

**League of Women Voters-GTA
Voter Services Committee Meeting
September 19, 2018**

Present: A. Montgomery, M. Grover, C. Naperala, B. Newson, N. Nordfjord, P. Townsend

Ballot Proposals Information Program: This program will provide attendees with information about the three ballot proposals appearing on the Nov. 6, 2018 ballot. Proposal 1 will ask voters to decide if the use of recreational marijuana should be legal in Michigan. Proposal 2, known as the Voters Not Politicians proposal, will ask voters to decide if an independent commission should be created to determine the boundaries of state and national representative districts in Michigan which would eliminate the present gerrymandering practice. Proposal 3, backed by LWVMI, asks voters to approve the expansion of voting rights in Michigan.

Donna Hornberger, coordinator for the event, has lined up volunteers to help facilitate it. The program will be held at Traverse City West Middle School from 7 - 8:30p.m. on Tuesday, September 25, 2018. Christina Schlitt or another LWVMI person will present the facts about the proposals, and Hal Gurian, a Voters Not Politicians speaker, will share information on Proposal 3. Since the League must be non-partisan, we cannot advocate for the first two proposals, but can show our advocacy for Proposal 3 which promotes one of the League goals, making it easier for all citizens to vote. Audience members will be able to ask the speakers questions.

Grants to help cover costs for the Ballot Proposal Programs were offered by LWVMI. LWVGTA applied for a \$400 grant and received it. \$300 will go to help LWVVGTA pay expenses for the Sept. 25 program, and \$100 will go to the LWVCC Unit for their program.

Candidate Forums: Forums had been planned for the 104th Michigan House District, the 37th Senate District, and the 1st U.S. House District. For each of the forums, the Republican candidate could not find a date acceptable for his participation. As a result, each of those forums had to be cancelled which was very disappointing to LWVGTA members.

A Grand Traverse County Commission Candidate forum will take place on Oct. 8 from 6 - 8:30p.m. at Garfield Township Hall. Jenn Gray will be the moderator. Because of the number of candidates running for seats on the GT County Board, the forum will be broken into two parts. Bev has been coordinating the logistics for this forum. Volunteers have been recruited. She also will also have cider and doughnuts for those people attending.

Voter Registration Events: National Voter Registration Day is Tuesday, Sept. 25. Because of Nancy's and Anne's efforts, 7 locations in Antrim, Grand Traverse, and Kalkaska Counties will have voter registration drives in their libraries as well as participation in the Bellaire Harvest Festival the following week. NMC will also have a registration drive on Sept. 26. Several members and friends will be manning tables to assist people in registering. A clerk or deputy clerk will also be at each site to help with questions and will be able to verify a new voter's identification if the person lives in the clerk's township or county. It would then be possible for that person to request an absentee ballot for the November election.

Jan will send out a press release about the voter registration drives.

Thank you notes will be sent to all the clerks who will be assisting at the various events. LWVGTA is so appreciative of their help as well as the help of all the volunteers who give their time on either day.

Discussion of LWVLC Candidate Mixer Event: Several committee members had read a Record Eagle article about an upcoming LWVLC event. It is being sponsored as a way to bring county residents, Republicans, Democrats, and Third Parties, together in the hope that dialogue will break down some of the barriers that have developed and polarized the electorate. The winning candidates for office in this election cycle can share their ideas/plans if elected and also answer citizen questions. Refreshments will be served.

Committee members would like to plan a similar event to be held after the Nov.6 election. Its purpose would be to invite elected officials from the various political parties to interact with their constituents in a more relaxed setting that could promote better relationships and understanding of how and why citizens and their representatives hold the beliefs/opinions they have and how they might find ways to better communicate with each other.

The committee's consensus was to pursue this idea after the election.

School Board Candidate Forum: With all but one of the planned forums cancelled, committee members expressed concern about the visibility of LWVGTA during the 2018 election season. The idea of revisiting the possibility of sponsoring a School Board Candidate forum came up. With 10 candidates running for seats on the TCAPS Board, providing citizens with an opportunity to see/hear them all in one place seemed like a worthy investment of the League's time. Mary G., Betsey W., Bev N. and Nancy N. volunteered to work on the planning for this event. Mary G. also said she would ask Linda C. if she would be willing to help. The planning has to happen quickly in order to secure a venue and to contact all the candidates.

Riverview Terrace Request; A request came from Riverview Terrace to share information about the three ballot proposals before the November election. Bev offered to contact them to ask about what type of program they would like. Bev contacted Tony Lentych, Director of the Housing Commission, and let him know that the LWVGTA Ballot Proposal forum would be taped and could be viewed on UpNorthTV (Channel 189). Mr. Lentych said that he would set up a showing of the forum for the residents once it can be viewed. Both he and Bev felt that it would be a good way for the residents to gather information before voting.

Voter Registration at the Traverse City Health Clinic: The TC Health Clinic connected with Anne to ask LWVGTA if they would organize a voter registration event at the clinic. Anne thought it was a good idea, but she expressed concern about the fact that Oct. 9 is the last day to register to vote in the Nov. election. Since she will be leaving on a trip soon and Peg will also not be available, it would be difficult to be organized in time. No one volunteered to step in so it isn't possible to fill that request this time. However, we will reach out to the Clinic in the future about doing voter registration there.

Respectfully submitted by,
Peg Townsend, Voter Services Co-chair