

# LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF BALTIMORE COUNTY

## Member Handbook 2023-2024



## Your League

The League of Women Voters of Baltimore County is a nonprofit organization dedicated to the principles of self-government established in the Constitution of the United States. For more than 60 years the League of Women Voters of Baltimore County has provided nonpartisan information on local, state, and national politics. The public depends on us for unbiased information on elections and policies.

Our volunteers are defenders of democracy who use their skills and professional knowledge to benefit the people of Baltimore County.

We believe in the power of voters to create a more perfect democracy. We believe our government is responsible to its citizens to maintain an equitable and flexible system of taxation, promote the conservation and development of natural resources in the public interest, share in the solution of economic and social problems affecting the general welfare, promote a sound economy, and adopt domestic policies which facilitate the solution of international problems.

## WHAT'S INSIDE

### [BOARD & COMMITTEES](#)

Find out who your board members are and check out our new committee structure.

### [BYLAWS](#)

Our bylaws are the nonprofit governing rules that guide how we operate.

### [PRIORITIES](#)

Learn about our committees and focus for this election year.

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# Who We Are

We help our members and the community understand what is happening in local and regional politics and provide opportunities to get involved. We work together for the social justice necessary for democracy to flourish.

## Protect the Freedom to Vote

We challenge all efforts and tactics that threaten our democracy and limit the ability of voters to exercise their right to vote.

## Reduce Money’s Political Influence

Elections should be about the voters, not big money interests. It’s time to limit Super PACs and secret donors to protect representative democracy.

## Fight for Fair Redistricting

Congressional districts and government legislative bodies should be apportioned substantially on population. We oppose partisan and racial gerrymandering that strips rights away from voters.



## Mission

Empowering voters. Defending democracy.

## Vision

We envision a democracy where every person has the desire, the right, the knowledge, and the confidence to participate.

# Membership-

Your LWVBCo membership supports the work done by the League at the state and national level, and you automatically become a member of the state and national League when you join. Dues are split among the organizations and are used to support the League's work on all levels. Nationwide there are more than 700 Leagues (15 in Maryland) and 500,000 members. As a member you have access to events, webinars, publications, and the combined efforts of half a million members nationwide who work to advocate for social and economic justice for all.

The League is nonpartisan. We do not support or oppose candidates for public office but advocate only on those issues chosen by the consensus of the membership. The League believes that political parties are essential to the American system of government and that participation is beneficial to the political parties and to the system. Consequently, the League encourages its members as individuals to be active in the political process, including supporting candidates for public office and in seeking election to public office, partisan or non-partisan.

Only to the extent that the public and its elected officials are convinced of the League's genuine nonpartisanship will the League be able to render effective voter service activities and gain a wide base of support for its positions on governmental issues.

The LWVBCo is fully committed to diversity, equity, and inclusion in principle and in practice. We invite members from every gender, gender identity, ethnicity, race, native or indigenous origin, age, generation, sexual orientation, culture, religion, belief system, marital status, parental status, socioeconomic status, language, accent, ability status, mental health, educational level or background, geography, nationality, work style, work experience, job role function, thinking style, personality type, physical appearance, political perspective or affiliation, and/or any other characteristic that can be identified as recognizing or illustrating diversity.

Membership costs \$60 for an individual, \$100 for a sustaining member, \$110 for a household, \$150 for a sustaining household, and full-time students are free. Members must be 16 years or older.

## Empowering Voters. Defending Democracy.

We envision a democracy where every person has  
the **DESIRE**,  
the **RIGHT**,  
the **KNOWLEDGE**,  
and the **CONFIDENCE**  
to participate.





# Stay Informed

## Website

Our website, [www.LWVBaltimoreCounty.org](http://www.LWVBaltimoreCounty.org), is a vital source of current and historical League information. You will also find the latest events, documents, newsletters, positions, advocacy, and opportunities to volunteer. If you still have questions, comments, or suggestions, please email [contact@lwvbaltimorecounty.org](mailto:contact@lwvbaltimorecounty.org) with suggestions and comments.

## Social Media

We ask members to follow our FB page, League of Women Voters of Baltimore County and share our posts to spread the word. Our posts on Facebook and LinkedIn provide information about our priorities and events. As we gain interest and followers, our social media presence may expand to other social media platforms.

## Newsletter

All members receive our monthly newsletter, *The Voter*, by email. The updated calendar, description of upcoming events, clarification of positions and activities, and important information about studies and action are included from September through June and are also available on our [website](#).

## Email

Email is used to update members of events and opportunities. If you have important information to share with the membership, email us at [contact@LWVBaltimoreCounty.org](mailto:contact@LWVBaltimoreCounty.org).

## Your Elected Officials

After every election, this brochure is updated with information about your elected officials and sent to members. Contact the office for the most current brochure or download it from our website.

## Voters' Guide

Before elections, the League asks candidates questions relating to the duties of the office they are seeking and prints their responses word-for-word to assist citizens in their decision-making. Voters Guides are distributed through libraries, senior centers, retirement homes, and mailed to newly registered voters.

# Administration



## Acting President

Stacey Morrison

## Office Manager

Maggy Lindgren

## Location

6600 York Road, Suite 211  
Baltimore, MD 21212

## Contact

Phone: (410) 377-8046  
Email: [contact@LWVBaltimoreCounty.org](mailto:contact@LWVBaltimoreCounty.org)  
Website: [www.LWVBaltimoreCounty.org](http://www.LWVBaltimoreCounty.org)



## President

Linda Kohn, President

## Executive Director

Nikki Tyree

## Location

121 Cathedral Street, Suite 2B  
Annapolis, MD 21401

## Contact

Phone: (410) 269-0232  
Email: [info@lwvmd.org](mailto:info@lwvmd.org)  
Website: [www.lwvmd.org](http://www.lwvmd.org)

# Board of Directors

The role of the board is to manage the business and finances of the organization and it is subject to the instructions of the membership.

If you are interested in being on our board, please contact the LWVBCo office. We also have a nominating committee that can assist you if you want to find out more about the roles of each office. If you are not interested in a Board position, please



Co-President  
Please volunteer!



Co-President  
Please volunteer!



Vice President  
This could be you!



Vice President  
[Stacey Morrison](#)  
Term 2023-2024



Secretary  
[Lisa Barkan](#)  
2022-2024



Treasurer  
Please volunteer!



Director/  
Acting Treasurer  
[Neilson Andrews](#)  
2022-2024



Director  
[Ramona Johnson](#)  
2022-2024



Director  
[Barbara Dezmon](#)  
2023-2025



Director  
[Angel Lee](#)  
2023-2024



Director  
[Wandra Ashley-Williams](#)  
2023-2025



Director  
[Teniola Akinwuntan](#)  
Term 2023-24

consider volunteering on a committee.

# Get Involved

## General and Board Meetings

The League sponsors several general meetings each year. The purpose is to highlight a specific topic on which the League has a position. Formats include panel discussions, forums, and guest speakers. The board of directors meets the first Thursday of each month from 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. The meetings are open to membership. This year most of our meetings will continue to be virtual. If you are interested in attending, please contact the office manager at [contact@lwvbaltimorecounty.org](mailto:contact@lwvbaltimorecounty.org).

## Consensus Meetings

Discussion and Consensus meetings are small meetings where issues are discussed that concern the League, including local, state, and national studies, and consensus is developed as needed. Unit meetings also provide an avenue for members and the board of directors to communicate; these are scheduled as needed. Traditionally our meetings are held a few times per year at either Broadmead Retirement Community, Charlestown Retirement Community, or a member's home. This year our meetings will be virtual. Dates will be included in the monthly newsletter, *The Voter*, and on our website.

## Annual Meeting

This meeting is held annually between May and June to elect officers and adopt the budget and the program for the following year. Consideration of amendments to the bylaws may take place. It is also a time to reflect on the accomplishments of the past year. There is usually a prominent guest speaker. Guests are welcome.

## Ways to Participate

There are many ways to participate in the LWVBCo. You can volunteer to join or lead a committee or participate in ongoing efforts to:

- Help on a committee, project, or event.
- Advocate for our causes.
- Edit publications.
- Share information on social media.
- Educate and register voters.
- Assist with office work.
- Contact legislators.
- Donate to our mission.
- Share your talents.

## Upcoming Volunteer Opportunities

- Become the Treasurer.
- Join the board or committee.
- Write an article for *The Voter* newsletter.
- Collect signatures for the ballot petition for [VOTE4MORE!](#)
- Plan and attend the Legislative Luncheon in January.
- Represent LWV as we register voters together.
- Plan or attend program planning meetings for membership.
- Participate in election year candidate forums.
- Assist in any of our events.
- Work to keep our website current.
- Help in the office.
- Attend County Council or Board of Education meetings.

## Sign up to volunteer!

Complete our [volunteer form](#) or contact us by calling 410-377-8046, or email [contact@lwvbaltimorecounty.org](mailto:contact@lwvbaltimorecounty.org). A member will contact you to find the right volunteer fit for you.

## Donate to support our work.

Your contributions make our work possible. We accept general donations, donations for specific projects, and bequeaths or investment donations.

Democracy  
Truth  
Project

Countering mis- and disinformation and advancing better public understanding of the democratic and electoral process.

- Research partnerships on mis- and disinformation
- Public messaging campaign
- Trainings & experiential learning opportunities
- Civic education

WOMEN  
POWER  
DEMOCRACY

# Calendar 2023-24

## November 2023

- 2 LWV Balt Co. Board Meeting
- 6 Baltimore Co. Council Legis Sessions
- 7 Election Day
- 7 Balt Co Board of Education Meetings
- 10 Veterans' Day
- 14 Baltimore County Council Work Sessions
- 20 LWV Balt Co. Exec. Com. Meeting
- 20 Baltimore Co. Council Legis Sessions
- 20 Balt Co Board of Education Meetings
- 23 Thanksgiving
- 24 Native American Heritage Day
- 28 Baltimore County Council Work Sessions
- 28 National Giving Day
- TBD Giving Day promotion

## December 2023

- 4 Balt. Co. Council Legis Sessions
- 5 Balt Co. Board of Ed Meetings
- 7 LWV Balt Co. Board Meeting
- 7 Chanukah begins
- 9 Holiday Gathering: Bluestone Restaurant
- 12 Balt Co. Council Work Session
- 18 18 LWV Balt Co. Exec. Com. Meeting
- 18 Balt. Co. Council Legis Sessions
- 19 Balt Co. Board of Ed Meetings
- 25 Christmas
- 26-Jan. 1 Kwanzaa
- 31 New Year's Eve

## January 2024

- 1 New Years Day
- 2 Balt. Co. Legis. Session
- 4 LWV Balt. Co. Board Meeting
- 6 Legislative Luncheon, Woodbridge Baptist
- 9 Baltimore Co. Board of Education Meetings
- 15 Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
- 16 Balt. Co. FY 2025 Oper. Budget Public Hearing
- 22 LWV Balt Co. Executive Committee Meeting
- 23 Balt. Co. FY 2025 Oper. Budget Work Session
- 23 Baltimore Co. Board of Education Meetings
- TBD Programming meeting dates

## February 2024

- 1 LWV Balt. Co. Board Meeting
- 13 Balt. Co Board of Education Meetings
- 19 Executive Committee Meeting
- 27 Balt. Co. Bd. Of Education Meetings

## March 2024

- 5 Balt. Co. Board of Education Meetings
- 7 LWV Balt. Co. Board Meeting
- 18 LWV Balt. Co. Executive Committee Meeting
- 19 Balt. Co. Board of Education Meetings
- 24-25 Purim Jewish holiday
- 31 Easter Sunday

## April 2024

- 4 LWV Balt. Co. Board Meeting
- 15 LWV Balt. Co. Executive Committee Meeting
- 16 Baltimore Co. Board of Education Meeting
- 22-30 Passover Jewish holiday

## May 2024

- 2 LWV Baltimore Co. Board Meeting
- 18 Possible Annual Meeting Date
- 20 LWV Balt. Co. Executive Committee Meeting
- 22 Balt. Co. FY2026 Capital Budget Public Hearing
- 27 Memorial Day

## June 2024

- 1 LGBT+ Pride Month
- 6 LWV Baltimore Co. Board Meeting
- 17 LWV Balt. Co. Executive Committee Meeting
- 30 End of LWV year/ membership renewal





# Committees and Subcommittees

## Executive Committee

Co-President	vacant
Co-President	vacant
Secretary	Lisa Barkan
Vice President	Stacey Morrison

## Action & Observer Corps

Chair	Vacant
County Council Monitoring	Vacant
Education	Yara Cheikh, Barbara Dezmon
Police Accountability	Cindy Farquhar
Housing Forums	Sharonda Huffman Vacant

## Board Nominating Committee

Some members were elected at the Annual Meeting.

## Communications

Chair	Vacant
Website	Sharalyn Luciani Heather Morris
Social Media	Teni Akinwuntan
Emails	Sharalyn Luciani
Publications	Sharalyn Luciani
Newsletter	Stacey Morrison

## Finance/Budget

Acting Treasurer	Neilson Andrews
Investments	Treasurer
Fundraising	Vacant

## Membership & Leadership Development

Chair	Vacant
Roster Management	Maggy Lindgren
New Member Coordinators	Jane Finnesch Judy Plymyer
Volunteer Coordinator	Vacant

## Programming (Event Planning)

Chair	Exec Board
Studies & Consensus	Board
Legislative Luncheon	Neilson Andrews
Speakers	Vacant
Annual Meeting	Angel Lee
Holiday Gathering	Neilson Andrews
Program Planning	Board

## Voter Services

Chair	Vacant
Voter Registration	Vacant
Poll Evaluation	Vacant
Candidate Forums	Vacant
Voter's Guide	

## LWVMD Liaison

Gail Sunderman





# Committee Roles

Volunteers are always needed for large and small tasks, short term and long-term assistance, a few hours, or a longer time commitment. Mentoring is always available as are ideas for new ways to meet our mission.

## Advocacy Committee

The Advocacy Committee identifies county issues that relate to League positions and decides when it is appropriate to present testimony to the County Executive or County Council or to lobby in other ways on those issues or pending legislation. The committee also tracks LWVBCo membership in coalitions.

*Advocacy Committee Chair/Co-Chair* – This committee focuses on information and action. It helps strategize as to what to advocate for at county level, advocate on social policy with county elected officials, attend the annual LWVMD Legislative Day in March, and learn best practices for following up with LWVMD action alerts.

*Advocacy Coordinator:* Member of the Action Committee who coordinates with other advocacy experts and committee chairs to be sure that we respond in a timely way to advocacy opportunities. Provides resources and training to advocacy experts to help them learn about and navigate the league.

*Advocacy Experts / Point People* - Members to track issues of interest in the county; coordinate with other local/state/national leagues; educate Board and league membership; and provide testimony / lobby local and state officials. Issues include environment, land use, food insecurity, education, health care, and transportation, as well as other issues that would fit with the league's positions.

*County Council Observer Corps Members* - Observes County Council meetings and updates the league membership through the newsletter, updates Advocacy Experts, and lobbies the County Executive on relevant issues.

*LWVMD Legislative Day Attendees* - Volunteers to attend and report back on the LWVMD Legislative Day in March.

## Budget & Finance Committee

This committee is critical to our work. The committee manages the league's annual budget and investments; ensures legal compliance; oversees financial record keeping; works with a financial consultant to keep the league books, preparing tax documents, etc.; and reports monthly on the budget and investments to the Board. The President, Treasurer, Chairperson, and members are appointed by the board to develop the budget.

They develop the annual budget, manage League funds to ensure balancing and reconciliation of funds and legal compliance, oversee annual budget and maintain financial records; work with our financial consultants for tracking, bookkeeping of League financial books, preparing tax documents, etc.

The Finance and Budget Committee meets once a year to analyze the previous year's budget, review the expectations for the coming year, and propose a balanced budget to be voted on by the Board prior to being presented to the membership for vote at the Annual Meeting. The Board of Directors appoints the Budget Committee at least four months prior to the Annual Meeting to prepare a budget for the next fiscal year. The Treasurer may not serve as chair of the committee but serves as an ex-officio member. The Treasurer is also the Chief Financial Officer for the League.

- meets annually to prepare the budget.



## **Communications Committee**

*Communications Chair:* We need a non-partisan LWV advocate to lead the Communications Committee, including developing a marketing strategy; sending and coordinating communications to the membership; developing and maintaining our social media presence, website, and publications, except the Voters' Guide, which is produced through the Voter Services Committee..

*Annual Meeting Workbook Coordinator:* The coordinator organizes a team to revise and update past workbooks which includes necessary information for annual meeting. The Workbook is updated annually.

*Member Handbook Coordinator:* The coordinator works with others to update the handbook and prepare it for publication and distribution to all members. It is updated annually.

*Newsletter sub-committee:* Volunteers coordinate the writing and proofreading of *The Voter*, which is published from September through June. Committee members will coordinate with board members, committee chairs, and general members to generate topic suggestions, articles, and dates of interest. Committee members will also report on relevant updates from the national and state Leagues; information can be obtained on the LWVUS and LWVMD websites.

*Website sub-committee:* The coordinator enlists members to research, change information as needed, update our online calendar, proofread, and check links. The process is ongoing but minimal work. The coordinator works with other committee members.

*Social Media Coordinator(s):* Maintain the LWVBCO's Facebook site, Twitter, and Instagram accounts by developing posts and advertising league events. Posts always need to be non-partisan.

**DEI Task Force** -This group follows guidelines established by LWV and looks for opportunities to expand our work in diverse communities.

## **Education Committee**

The committee monitors the Board of Education meetings and the county's website. The committee follows education news from the Baltimore County Public Schools, state, and federal activity by the LWV. Committee members do the following:

- Represent the league on the governor's committee for selecting School Board candidates.
- Represent the league on a county commission for future attendance planning.
- Represent the league on a TABCO committee encouraging full funding of the education budget.
- Follow progress on implementing the Blueprint for Maryland's Future
- Look into bus driver salary, Co-Vid 19 concerns, and the Food Insecurity Plan for county schools.
- In the past we have examined charter schools and their implications and participated in meetings to choose a superintendent.

## **Events Committee**

*Event Committee Chair:* Plans and implement League hosted events (i.e., Annual Meeting, Holiday Party, and Legislative Luncheon, etc.); coordinates educational events for members and the community; works with the Board and other committees to align League events with our League's strategic plan.

*Annual Meeting Coordinator:* Volunteer to plan and oversee the LWVBCO Annual Meeting. The Annual Meeting is a year-end business meeting to elect officers and directors, vote on bylaw changes, and adopt a budget and program of work for the next year.

*Holiday Party Coordinator:* Volunteer to plan and oversee the LWVBCO annual Holiday Party in December. The Holiday Party is a social meeting to celebrate the league's membership and work.

*Legislative Luncheon Coordinator:* Plans and oversees the annual Legislative Luncheon held in January.

*Speaker Series:* On directions from the Board, the coordinator enlists others to present topics of importance to our members and the public. Speakers can be in person or online.

## **Executive Committee**

The Executive Committee reviews and develops the strategic plan and then brings it to the Board for approval. The Executive Committee meets to work on projects as assigned by the Board or Co-Presidents.

The Executive Committee is composed of the Board of Directors' President(s), Vice President(s), Treasurer, and Secretary. Officers positions are elected by the general membership during the Annual Meeting. Officers take office July 1st and serve for a term of two years or until their successors are elected. See Bylaws and Board Handbook for description of duties and responsibilities.

## **Fundraising Committee**

*Fundraising Chair* - The Fundraising Chair develops and implements an annual plan for raising funds through events, donations, and grants to support league programs, events, and publications; oversee charitable giving campaigns for the league; work with the Board and league committees promote and coordinate fundraising; and recruit committee members as needed to implement the fundraising plan. The Fundraising Chair will often work in conjunction with the Finance Committee and Program Committee.

## **Membership Committee**

This committee has several roles, not just maintaining a roster. They coordinate the recruitment of people/groups to become dues paying members of our League; investigate and develop a program to create opportunities for 16 year old students to work with our League (i.e. fulfill service learning hours, support voter registration, etc.); work with other Committees to ensure inclusion and belonging of every member; and help structure events so that they include a membership piece.

Responsibilities of the committee include:

- Maintaining the membership list in coordination with the Office Manager
- Collecting dues in coordination with the Treasurer
- Welcoming new members and volunteers, matching them with committees based on their interests, and holding orientation meetings to introduce them to the league.
- Working to increase the diversity of the league through events and collaborations with

underrepresented groups and areas of Baltimore County.

- Promoting events and activities that represent the interests of the membership.

*Membership Diversity Coordinator:* Volunteer(s) to work with the Membership Committee to coordinate the recruitment of people from underrepresented groups and work with other committees to ensure inclusion and belonging. See documents on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion.

*Membership Committee Member for Student Service Learning:* Volunteer(s) to work with the Membership Committee to investigate and develop a program to create opportunities for high school students to work with the league to fulfill service-learning hours.

## **Nominating & Board Development Committee**

The nominating committee works with other committees to recruit League members annually to serve on the Board of Directors. Committee members provide candidates with information pertaining to duties, roles, and responsibilities of all Board of Director and Executive Committee positions. The committee sends a report with nominated Officers, Directors, and members of the succeeding Nominating Committee to all members one month prior to the Annual Meeting.

The Nominating Committee consists of five voting members, two of whom are Board members. The Chair and two non-Board members are nominated annually by the Nominating Committee and elected at the Annual Meeting.

## **Program Planning Committee**

*Program and Consensus Meetings Coordinator:* Plans, implements, and reports on membership-wide meetings to discuss Programming (league positions) and Consensus (votes on positions). Member of the Events Committee. This committee also coordinates local programming with National and State programming.

### Meetings:

- Programming Meeting - Annual meeting in January or February



- Consensus Meetings - As needed to vote on league positions.

### **Voter Services Committee**

Coordinates and plans distribution of Voters' Guides including, including exploring new strategies for advertising the Voters' Guides; work with the Finance Committee to assist with cost estimate planning of Voter Guides; coordinate voter registration and GOTV activities; research and contribute data to VOTE411.org; assist in poll evaluations.

*Voter Services Volunteers:* Volunteers are necessary for the success of our Voter's Guide, Vote411.org and voter registration efforts. assist with planning for cost estimates for the Voters' Guide and VOTE411.org; plan for broadening distribution of Voters' Guides; examine new ways to advertise VOTE411.org.

2022 - 1-2 volunteers to help write and edit *Voters' Guide*, 5-8 volunteers to help distribute the *Voters' Guide*, 2 volunteers to help with VOTE411.org, 30 volunteers to do poll evaluations

### *Voter Registration sub-committee:*

Staff voter registration at the Baltimore Field Office of US Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) at least 4-8 times per month. (Each session lasts two hours, requires 3 people, and averages about 25-65 new citizens registered per session.) Coordinated community voter registration events upon request during election years.

### *Voters' Guide / Vote411.org sub-committee:*

- Voters' Guides - LWVBCo produces and distributes approximately 40,000 Guides for each election.
  - Volunteers create candidate questions, mail them to candidates and follow up when needed.
  - During production volunteers are needed to edit the text; good organizational skills and facility with word processing are needed.
  - Distribution of the printed Guides; about 5-8 volunteers needed to plan outreach.

- VOTE411.org is our online Voters' Guide that can be personalized for each user.
  - Volunteers create candidate questions, mail them to candidates and follow up when needed.
  - Volunteers to enter/check data on the VOTE411 website; send email invitations and reminders; make telephone calls to remind candidates about participation. There is a half-day formal training session, with one-the-job training once we start working. Good organizational skills are needed. Mentoring is available.

### *Poll Evaluation sub-committee:*

- Poll evaluations are required by the Maryland Board of Elections. As a nonpartisan organization we volunteer to visit polling locations and observe the election process. This activity requires 2-3 hours of training at the Board of Elections as well as several hours of visiting assigned polls on election day. Poll evaluators use checklists to verify that individual polls are following the required procedures.





## Programming

### LWV Baltimore County

Our program positions revolve around the themes of Government, Natural Resources, and Social Policy, including Education, Healthcare, and Housing. Annual programming for the next year is approved at the Annual Meeting. This year our work centers around the 2024 election. To learn more about this year's programming, check our website, <https://www.lwvbaltimorecounty.org/programming>.

Position statements are created through an in-depth process of studying the issue, developing consensus, and the vote of membership. All position statements are available on our website, or you can search the web for "LWV Baltimore County Position Statements 2021."

We periodically evaluate our position statements to decide if they need to be updated. If you would like to assist with reviewing positions, please email [contact@LWVBaltimoreCounty.org](mailto:contact@LWVBaltimoreCounty.org)

### LWV Maryland

Like all LWV, positions are adopted after multi-county League representatives have conducted a study and produced fact sheets and consensus questions. All LWVMD members meet locally to discuss and come to a consensus on the issue. This includes reviewing current LWVMD positions to determine whether they should be retained or updated, or new ones developed.

This year the state is focusing on several broad categories, including Making Democracy Work, Promoting Social and Economic Justice, and Protecting the Environment.

LWVMD is committed to continuing to work in these areas, but only with volunteers or teams of volunteers who will engage with the issue by:

- Leveraging our influence by working with coalitions and/or partners.
- Working to pass (or in some cases oppose) a limited number of bills.
- Providing education to our members about the issue area they are working on and the priority bills that address those issues.
- Submitting testimony at hearings and, if appropriate, presenting testimony.
- Following the progress of the priority bills and, if necessary, drafting action alerts to be sent to League members.
- Using social media to promote our causes.
- Reporting to members about the progress of the legislation.



# Bylaws

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF BALTIMORE COUNTY, INC. (Revised June 2022)

## Article I. Name and Office

**Section 1. Name.** The name of this organization shall be the League of Women Voters of Baltimore County, Inc. (hereinafter referred to as the "LWVBCo"). The LWVBCo is an integral part of the League of Women Voters of the United States (hereinafter referred to as "LWVUS") and the League of Women Voters of Maryland (hereinafter referred to as "LWVMD").

**Section 2. Principal Office.** The principal office of the LWVBCo shall be in Baltimore County, Maryland, if feasible.

## Article II. Purpose and Policy

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

a. The LWVBCo is organized and operated exclusively for charitable purposes under section 501(c)3 of the Internal Revenue Code, or the corresponding section of any future federal tax code. Notwithstanding any other provisions of these articles, the LWVBCo shall not carry on any other activities not permitted to be carried on by a corporation exempt from federal income tax under such provisions of the Internal Revenue Code.

b. No substantial part of the activities of the LWVBCo shall be attempting to influence legislation.

**Section 2. Political Policy.** The LWVBCo shall not support or oppose any political party or candidate.

**Section 3. Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion Policy.** The LWVBCo is fully committed to ensuring compliance - in principle and in practice - with LWVUS' Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Policy.

**Section 4. Unity.** All purposes and policies of the LWVBCo shall be in accord with those of the LWVUS and the LWVMD.

## Article III. Membership

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

### Section 2. Types of Membership.

a) *Voting members.* Individuals at least 16 years of age who join the LWVBCo and are members in good standing shall be voting members of the LWVUS, LWVMD, the LWVBCo, and any regional League to which the LWVBCo belongs. A member in good standing is one who has paid dues in accordance with Article XI,

(i) Those who have been members of the LWVUS for 50 years or more shall be life members excused from the payment of dues.

(ii) Individuals 16 and over in the above categories, who are enrolled in an educational program leading to a degree or certification, may be designated as "Student Members" and pay no dues.

b) *Nonvoting members.*

(i) Associate Members. All others who join the League shall be associate members.

(ii) Institutional Members. Institutional members such as educational institutions shall be approved by the board of directors.

**Section 3. Member Action.** Members may act in the name of the League of Women Voters only when authorized to do so by the appropriate LWVUS, LWVMD, or LWVBCO Board of Directors.

## Article IV. Officers

**Section 1. Enumeration and Election of Officers.** The officers of the LWVBCo shall be president or co-presidents (hereinafter, the term "president" shall be understood to include co-presidents), first vice president, second vice president, secretary, and



treasurer who shall be elected by the general membership at an annual meeting. Officers shall take office on July 1 following their election and serve for a term of two years or until their successors are elected. The president, first vice-president, and secretary shall be elected in odd-numbered years. The second vice president and the treasurer shall be elected in even-numbered years.

**Section 2. The President.** The president shall preside at all meetings of the organization and of the board of directors. She/he may, in the absence or disability of the treasurer, sign or endorse checks, drafts, and notes. She/he shall be an ex-officio member of all committees except the nominating committee. She/he shall have such usual powers of supervision and management as may pertain to the office of president and perform such other duties as may be designated by the board. The president shall also serve on the Management Committee of the Jessa Goldberg Endowment Fund.

**Section 3. The Vice Presidents.** One of the two vice presidents, in order of their seniority determined by time in office, in the event of the absence, disability, or death of the president, shall possess all the powers and perform all the duties of that office. If neither vice president is able to serve in the capacity of president, the board of directors shall elect one of its members to fill the vacancy. The vice presidents shall perform such other duties as the president and board may designate.

**Section 4. The Secretary.** The secretary shall keep minutes of all the general meetings of the LWVBCo including the annual meeting, all meetings of the board of directors, and any meetings of the Executive committee of the board of directors. She/he shall notify all officers and directors of their election. She/he shall sign, with the president, all contracts and other instruments when so authorized by the board and shall perform such other functions as may be incident to that office.

**Section 5. The Treasurer.** The treasurer shall receive all monies directed to the LWVBCo. She/he shall be custodian of these monies and shall deposit operational monies with financial institutions designated by the board of directors. Monies designated for the Jessa Goldberg Endowment Fund shall be deposited in the endowment fund account. The treasurer shall also disburse same in accordance with

the budget and/or upon order of the Board including a monthly or quarterly disbursement into the Management Fund of the Baltimore City and Baltimore County Leagues of Women Voters for purposes of maintaining joint office and personnel. She/he shall present statements to the board at its regular meetings and to the membership in an annual report. The treasurer shall retain all aforementioned responsibilities of the office of treasurer. However, the board may designate an assistant to perform the routine operations required to fulfill these functions. The books of the treasurer shall be reviewed annually.

**Section 6. Term.** Each officer shall be elected for a term of two (2) years and shall not be eligible for more than two (2) consecutive terms in the same office. However, in the event a person is elected to serve an unexpired term, she/he is not precluded from being elected for two terms in her/his own right. The treasurer shall also serve on the Management Committee of the Jessa Goldberg Endowment Fund.

## Article V. Board of Directors

**Section 1. Composition, Number, Manner of Selection, and Term of Office.** The board of directors shall consist of the officers of the LWVBCo, eight (8) elected voting directors, and not more than eight (8) appointed non-voting directors. Four (4) directors shall be elected by the general membership at each annual meeting and shall serve for a term of staggered two-year terms. The elected directors may appoint such additional directors as they deem necessary to carry on the work of the LWVBCo. The terms of office of the appointed directors shall be one (1) year or less and shall expire on June 30.

**Section 2. Qualifications.** No person shall be elected or appointed or continue to serve as an officer or director of this organization unless this person is a voting member of the LWVBCo.

**Section 3. Vacancies.** Any vacancy occurring in the board of directors may be filled, until July 1, by a majority vote of the board of directors. Three consecutive absences from board meetings by any board member without a valid reason may be deemed a resignation.

**Section 4. Power 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 the same, subject to the instructions of the general membership. It shall plan and direct the work necessary to carry out the programs as adopted by the LWVUS and the LWVMD. The board shall create and designate special committees as it may deem necessary.

**Section 5. Executive Committee.** The executive committee, consisting of the officers of the LWVBCo, shall exercise such powers and authority as may be delegated to it by the LWVBCo Board of Directors and shall report to the board of directors on all actions taken by it between regular meetings of the board.

#### **Section 6. Meetings.**

a) *Regular Meetings.* There shall be at least nine (9) regular meetings of the board of directors annually. The president shall notify each member of the board of directors of all meetings.

b) *Special Meetings.* The president may call special meetings of the board of directors and/or the executive committee and shall call a special meeting of the board upon the written request of five (5) members of the board.

c) *Conference Telephone Call Meetings.* The board members may participate in meetings by means of conference telephone calls or similar communication equipment allowing all persons participating in the meeting to hear each other at the same time. The president or co-presidents shall give due notice to the board members prior to the meeting with dial-in instructions.

Participation by such means shall constitute presence in person at a meeting. Such meetings shall follow the prescription of in-person board meetings. A quorum must call in for decision making and meeting material, and an agenda must be available to all participants.

d) *Email Meetings.* Board meetings may be held by email to deal with specific matters which arise between in-person or conference call board meetings. Such email meetings can take place provided that all board members have access to email on a personal computer. For an email meeting to occur, the president or co-

presidents must notify all board members of the starting and ending time of the meeting and have acknowledgment by a quorum of all board members that they have received notice of the meeting. The president or co-presidents would provide an agenda that would contain no more than three (3) matters. The meeting should not contain minutes of a previous meeting nor treasurer or committee reports. Those participating must do so by assuring that all participants are included in order for their comments and votes to be considered and valid by selecting reply all. At the termination time of the meeting, all input, discussion, and voting would cease.

**Section 7. Quorum.** A majority of the elected members of the board of directors shall be necessary and sufficient to constitute a quorum for the transaction of business at every meeting of the board of directors.

**Section 8. Removal.** The board of directors shall have the power to remove any director or officer with due process and such action shall be conclusive.

## **Article VI**

### **Conflict of Interest**

**Section 1. Disclosure.** Any board member, officer, or committee member having an interest in a contract or other transaction presented to the board of directors shall give prompt, full, and frank disclosure of her/his interest to the board of directors prior to the board of directors acting on such contract or transaction.

**Section 2. Determination of Conflict.** The board of directors shall determine, by majority vote, whether the disclosure shows that a conflict of interest exists or can reasonably be construed to exist. If a conflict is found to exist, such person shall not vote on, nor use her/his personal influence on, nor participate in the discussion of the issue. This person may not be counted in determining the existence of a quorum at any meeting where the contract, transaction, or determination is under discussion or is being voted upon.

**Section 3. Minutes.** The minutes of the meeting shall reflect the disclosure made, the vote thereon, and,

where applicable, the abstention from voting and participation, and whether a quorum was present.

**Section 4. Conflict of Interest Form.** All board members shall sign a conflict-of-interest form at the first board meeting of the year.

## Article VII

### National Convention, State Convention and Council, and Inter-League Organization Convention

**Section 1. National Convention.** The board of directors shall select delegates to the LWVUS National Convention in the number allotted the LWVBCo under the provisions of the bylaws of the LWVUS at a meeting before the date on which the names of the delegates must be sent to the national office

**Section 2. State Convention.** The board of directors shall select delegates to the LWVMD State Convention in the number allotted the LWVBCo under the provisions of the bylaws of the LWVMD at a meeting before the date on which names of delegates must be sent to the state office.

**Section 3. State Council.** The board of directors shall select delegates to the LWVMD Council in the number allotted the LWVBCo under the provisions of the bylaws of the LWVMD at a meeting before the date on which names of delegates must be sent to the state office.

## Article VIII

### Nominating Committee and Elections

**Section 1. Nominating Committee.** The nominating committee shall consist of five (5) voting members, two of whom shall be members of the board of directors. The chairman of the nominating committee and two members, who shall not be members of the board, shall be nominated annually by the nominating committee and elected at the annual meeting. The board of directors shall appoint the two board members of the committee prior to the first meeting of the nominating committee. Any vacancy on the nominating committee shall be filled by the board of directors. Suggestions for

the nominations of officers and directors may be sent to this committee by any voting member.

**Section 2. Report of Nominating Committee and Nominations from the Floor.** The report of the nominating committee of its nominations for officers, directors, and the members of the succeeding nominating committee shall be sent to all members one month before the date of the annual meeting. The report of the nominating committee shall be presented at 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 have been obtained.

**Section 3. Elections.** The election shall be by ballot, provided that when there is but one nominee for each office, the secretary may be instructed to cast the ballot for every nominee. A majority vote of those qualified to vote and voting shall constitute an election. Absentee or proxy voting shall not be permitted.

## Article IX

### Principles and Programs

**Section 1. Principles.** The governmental principles adopted by the national convention, and supported by the League as a whole, constitute the authorization for the adoption of the national, state, and local programs.

**Section 2. Program.** The program consists of action to protect the right to vote of every citizen and those governmental issues chosen for concerted study and action by the members at the annual meeting. The members shall act upon the proposed program in the following manner: the Board of directors shall consider suggestions developed at a meeting on program planning or any suggestions submitted by a voting member two months prior to the annual meeting and shall formulate a recommended program.

a) The recommended program plus a list of non-recommended items shall be sent to all voting members one month before the annual meeting.

b) At the annual meeting, a majority of voting members present, and voting shall be required for adoption of items in the recommended program.



c) Items submitted to the board of directors by voting members at least two months prior to the annual meeting, but not recommended by the board of directors, may be considered by the annual meeting provided that a majority vote of those attending the annual meeting requests consideration. Such items may be adopted by a simple majority of voting members present and voting.

In the case of altered conditions, changes in the program may be made provided that information concerning any proposed change has been sent to all members at least two weeks prior to the general membership meeting at which the change is to be discussed and acted upon.

**Section 3. Member Action.** Members may act in the name of the League of Women Voters only when authorized to do so by the appropriate LWVUS, LWVMD, or LWVBCo Board of Directors.

## Article X

### Meetings

**Section 1. Membership Meetings.** There shall be at least four (4) meetings of the membership related to the program each year. The time and place of such meetings shall be determined by the board of directors.

**Section 2. Annual Meeting.** An annual meeting shall be held between April 15 and June 15, the exact date to be determined by the board of directors. The annual meeting shall:

- a) adopt a local program for the ensuing year, elect required officers, and directors, and members of the nominating committee,
- b) adopt an adequate budget and transact such other business as may properly come before it.

**Section 3. Quorum.** Ten percent of the membership shall constitute a quorum at all meetings of the LWVBCo.

## Article XI

### Financial Administration

**Section 1. Fiscal Year.** The fiscal year of the LWVBCo shall commence on the first day of July each year.

**Section 2. Dues.** The board of directors of the LWVBCo shall determine the amount of annual dues subject to the approval of two-thirds of the voting members attending the annual meeting. One month's notice shall be given to the members of any proposed dues change. Annual dues shall be payable on July 1. Any member who fails to pay her or his dues within three months after they become payable may be dropped from the membership rolls. Dues for a second member residing at the same address in a common household shall be assessed at a reduced rate as approved by the membership at the annual meeting.

**Section 3. Gifts and Donations.** The board of directors may receive and accept gifts and donations from the members, the general public, or any other source for the League's operational and educational activities. The board, at its absolute discretion, may decline gifts they deem inappropriate. Money received by LWVBCo shall be deposited in the general funds unless designated or restricted to the Jessa Goldberg Endowment Fund and shall be managed by the treasurer in separate accounts.

**Section 4. Budget.** A budget for the ensuing fiscal year shall be submitted by the board of directors prior to the annual meeting for adoption.

**Section 5. Finance Committee.** A finance committee shall be appointed by the board of directors at least four (4) months prior to the annual meeting to prepare a budget for the ensuing fiscal year. This committee shall submit a budget to the board of directors for review before submission to the annual meeting. The proposed budget shall be sent to all voting members one month before the annual meeting. The treasurer shall not be eligible to serve as chairman of the budget committee but shall be an ex-officio member of the committee.

**Section 6. Distribution of Funds on Dissolution.** In the event of the dissolution or merger of the LWVBCo for any reason, all money and securities or other property of whatsoever nature which at the time be owned or under the absolute control of the LWVBCo shall be distributed at the discretion of the board of directors or such other persons as shall be charged by law with the

liquidation or winding up of the LWVBCo and its affairs to any member organization of the League of Women Voters national organization which is exempt under section 501(c)3 of the Internal Revenue Code or the corresponding section of any future federal tax code; or if none of these organizations are then in existence or exempt under those tax provisions, then, at the discretion of the board of directors, to another organization which is organized and operated exclusively for charitable and educational purposes and which has established its tax-exempt status under such designated tax provisions.

## Article XII

### Parliamentary Authority

The rules contained 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

### Officer Indemnification

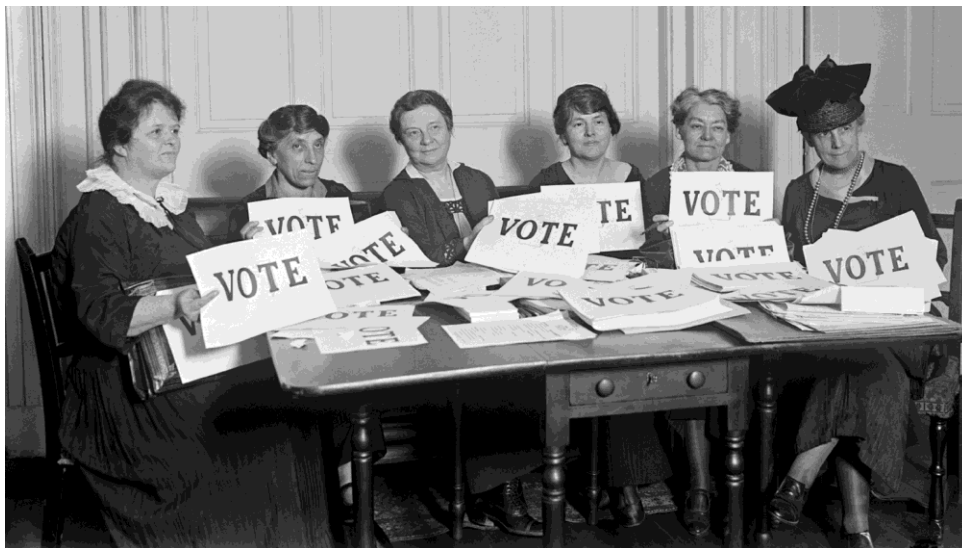
The LWVBCo shall indemnify and hold harmless its officers and directors to the fullest extent of the law as provided in the Maryland Code of Corporations and Associations as amended from time to time.

Indemnification shall extend to all judgments, penalties, fines, settlements, and reasonable expenses actually incurred by any director or officer if that director or officer was or is threatened with suit in his capacity as a director or officer. No director or officer shall be entitled to indemnification if the director or officer received an improper personal benefit from his or her action for which he or she seeks indemnification.

## Article XIV

### Amendments

Amendments to these bylaws may be proposed by the LWVBCo Board of Directors or any individual voting member of the LWVBCo. These bylaws may be amended by a two-thirds vote of the voting members present at the annual meeting provided the amendments were submitted to the membership in writing at least one month in advance of the meeting. Any amendments shall go into effect the first day of the following fiscal year unless otherwise specified in the amendment.



# Glossary

There are some terms that are unique to the League of Women Voters, "League Lingo." For your reference, some are listed below.

**ACTION.** Promoting the League's positions on local, state, and national public policy issues to government officials, the media, and the public.

**ACTION ALERT.** Request from the LWVUS or state League to act in support of a League position.

**ANNUAL MEETING.** Local year-end business meeting to elect officers and directors, vote on bylaw changes, and adopt a budget and program of work for the next year.

**ASSOCIATE MEMBER.** A non-voting member of the League, such as a person under 16 years of age or a non-citizen.

**CONSENSUS.** After objective study of an issue, the collective opinion of a substantial number of League members that is representative of the entire membership.

**CONCURRENCE.** Agreement by League members with a position on an issue reached by a small group of members or by another League.

**CONVENTION.** A state or national League meeting held every other year at which delegates elect officers and directors for the biennium, adopt program, make bylaw changes, and adopt a budget, usually for one year. Local Leagues send delegates to state convention; local and state Leagues send delegates to national convention.

**COUNCIL.** An assembly of delegates held in alternate years to adopt a budget and assess program developments. Local Leagues send delegates to state council, state Leagues send delegates to national council.

**ILO.** Acronym for an Inter-League Organization, formed by local Leagues within a county, metropolitan area, or region to act on issues that are beyond the local League area in scope.

**LIFE MEMBER.** A person who has been a member for 50 years or more. Life members are excused from dues payment and their Leagues pay no per member payment (PMP) for them.

**MAL UNIT.** A state-recognized group of Members-At-Large in an area where there is no local League.

**OBSERVERS.** Representatives of the League who silently monitor the public meetings of elected and non-elected governmental bodies.

**PMP.** Per Member Payment, an annual assessment for each local League member paid to the LWVUS and the state Leagues.

**POSITION.** The stand of the League on a public policy issue arrived at through member study and agreement (consensus or concurrence), approved by the appropriate board, and the basis for action.

**PRINCIPLES.** Governmental standards and policies supported by the League as a whole. They constitute the authorization for the adoption of the program at all levels.

**PROGRAM.** Selected governmental issues chosen by members at the local, state, and national levels for study and action, including plans for speakers, discussion, or other activities.

**STUDY.** The process of gathering information on a specific issue for discussion and subsequent consensus to establish positions.

**UNIT MEETING.** Groupings of members within the local Leagues to provide more opportunities for discussion. Units may be time-oriented (day, evening, lunch hour), geographically-oriented, or both.

**VOTERS' GUIDE.** Nonpartisan publication giving candidates' qualifications and positions on selected issues.

**VOTERS' SERVICE.** Year-round activity to help citizens be politically effective and to encourage their participation in the political process. Registering voters and presenting factual, non-partisan information on candidates and election issues are basic voter services activities.

**VOTING MEMBERS.** All League members who are U.S. citizens and at least 16 years old.