



Argus

League of Women Voters of Lane County Newsletter

PRIMARIES AND MIDTERMS MAKE 2022 A BUSY YEAR

BY PAULA GRISAFI, VOTER SERVICE CHAIR

This year's May primary will be an important one for Lane County and the State of Oregon. There are many open and contested seats. These include the governorship, which currently has twenty-seven candidates in the race, and the US District 4 race for the House of Representatives, which currently has four Democrats and at least one likely Republican running. The application timeline for all positions is open until March 8th so there could be more candidates before the deadline. There are three Lane County Commissioner races, positions 1,2 and 5, with two already contested. This does not include numerous state representative and senate races and other city, county and state races.

Given the current conditions, there will be a great deal of information

for voters to review and process to make thoughtful choices. Information will be available at Vote411.com by April 11. There will be a *Voters Guide* published by the League in both English and Spanish, as well as a limited number of copies in Braille. The state and county Leagues will also join forces and include other partners like Springfield City Club to produce online candidate forums for the community. We will also, as always, develop information explaining and reviewing any ballot initiatives that will be brought up for both the primary and the November general election.

Needless to say, these efforts require a good deal of volunteer effort for both large and small tasks alike. We need help developing questions to ask candidates about

local issues at forums, handing out voter information guides, and helping people update their voter registration forms. Members can spread the word about using Vote411.com or post signs that include QR codes for the Vote411.com website. They can disseminate information about important dates like election day (May 17) and last day to register to vote (April 26) and remind people that picking a political party will actually allow them to vote more fully in a primary. We need people to enter accurate candidate and ballot initiative data into the [Vote411](http://Vote411.com) website. Even sharing our voting information within your neighborhood associations, churches, book clubs and other organizations you belong to can improve voter education and participation and will be a big help.

Continued on page 2

4J SCHOOL DISTRICT ASKED FOR HELP FROM LANE COUNTY LEAGUE
See page four.

NOON SPEAKER SERIES ON FEBRUARY 17

WILL FEATURE

JIM RONDEAU

KLCC GENERAL MANAGER

SPEAKING ON

**PRESERVING LOCAL JOURNALISM
IN THE DIGITAL ERA**

Go to LWVLC website to register for the February webinar.



UNITS

MARY KEATING, CHAIR

LWV of Lane County Board and Off Board Roster 2021-22

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 CHARLCIE KAYLOR
president@lwvlc.org
Vice President
 TERRY PARKER
Secretary
 JEANNE TAYLOR
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Website & Technology
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Director
 KATIE LOUGHARY

FEBRUARY UNIT DISCUSSION

EQUITABLE ACCESS TO THE INTERNET

The recently passed infrastructure bill gives \$100 million to expand broadband access to every Oregonian. Neither broadband nor internet services is mentioned in the local, state, or national LWV positions, but our committee found the local League positions, Urban Services and Elementary and Secondary School Facilities, could support equitable access to the internet for school districts and communities with language updates.

Our committee surveyed many of the schools and libraries in Lane County to learn about their challenges in pivoting quickly to online learning with the onset of Covid-19 in March 2020. The Directors of Information Technology for the various districts and librarians were our primary sources of information. The degree to which the schools accommodated their students was impressive, although hundreds of families in Lane County had no access.

We looked at the barriers to equitable access to internet connectivity. Our study proposes solutions that involve a wide range of considerations, such as Oregon’s unique geography and the economic challenges for districts around our county. We propose language changes to clarify our current LWVLC positions, including broadband accessibility, technological infrastructure, and school computer equipment and devices. Our study also defines and graphically explains the terminology often used when discussing broadband.

Sharon Amasha, Chair
Equitable Access to the Internet Committee

BRIEFING
February 1, 2 pm
 For Zoom link contact
 Mary Keating
myrnalouise@hotmail.com

CONNECT TO A UNIT

BY LINDA FERDOWSIAN, PROGRAM CHAIR

Meetings will continue to be virtual. Contact the unit discussion leader for the link.

Monday, February 7, 10 am, Zoom
Discussion Leader: Nancy Mills, nmills@trinity.edu

Monday, February 7, 2 pm, Zoom
Discussion Leader: Mary Keating, myrnalouisa@hotmail.com

Tuesday, February 8, 10 am, Zoom
Discussion Leader: Linda Ferdowsian, lferdowsian@yahoo.com

Wednesday, February 9, noon, Zoom
Discussion Leader: Cynthia Sharp, cynthiasharp01@gmail.com

Continued from page one

If you have any interest in helping in any of these areas and can donate even two hours of your time, contact me at voterservice@lwvlc.org. If your interests lean more toward longer term projects like helping promote independent redistricting efforts locally and statewide or educating voters about the differences between our current voting system and Star and Rank Choice voting methods, we can use you too. Check the LWVLC website for updates or go to the Oregon Secretary of State or Lane County Government webpages and look under their Current Election sections for information.

Voter Service Meeting
 Thursday, February 10 at 10:30am
 via Zoom
 To receive the link contact
voterservice@lwvlc.org

FOCUS: LAND USE AND TRANSPORTATION - MUCH MORE TO DO IN 2022 BY TERRY PARKER, ACTION CHAIR

The League of Women Voters of Lane County supports the principles of planning and zoning, believing a unified planning approach to our metropolitan area is essential. (PLANNING AND ZONING Consensus in 1963, 1989)

The **City of Springfield** is undergoing a Development Code Update. You can visit [Springfield Oregon Speaks](#) for a link to meetings and materials. Written testimony on proposed updates can be submitted at any time before the Springfield City Council and the Lane County Board of Commissioners close the written record, to occur no sooner than April 25, 2022. For information on submitting testimony, go to the [Springfield Development Code Update Project website](#).

The **City of Eugene** is currently working on the River Road-Santa Clara Neighborhood Plan code, Middle Housing code, and Accessory Dwelling Unit code. Our January speaker Kaarin Knudson from Better Housing Together presented us with the why of Eugene's draft set of land use code and plan amendment. If you missed the session, a recording is available on our website [League of Women Voters of Lane County](#).

By the end of January the planning commission will have completed their deliberations by making recommendations to the city council on the draft land use code and plan amendments to implement the requirements of House Bill 2001 (passed in 2019), which requires large cities to allow middle housing including duplexes, triplexes, fourplexes, cottage clusters, and rowhouse, in more places across the City to increase housing choice and supply.

By June 30, 2022, the City must have regulations in place that comply with state law. Otherwise, the state's adopted model code will apply in Eugene. The City has background information, summaries of proposed code changes, and explanations of the choices "for various code sections along the Allow, Encourage, and Incentivize spectrum. In general, the Allow option meets the state's minimum standards, the Encourage option removes barriers to middle housing, and the Incentivize

option removes even more barriers and lowers the cost of providing housing". Go to [Engage Eugene - Middle Housing](#) on the City of Eugene website for detailed information.

The draft code has been through several revisions, and the record of public testimony is available. The Planning Commission's deliberations and recommendation (scheduled for January 25th) will go to the City Council. A work session and a public hearing is anticipated for March or April 2022.

Regional Transportation Plan - As previously reported, there is a draft 20-year Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) for the Central Lane region. The LWVLC provided this testimony seeking improvements to the plan and process:

...The *Draft* Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) as presented is obsolete. Based on outdated assumptions that do not acknowledge the climate crisis, it does little to reduce vehicle travel and greenhouse gas emissions in the foreseeable future. After spending an estimated \$1.65 billion over 20 years, mostly on roads, the plan projects that traffic congestion and delays will be worse. This RTP does not meet the needs or protect the health and safety of those it is meant to serve.

That said, given where we are today in the process, we are asking what can be done to ensure that revised iterations of the RTP will be timely and better reflect the salient issues that we face. ... We expect that the next RTP will reflect a coordinated effort that integrates land use, climate change, equity planning and the desired needs of our community.

Your ACTION Committee at work. Please join us.

Action Meeting

February 2, 10 am

via Zoom

To receive the link contact
action@lwvlc.org

Comments from Kaarin Knudsen of Better Housing Together

THE COLOR OF LAW: by Richard Rothstein offers an overview of housing discrimination as enacted through local policy before and after the Civil Rights Era.

NEWSLETTER: We're launching a quarterly newsletter in 2022, and anyone can [sign up via our website!](#)

LINK TO PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT PROCESS: How this project is characterized **by some** is a mix of misinformation/disinformation. It is important to understand there is no "city-planner" or "city-staff proposal." There is only a proposal constructed by its staff based on the most expansive and innovative public engagement effort Eugene has ever undertaken. The process is delineated on the [City's website](#).

LOCAL ACTION ON CLIMATE BY TERRY PARKER, ACTION CHAIR

Don't know where to go next on protecting the planet? The US League of Women Voters offers this sage advice:

Although the largest impacts to limit climate change will come from countries and corporations, individuals can make a difference as well, especially by applying pressure and sharing their thoughts with elected officials. What can we do today to make a difference?

- **Vote!** Vote for individuals at both the local and national level who are working towards climate change initiatives, legislation, and carbon neutrality.
- Amplify your voice and **join local climate groups**. There are so many groups out there. Look for one that fits your areas of interest, whether that's water conservation, native plants, carbon taxes, installing charging stations for electric vehicles, etc.

Locally [350 Eugene](#), a grassroots 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization established in 2013, works toward climate justice and is part of a larger coalition of people and organizations dedicated to doing something about the climate crisis.

These four campaigns are now in progress:

The **Drawdown** campaign is all about reducing fossil fuel use on a local level - through city, county, and state politics.

Fracked Gas Resistance focuses on combating fracked gas infrastructure on a state and regional level.

Electric Transportation Action Group (E-TAG) works on the city, county, and state levels on electric transportation issues.

The **Resilience & Regeneration** work group provides resources to nurture resilience in response to climate disruption, including covid-19 and racial justice.

And the good news is you can participate from your own home. Allowing people to participate in public meetings remotely is now state law. On January 1 [House Bill 2560](#) went into effect (passed by the Oregon Legislature in the 2021 session) requiring that governing bodies make most public meetings remotely accessible except for executive sessions.

Go to the [350 Eugene](#) website for more information.



LWVLC'S REPUTATION HELPS SCHOOL DISTRICT 4J BY CHARLCIE KAYLOR, PRESIDENT

On Thursday, January 20 at 3:30pm Judy Newman (4J's board chair) called asking for help to cover the forums discussing criteria for the new 4J superintendent. She wanted LWV members as neutral parties to take notes of what is said at the forums. Because of possible acrimony present in the district right now, it was felt it might be necessary to dispel hard feelings if Leaguers were in the (virtual) room to take notes. The two forums would be held **the next day!**

A quick email blast to all our members got a response for which Chair Newman was very grateful. "I can't thank you enough for your willingness to step up on such short notice and volunteer to take notes in our Staff Community Input forums."



It was so important to have impartial people in the forums to take notes and be an impartial presence. I appreciate the roles and responsibilities you take on to ensure that our community engages in fair and sound democratic practices in our governance and work."

Three of the Leaguers who answered the call said -

Supporting District 4-J to hire a top-notch new superintendent who will empower educators and other staff to assure children and young people get the best public education was why I volunteered to act as a note-taker. It was gratifying to witness the level of commitment that educators, classified staff, parents and other volunteers have for making sure the next superintendent understands and reflects community values and student needs.

Sandra Bishop

I appreciated that Judy thought of us as being impartial witnesses to the 4J discussions. I take that role seriously. When asked by the group I sat in on I thanked them for participating and for the League's appreciation of civil discourse; discourse that "supports, rather than undermines the societal good."

Terry Parker

We were happy to be a trusted presence during the process in which district teachers and staff broke into small, virtual discussion groups led by the facilitators.

Freddi Weishahn

DEVELOPMENT UPDATE

BY FREDDI WEISHAHN, DEVELOPMENT CHAIR

We would like to extend a huge THANK YOU to our members and donors who have contributed \$8,725 in response to our December campaign, including \$3,000 from an anonymous donor. We asked for your help, and you answered! Your gifts will help extend our outreach for voter registration and education, including more advertising for VOTE411.org.

We will also be planning another fundraising appeal in the spring, and for your convenience, our webmaster, Rhonda Livesay, has added a monthly option for recurring donations on our website. This gives our members and donors a fixed monthly budget item and enables our League to fund our operations with predictable future cash flow.



For any questions, please contact our office at 541-343-7917 or contact development@lwvlc.org.

LEGACY GIVING

Legacy giving is a way to ensure that those who come after us will continue the work we value. The LWVLC has been a strong presence in our community since 1939 thanks to the generous donations from our members and community supporters.

Only a small fraction of our membership dues stay with our local League, and we rely primarily on fundraisers, donations, and bequests to fund our operations and activities. Should you consider leaving a bequest to the League, please check with an attorney or estate planning professional. We are careful stewards of our gifts, and informing our League of your plans will help us ensure that your gift is used according to your wishes.

For more information on ways to give to the LWVLC, please contact Freddi Weishahn at development@lwvlc.org or call our office at 541-343-7917.

Freddi Weishahn

FRUIT SALE UPDATE

BY KATIE LOUGHARY, CHAIR

The Fruit Loop team has wrapped up another successful fruit sale. We saw a growth in our net revenue for the League – over \$5,400, and donations to Food for Lane County – over a **ton** of produce! The Fruit Loop volunteers were amazing and hopefully had a good time with this fundraiser. Thanks to the support and flexibility of everyone we dealt with because of the last-minute change in our distribution schedule caused by an ice storm in Texas that delayed the arrival of our grapefruit and some chilly weather during our delivery days.



We expect to implement a few changes next year including streamlining the distribution process to a single day and offering more opportunities for distribution to your home.

A shout out of appreciation to the many volunteers that contributed to this successful fundraiser: Audrey Alvarado, Sharon Amasha, Janet Calvert, Linda and Fred Ferdowsian, Barb French, Gary Harmon, Mary Keating, Rhonda Livesay, Linda Lynch, Ellen McHaley, Marj Maxwell, Terry Parker, Sharon Posner, Karla Rusow, June Stevens, Freddi Weishahn, and anyone I may have forgotten.

Would you consider serving on the LWVOR board as a director-at-large?

This means once you joined the board you could see where your interest and talents best fit and devote your time and energy there. You would have the opportunity to see how the state League works and be in on the action. All but three of the LWVOR board meetings a year are now remote, greatly reducing travel time and expense.

If you are interested or need more information, please get in touch with Diana Bodtker, LWVOR Nominating Committee member at diana.bodtker@gmail.com.



380 Q STREET, Suite 250, SPRINGFIELD, OREGON 97477
541-343-7917

For the latest information visit our website <http://lwvlc.org/>

CALENDAR

JANUARY

- 1 - 2 pm - Briefing (page 2)
- 2 - 10 am, Action meeting (page 3)
- 7 thru 9 - Units (page 2)
- 10 - 10:30 am, Voter Service (page 1 & 2)
- 15 - 2 pm, Membership meeting (page 3)
- 16 - 10 am to 2 pm, Board retreat
- 17 - Noon, League Speaker Series (page 1)
- 19 - Midnight, *Argus* deadline

LWVLC Office Hours
Monday, Wednesday and Friday
(except holidays)
11 am - 1:30 pm

*Thanks to our
2020-21 Directory
Advertisers*

- Lane Forest Products*
- Baker Bay Bead Company*
- Christine Dambach*
- Farmers Insurance*
- The Eugene Hotel*
- Retirement Community*
- Lohring Miller, DMD PC*
- Plank Town Brewing Co.*
- Sundance Natural Foods/
Wine Cellars*
- Unique Properties*
- Aayres Appliance Repair*
- Ambrosia*
- Bel Ami*
- Central Print*
- Dot Dotson's*
- Eugene's Flower Home*
- Folkways*
- Fused Glass Art*
- Long's Meat Market*
- Quality Cleaning*

MISSED A THIRD THURSDAY?
<https://lwvlc.org/third-thursday-audio-presentations/>
BRIEFINGS VIDEOS
<https://lwvlc.org/publications/everymember-details/>

DONATE NOW

<http://lwvlc.org/get-involved/donate/>

For more information on how and why
see page five .