote community dialogue and strengthen AUSD policies and practices relating to gun safety. (Amos White to report back to us on LWV Broward County activities relating to gun violence prior to Feb. Board meeting.)
- 5) Local Government: Transparency and Good Governance
- 6) Advocate locally for "bridging the partisan divide" in civil discourse, including our elected and appointed public officials, in collaboration with community groups such as Better Angels Alliance; publicize educational and skills training workshops offered by these groups.
- 7) Emphasize affordable housing and rent stabilization for Alameda; public transit for getting off, on and around the island; climate change and the challenge of rising sea levels. Note that LWVA could leverage its efforts with the "sustainability manifestos" on housing and on the environment of CASA (Community Action for a Sustainable Alameda).

Final recommendation: On its program planning response form, LWVA should encourage LWVC to emphasize programs that offer the best opportunities for participant diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Ruth Dixon-Mueller, Acting Secretary