

LWVSPA Bylaws

As amended April 2008

ARTICLE I. NAME

Sec. 1. Name. The name of this organization shall be the League of Women Voters of the St. Petersburg Area, Inc. This local League is an integral part of the League of Women Voters of the United States and of the League of Women Voters of Florida.

ARTICLE II. PURPOSE AND POLICY

Sec. 1. Purposes. The purposes of the League of Women Voters of the St. Petersburg Area shall be to promote political responsibility through informed and active participation in government, to act on selected governmental issues, and to influence public policy through education and advocacy. [04/07]

Sec. 2. Political Policy. The League shall not support or oppose any political party or any candidate.

ARTICLE III. MEMBERSHIP

Sec. 1. Eligibility. Any person who subscribes to the purpose and policy of the League shall be eligible for membership.

Sec. 2. Types of Membership. The membership of the League of Women Voters of the St. Petersburg Area shall be composed of voting members and associate members.

(a) Voting members. Those citizens at least 18 years of age residing within the United States, a territory or an associated commonwealth, who join the League, shall be voting members of local Leagues, state Leagues and of the LWVUS; (1) individuals who live within an area of a local League may join that League or any other local League; (2) those who reside outside the area of any local League may join a local League or shall be state members-at-large; (3) those who have been members of the League for 50 years or more shall be **life members** excused from the payment of dues. [04/07]

(b) Associate members. All others who join the League shall be associate members. Those residing outside the United States shall be members of the LWVUS.

ARTICLE IV. OFFICERS

Sec. 1. Enumeration and Election of Officers. The officers of the League of Women Voters of the St. Petersburg Area shall be a president or co-presidents, a first vice president and a second vice president*, who shall be elected for terms of one year, and a secretary and a treasurer, who shall be elected for terms of two years by the general membership at an Annual Meeting, and take office immediately. The president or co-presidents, first vice president and second vice president shall be elected annually. The secretary shall be elected in odd-numbered years. The treasurer shall be elected in even-numbered years. *In the case of co-presidents being elected, the office of second vice president need not be filled. [04/07]

Sec. 2. The President or Co-president. The president or co-president shall preside at appropriate meetings of the organization and of the board of directors. She, he or they may, in the absence or disability of the treasurer, sign or endorse checks, drafts and notes. The president or co-presidents shall be ex officio a member of all committees except the nominating committee. She, he or they shall have such usual powers of supervision and management as may pertain to the office of the president and perform such other duties as may be designated by the board. The co-presidents shall decide between them as to the division of the duties of the office. In the event of any lack of agreement on any matter between the co-presidents the board shall make the final decision.

Sec. 3. The Vice Presidents. The two vice presidents in order of their rank shall in the event of absence, disability or death of a president, possess all the powers and perform all the duties of that office,

until such time as the board of directors shall select a member to fill the vacancy. The vice presidents shall perform such other duties as the president or co-president and the board may designate.

Sec. 4. The Secretary. The secretary shall keep and distribute minutes of appropriate meetings of the League and of all meetings of the board of directors. The secretary shall sign, with the president or co-president, all contracts and other instruments when so authorized by the board and shall perform such other functions as may be incident to the office. [04/07]

Sec. 5. The Treasurer. The treasurer shall collect and receive all moneys due. She or he shall be the custodian of these moneys, shall deposit them in a bank and/or other reliable financial institution as directed by the board and shall disburse the same in accordance with the budget or on order of the board.

ARTICLE V. BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Sec. 1. Number, Manner of Selection and Term of Office. The board of directors shall consist of the officers of the League, five elected directors and not more than five appointed directors. Two shall be elected by the general membership at the Annual Meeting held in even-numbered years and three shall be elected by the general membership at the Annual Meeting held in odd-numbered years. They shall serve for a term of two years or until their successors have been elected and qualified. The elected members shall appoint such additional directors, not exceeding five, as they deem necessary to carry on the work of the League. The terms of office of the appointed directors shall be one year and shall expire at the conclusion of the next Annual Meeting. (Amended 2006)

Sec. 2. Qualifications. No person shall be elected or appointed or shall continue to serve as officer or director of this organization unless she or he is a voting member of the League of Women Voters of the St. Petersburg Area.

Sec. 3. Vacancies. Any vacancy occurring in the board of directors by reason of the resignation, death, or disqualification of an officer may be filled, until the next annual meeting, by a majority vote of the remaining members of the board of directors. Three absences from a board meeting of any member without a valid reason during a fiscal year shall be deemed a resignation.

Sec. 4. Powers 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 same, subject to the instructions of the general membership. It shall plan and direct the work necessary to carry out the program as adopted by the national convention, the state convention and the Annual Meeting. The board shall create and designate such special committees as it may deem necessary.

Sec. 5. Meetings. There shall be at least nine regular meetings of the board of directors annually. The president or co-president may call special meetings of the board of directors and shall call a special meeting upon the written request of five members of the board.

(a) Electronic Board Meetings: Electronic board meetings to include, but not limited to, telephone, video, and web conferencing shall be authorized to facilitate action on timely items that cannot wait until a regular Board Meeting and these meetings must be conducted with quorum as designated by the bylaws, and with a twenty-four (24) hour notice of date, time, and place, by a technology that is available to all members eligible to participate and that allows all persons participating to hear each other at the same time. [04/08]

Sec. 6. Quorum. A majority of the members of the board of directors shall constitute a quorum.

ARTICLE VI. NOMINATIONS AND ELECTIONS

Sec. 1. Nominating Committee. The nominating committee shall consist of five members: The chair and two others, who shall not be members of the board of directors, shall be nominated by the current nominating committee and elected by the members at the Annual Meeting. The remaining two members shall be appointed by the newly elected board of directors from among their own number immediately following the Annual Meeting.

(a) Any vacancy on the nominating committee shall be filled by the board of directors.

(b) Suggestions for nominations for officers and directors may be sent to this committee by any voting member.

Sec. 2. Report of the Nominating Committee and Nominations from the Floor. The report of the nominating committee of its nominations for officers, directors and members of the succeeding nominating committee shall be sent to all members at least one month before the date of the Annual Meeting. The report of the nominating committee shall be presented to 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 secured.

Sec. 3. Elections. The election shall be by written ballot, providing that when there is but one nominee for any office, the ballot may be by voice vote. A majority vote by those qualified to vote, present and voting shall constitute an election.

ARTICLE VII. MEETINGS

Sec. 1. Membership Meetings. There shall be at least six meetings of the membership each year. Time and place shall be determined by the board of directors.

Sec. 2. Annual Meeting. An Annual Meeting shall be held after the end of each League fiscal year, the exact date to be determined by the board of directors. The Annual Meeting shall:

- (a) Adopt a local program for the ensuing year,
- (b) Elect officers, directors, and members of the nominating committee,
- (c) Adopt a budget, and
- (d) Transact such other business as may properly come before it.

Sec. 3. Quorum. Fifteen paid members shall constitute a quorum at all business meetings of the League of Women Voters of the St. Petersburg Area. [04/08]

ARTICLE VIII. FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION

Sec. 1. Fiscal Year. The fiscal year of the League of Women Voters of the St. Petersburg Area shall be from April 1 to March 31.

Sec. 2. Dues.

- (a) Annual dues shall be set at the Annual Meeting and shall be due and payable on or before October first. [04/07]
- (b) Dues paid by new members joining between July first and October first shall be credited to the ensuing League year. [04/07]
- (c) Any member whose dues have not been received by December 31st shall be dropped from membership on that date, unless this action is countermanded by the board of directors. [04/07]
- (d) When two or more members reside at the same address in a common household, full payment of dues shall be made for the first member; a payment equal to one-half the annual dues payment shall be made for each other member.

Sec. 3. Budget. A budget for the ensuing year based on recommendations of the budget committee shall be proposed by the board of directors to the members at least one month before the Annual Meeting where it will be presented for adoption. The budget shall include support for the work of the League as a whole.

Sec. 4. Budget Committee. A budget committee of at least three members shall be appointed by the board of directors by Nov. 1 of each year to recommend a budget for the ensuing year to the board of directors. A member other than the treasurer shall serve as its chair.

Sec. 5. Audit Committee. A committee shall be appointed by the board of directors to examine the books of the treasurer prior to each Annual Meeting and it shall make a report to the members at the Annual Meeting. The audit committee's report shall be presented to the members for their adoption at the Annual Meeting.

ARTICLE IX. PROGRAM

Sec. 1. Authorization. The governmental principles adopted by the national convention and supported by the League as a whole constitute the authorization for the adoption of program.

Sec. 2. Program. The program of the League of Women Voters of the St. Petersburg Area shall consist of:

- (a) action to protect the right to vote of every citizen, and
- (b) those national, state, regional, county and municipal governmental issues chosen for concerted study and action.

Sec. 3. Action by the Annual Meeting. The Annual Meeting shall act upon the program using the following procedures:

- (a) The board of directors shall consider the recommendations sent in by the voting members two months prior to the Annual Meeting and shall formulate a proposed program.
- (b) The proposed program shall be sent to all members at least one month before the Annual Meeting.
- (c) A majority vote of voting members present and voting at the Annual Meeting shall be required for adoption of subjects in the proposed program as presented to the Annual Meeting by the board of directors.
- (d) Recommendations for the program submitted by voting members two months prior to the Annual Meeting but not recommended by the board of directors may be considered by the Annual Meeting provided that:
 - (1) the Annual Meeting shall order consideration by a majority vote and (2) the Annual Meeting shall adopt the item by a majority vote.
- (e) Changes in the program, in the case of altered conditions, may be made provided that: (1) information concerning the proposed changes has been sent to all members at least two weeks prior to a general membership meeting at which the change is to be discussed and (2) final action by the membership is taken at a succeeding meeting.

Sec. 4. Member Action. Members may act in the name of the League of Women Voters only when authorized to do so by the appropriate board of directors.

ARTICLE X. NATIONAL CONVENTION, STATE CONVENTION AND COUNCIL

Sec. 1. National Convention. The board of directors at a meeting before the date on which the names of the delegates must be sent to the national office shall select delegates to that convention in the number allotted the League of Women Voters of the St. Petersburg Area under the provisions of the bylaws of the League of Women Voters of the United States.

Sec. 2. State Convention. The board of directors at a meeting before the date on which the names of delegates must be sent to the state office shall select delegates to that convention in the number allotted the League of Women Voters of the St. Petersburg Area under the provisions of the bylaws of the League of Women Voters of Florida.

Sec. 3. State Council. The board of directors at a meeting before the date on which the names of delegates must be sent to the state office shall select delegates to that council in the number allotted the League of Women Voters of the St. Petersburg Area under the provisions of the bylaws of the League of Women Voters of Florida.

ARTICLE XI. PARLIAMENTARY AUTHORITY

Sec. 1. The rules contained in the current edition of Robert's 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, any special rules of order the organization may adopt or those of the League of Women Voters of the United States or the League of Women Voters of Florida.

ARTICLE XII. AMENDMENTS

Sec. 1. Amendments. These bylaws may be amended by a two-thirds vote of the voting members present and voting at the Annual Meeting provided that amendments were submitted to the membership at least one month in advance of the meeting.

Sec. 2. Bylaws Committee. A bylaws committee of at least three members shall be appointed by the board of directors by November first of each year to review the bylaws and submit any recommendations to the board of directors. The committee shall also consider proposed amendments from individual members that have been received in writing not later than 10 weeks prior to the Annual Meeting. (*Sec. 3. Proposal continued next page*)

Sec. 3. Proposal. Based on a report from the bylaws committee, the board of directors shall submit recommended and not-recommended proposed amendments to the membership for their consideration at the Annual Meeting.

LWVSPA Anti-Harassment Policy

Adopted April 2006

The LWVSPA will not tolerate unlawful harassment in any form, against anyone, at any time, for any reason. This includes any conduct that creates an unprofessional or hostile working environment.

If you feel that you have been subjected to conduct that violates this policy, you should immediately report the matter to the president. The board of directors will investigate all such complaints in a timely manner and take appropriate action to resolve the matter.

LWVSPA Anti-Discrimination Policy

Adopted April 2006

LWVSPA does not discriminate in employment or membership on the basis of age, race, color, religion, ancestry, ethnicity, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, disability or other protected group status. Physical standards for employment shall be fair, reasonable and appropriate to the requirements of the position.

Non-partisan Policy

of the LWVSPA Board of Directors

Adopted as amended 7/09

Re-adopted 11/11

Our non-partisan policy protects the good name of the League of Women Voters. The League as an organization does not support or oppose any political party, candidate for elective office, or any group that supports candidates. This applies whether a candidate is running under a party designation or in a non-partisan election.

The board of directors is responsible for carrying out the non-partisan policy and seeing that there is member understanding and public awareness of the League's non-partisan stance.

Board members may have party affiliations and should certainly carry out the responsibilities of every voter in exercising the franchise, including the responsibility to become informed about candidates.

Board members may contribute to political parties and candidates and attend political meetings on the basis of individual judgement. The LWVSPA president and Voters Service chair need to exercise particular caution in areas where their active participation may be publicized and bring to question the League's non-partisan stance. Political activity of partner, spouse or other family member is separate and distinct from board members'.

Campaign literature is not distributed during League meetings. A board member must resign: (a) as soon as she/he declares an intention to be a candidate. (b) before working in a highly visible position for a political party or candidate.

A board member may not hold elective political office during his/her term of office on the board of directors. The board may determine how soon after a member holds office or is actively involved in a campaign that that person is eligible for a board position.

The board will deal with specific cases as they arise, on an individual basis. For guidance, refer to the Bylaws of the League of Women Voters and the *In League* chapter on non-partisan policy.