

**THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF MANATEE COUNTY, FLORIDA
BYLAWS**

(Proposed revision April 2024 from Last revised April 2023)

Article I

Section 1. The name of this organization shall be League of Women Voters of Manatee County, Florida, (hereinafter referred to as LWVMC or as the League). This local League is an integral part of the League of Women Voters of the United States (hereinafter referred to as LWVUS) and of the League of Women Voters of Florida (hereinafter referred to as LWVFL).

Article II
Purposes and Policies

Section 1. Purposes. The purposes of the LWVMC are to promote political responsibility through informed and active participation in government, to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and to influence public policy on selected governmental issues through education and advocacy.

Section 2. Policies. The policies of LWVMC are:

1. Political Policy. The LWVMC shall not support or oppose any political party or any candidate.
2. Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Policy. The LWVMC is fully committed to ensure compliance - in principle and in practice - with LWVUS' Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Policy.

Article III
Membership

Section 1. Eligibility. Any person who subscribes to the purposes and policies of the League shall be eligible for membership.

Section 2. Types of Membership.

1. Voting Members. Persons at least ~~18~~16 years of age who join the LWVMC shall be voting members of the local and state Leagues of their place of joining and of the LWVUS. Those who have been members of the League for 50 years or more shall be honorary life members, excused from the payment of dues. Those who are students are defined as individuals enrolled as full or part time with an accredited institution.
2. Associate Members. All others who join the League shall be associate members.

Article IV
Board of Directors

Section 1. Number, Manner of Selection, and Term of Office. The board of directors shall consist of the officers of LWVMC, six directors elected by the annual meeting; and not more than six directors appointed by the elected members of the board. Three directors shall be elected in the even-numbered years, and three directors shall be elected in the odd-numbered years. They shall serve for a term of two years or until their successors have been elected or appointed and qualified.

~~The board of directors shall consist of the officers of the League, six elected directors, and not more than six appointed directors. One half of the elected directors shall be elected by the general membership at each annual meeting and shall serve for a term of two years, or until their successors have been selected and qualified. The elected members shall appoint such additional directors, not exceeding six, as they deem necessary to carry on the work of the League. The term of office of the appointed directors shall be one year and shall expire at the conclusion of the next annual meeting.~~

Section 2. Qualifications. No person who is not a voting member of the LWVMC, shall be elected or appointed or shall continue to serve as an officer or director of this organization.

Section 3. Vacancies. ~~Vacancies other than the presidency. Any vacancy~~ occurring in the board of directors by reason of resignation, death, or disqualification of an officer or elected member may be filled until the next annual meeting by a majority vote of the remaining members of the board of directors. Three consecutive absences from board of directors' meetings of any member, without valid reason, may be deemed a resignation, upon action of the board of directors.

Section 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, state convention, and annual meeting. The board of directors shall create and designate such committees as it may deem necessary.

Section 5. Regular Meetings. There shall be at least nine regular meetings of the board of directors annually. Notice of these meetings shall be sent at least one week in advance. ~~The 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 of directors.~~

Section 6. Special Meetings. The 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. Members of the Board shall be notified of the time, place and subject of special meetings, in writing, delivered personally or by mail, facsimile, or other electronic means, sent at least two days prior to such meetings.

Section 7. Manner of Meetings. Meetings may be held in person or by electronic means including but not limited to telephonic conferencing, video conferencing and E-Mail. Telephonic and video conferencing meetings shall be called, noticed and conducted in the same manner as in person meetings. Meetings via email may extend over a period of time (e.g. 1 week) with procedural requirements to include the following:

1. The President shall formally call a meeting by notifying each member of the Board of Directors, providing the agenda, and meeting start and end time.
2. A quorum is established based on the number of board member responses to the President's call. A majority of members of the board shall constitute a quorum.
3. All motions, debates and votes are sent only to the President, who shall forward them to all members in the order received.
4. The time allowed for discussion and voting on a motion shall be specified by the President, who shall send out a reminder alert as the vote closing time nears.
5. The meeting shall end at the specified time unless formally extended.

Section ~~86~~. Quorum. A majority of the members of the board of directors shall constitute a quorum ~~provided notice of the meeting is sent at least one week in advance.~~ Any one or more members of the board of directors may participate in a meeting by means of conference telephone or other similar equipment allowing all persons participating in the meeting to hear each other at the same time. Participation by such means shall constitute presence in person at a meeting.

Article V Officers

Section 1. Election, Qualifications and Term. The officers of LWVMC, shall be a president, a vice president, 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 and the vice president shall be elected in odd numbered years. The secretary and treasurer shall be elected in even number years. Co-officers are permissible and references herein to any officers shall include the possibility of co-officers. In the event of co-officers, the duties will be determined and assigned by the board of directors.

Section 2. The President. The president shall preside at all meetings of the organization and of the board of directors unless the president shall designate another person to preside. The president may, in the absence or disability of the treasurer, sign or endorse checks, drafts and notes. The president 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 of directors. In the event of the absence, disability, resignation or death of the president, the vice-president shall assume the office. If the vice-president is unable to serve as president, the board of directors shall fill the vacancy from among the elected directors.

Section 3. The Vice President. (a) The vice president shall, in the event of the absence, disability, resignation, or death of the president, possess all powers and perform all duties of that office. (b) The vice president shall perform such other duties as the president and the board of directors may designate.

Section 4. The Secretary. The secretary shall keep minutes of all meetings of the League at which business is conducted and of all meetings of the board of directors. The secretary shall notify all officers and directors of their election. The secretary shall sign, with the president, all contracts and other instruments when so authorized by the board of directors and shall perform such other functions as may be incident to the office.

Section 5. The Treasurer. The treasurer shall collect and receive all moneys due. The treasurer shall be the custodian of these moneys, shall deposit them in a bank designated by the board of directors, and shall disburse the same only upon order of the board of directors. The treasurer shall present statements to the board of directors at their regular meetings and an annual report to the annual meeting.

Article VI Financial Administration

Section 1. Fiscal Year. The fiscal year of the LWVMC shall commence on the first day of April each year.

Section 2. Dues. (a) When LWVUS or LWVFL raises per member payment (PMP), the annual dues of LWVMC will be automatically raised in like amount at the beginning of the fiscal year. The board of directors at its discretion may vote to waive this increase. (b) Any other change in the amount of annual dues shall be determined by vote of the membership at the annual meeting. (c) The membership year is January 1 through December 31. All members' dues shall be payable on January 1. Any member who fails to pay dues within three months after they become payable shall be dropped from the membership. (d) When two members reside at the same address and a common household, they shall be required to pay only one and one-half of the determined dues. (e) In the event LWVUS implements nationally a change in membership categories, rates and billing procedures, LWVMC will follow those directives.

Section 3. Budget. A budget for the ensuing year shall be submitted by the board of directors to the annual meeting for adoption. The budget shall include support for the work of the League as a whole.

Section 4. Budget Committee. A budget committee shall be appointed by the board of directors at least two months prior to the annual meeting to prepare a budget for the ensuing year. The proposed budget shall be sent to all members one month before the annual meeting. The treasurer shall not be eligible to serve as chairman of the budget committee.

Section 5. Financial Review Committee. The board of directors shall appoint a financial review committee of not less than three members. After the end of each fiscal year, the financial review committee shall review the books of the LWVMC and shall report to the board of directors at the first board of directors meeting after the annual meeting.

Article VII

Meetings

Section 1. Membership Meetings. There shall be at least three meetings of the general membership each year. Time and place shall be determined by the board of directors. Special meetings of the members may be called by the president, the board of directors or upon written request of ten percent of the voting members.

Section 2. Manner of Meetings. Meetings may be held in person or by electronic means including but not limited to telephonic conferencing and video conferencing. Telephonic and video conferencing meetings shall be called, noticed and conducted in the same manner as in person meetings.

Section 3. Annual Meeting. An annual meeting shall be held between April 1st and April 30th, 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 and directors and members of the nominating committee; (c) adopt an adequate budget; (d) transact such other business as may properly come before it. Absentee or proxy voting shall not be permitted.

Section 4. Quorum. Fifteen members shall constitute a quorum at all general meetings of the LWVMC provided notice of the meeting is sent to the membership at least one week in advance.

Article VIII Nominations and Elections

Section 1. Nominating Committee. A nominating committee shall consist of at least three members, one of whom shall be a member of the board of directors. The member(s), who shall not be member(s) of the board of directors, shall be elected at the annual meeting. Nominations for these offices shall be made by the current nominating committee. The other member(s) of said committee shall be appointed by the board of directors immediately following the annual meeting. The term of office for the members of the nominating committee shall be one year. Any vacancy occurring in the nominating committee shall be filled from the general membership by appointment of the board of directors. It shall be the duty of this committee to nominate a slate consisting of the candidates for each office to be filled at the annual meeting. Suggestions for nominations for officers and directors may be sent to this committee by any voting members.

Section 2. Report of the Nominating Committee and Nominations from the Floor. One month prior to the date of the annual meeting, the nominating committee shall send to all members a report of the slate of candidates nominated. The report of the nominating committee shall be presented to the annual meeting. Immediately following 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.

Section 3. Elections. Election shall be by ballot, except that if there is only one nominee for an office, it shall be by voice vote. A majority vote shall constitute election.

Article IX Principles and Program

Section 1. Principles. The Principles are concepts of government adopted by the national convention and supported by the League as a whole. They are the authorization for the adoption of national, state, and local program.

Section 2. Program. The program of the LWVMC shall consist of action to implement the Principles and those governmental issues chosen by the annual meeting for concerted study and action as follows:

1. Voting members resident within the jurisdiction(s) of the local government(s) concerned may make recommendations to the board of directors two months before the annual meeting.

2. The board of directors shall consider these recommendations and formulate a proposed program, which shall be sent to the members at least one month before the annual meeting.
3. Issues that relate to specific jurisdiction(s) in the program as presented to the annual meeting by the board of directors shall require for adoption a majority vote of members resident within the jurisdiction(s) of the local government(s) concerned and followed by a majority vote of concurrence of the members resident outside the jurisdiction(s) of the local government(s) concerned.
4. Recommendations for program submitted by members resident within the jurisdiction(s) of the local government(s) concerned but not included in the program recommended by the board of directors may be considered by the annual meeting, provided that (a) they were submitted two months before the annual meeting, (b) the annual meeting shall order consideration by a majority vote of members resident within the jurisdiction(s) of the local government(s) concerned, (c) the annual meeting shall adopt the item by a majority vote of the members resident within the jurisdiction(s) of the local government(s) concerned, and followed by a majority vote of concurrence of the members resident outside the jurisdiction(s) of the local government(s) concerned.

Section 3. Changes in Program. Changes in program, in the case of altered conditions, may be made provided that (a) information concerning the proposed changes has been sent to all members at least two weeks prior to a general membership meeting at which the changes are discussed, (b) final action by the membership resident within the jurisdiction(s) of the local government(s) concerned is taken at a succeeding meeting, with concurrence by the membership residing outside the jurisdiction(s) of the local government(s).

Section 4. Program Action. Members may act in the name of the LWVMC when authorized to do so by the appropriate board of directors. They may act only in conformity with, and not contrary to, a position taken by the LWVMC, the LWVFL and the LWVUS.

Article X
National Convention, State Convention, and State Council

Section 1. National Convention. The membership or the board of directors of the LWVMC, at a meeting before the date on which the names of delegates must be sent to the national office, shall select delegates from the LWVMC who are voting members to that convention in the number allotted.

Section 2. State Convention. The membership or board of directors of the LWVMC, at a meeting before the date on which the names of delegates who are voting members must be sent to the state office, shall select delegates from the LWVMC who are voting members to that convention in the number allotted.

Section 3. State Council. (Same as for state convention)

Article XI
Parliamentary Authority

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 when they are not inconsistent with these *Bylaws*.

Article XII
Amendments

These *Bylaws* may be amended by a two-thirds vote of the voting members at an annual meeting, providing a quorum is present and said amendments were submitted to the board of directors in writing at least two months prior to the annual meeting and sent to the general membership at least one month in advance of the annual meeting.