

County Government Position

Adopted May 1992, Revised May 2000

The League of Women Voters believes that democratic government policies, programs, and performance must meet these criteria:

- Well-defined channels for timely citizen input and review
- Coordination among agencies and levels of government
- Adequate financing
- Competent personnel with clear responsibilities
- Effective enforcement As they apply to Grand Traverse

Area units of county government:

The League of Women Voters of the Grand Traverse Area supports easy citizen access to and review of the process of governing by:

A. Giving adequate and well-publicized notice of meetings and agendas for all committees, boards, and commissions.

1. Notification of meetings and agendas needs to be expanded and an effort made to televise and/or broadcast County Commission meetings to inform interested citizens and arouse interest in others

2. Efficiency may dictate additions or deletions from published agendas. However, this practice makes it difficult for commissioners to make responsible decisions and for the public to follow issues.

B. Holding meetings at convenient times and places. The timing of closed sessions should respect the convenience of citizens in attendance.

C. Providing opportunity for citizen input at meetings. All persons addressing a meeting should be required to identify themselves.

D. Increasing accountability by handling more County business as a Committee of the Whole where:

1. Discussion of issues takes place in meetings subject to the Open Meetings Act.

2. Action on important issues is not taken under the Consent Calendar.

3. The public has the opportunity to:

a. Hear the pros and cons of the discussion leading to action.

b. Provide input.

c. Evaluate the performances of individual commissioners.

E. Attracting and appointing a broad representation of citizens to County boards and commissions through:

1. Publication of vacancies with full description of duties.

2. A written statement of the desired qualifications.

3. A standard form of application which can be kept on file for a period of time.

4. Orientation and training for new appointees.

II. The League of Women Voters of the Grand Traverse Area supports the active role of each County in promoting and facilitating flexible regional problem solving. Continuing action should focus on:

A. Communication and cooperation between local units of government for the purpose of:

1. Coordinating services.

2. Building consensus among governmental units, agencies, and the public on projects of common concern.

B. Management of growth by seeking new and creative solutions and by:

1. Encouraging a regional perspective which includes long range planning and updating of local government unit plans.

2. Serving as an educational resource for local units in growth and planning through mechanisms such as the use of retreats to serve as a means of fostering education and collaboration.

3. Ensuring that citizen concerns are incorporated in proposals.

4. Strengthening the role and authority of the County Planning Commission.

5. Encouraging collaboration among all units of government.

IV. The League of Women Voters of the Grand Traverse Area supports long-range financial planning.

IV. The League of Women Voters of the Grand Traverse Area supports an appointed administrator, acting under a well-defined job description, who coordinates the County's business and implements the policies of the Board of Commissioners.