Annual Meeting

League of Women Voters
Oak Park & River Forest
June 3, 2025

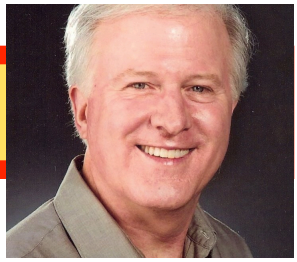
6:00 PM Meeting

2025

League of Women Voters of Oak Park & River Forest

100th Annual Meeting
Tuesday, June 3, 2025
Forest Park Park District Building
7501 Harrison
Forest Park, IL 60130

Jim McGrath, League of Women Voters of Illinois Gun Violence Specialist will be our speaker at 6:00 pm.



Business Meeting Agenda

Welcome, Introduction of Speaker Jim McGrath	Jane Hastings
Call to Order	Jane Hastings
Disposition of the Minutes of 2024 Annual Meeting	Mary Ann Porucznik
Treasurer's Report	Sue Jaffee
Budget Proposal 2025–26	Sue Jaffee/Joan Petertil
Transformation Update	Jane Hastings
Local Program Report 2024-2025/Proposed FY'26 Priorities	Beverly Tuck/Judy Crown
Proposed Slate of Officers & Board/Floor nominations	Penny Wallingford/Joanne Susmilch
Recognition of Past Presidents/Hanson Award Recipients	Tina Birnbaum
Presentation of Hazel Hanson Award	Tina Birnbaum

Closing Remarks and Acknowledgments Jane Hastings

Sadly, we acknowledge the loss of the following League members who passed away last year: Ann Marohn, Rose Meyers, Diane Moses, Kathy Perry, and Fran Sullivan, a 50 year, Honorary Lifetime Member.

Meeting Adjournment Jane Hastings

Proposed Rules of 2025 Annual Meeting

1. Only members of the League of Women Voters of Oak Park & River Forest may vote**.**
2. Only voting members may address the meeting. A member wishing to speak can raise their hand during the meeting, be recognized by the chair, and give her or his name and League position, if held.
3. During debate on a motion, no person may speak more than once until all others who wish to speak have been heard. After the original presentation, debate shall be limited to one minute for each speaker.
4. No announcements shall be made that do not relate to the business of the meeting or the welfare of the members.
5. Procedure for adoption of local program shall be:
    a. Recommended items shall be moved for adoption by the Vice-President or the Co-President.
    b. Motion for consideration of any non-recommended items shall be made by majority vote.
    c. Debate on recommended and non-recommended items shall then be held (items may be amended at this time).
    d. Recommended items shall be voted upon in their entirety by majority vote.
    e. Non-recommended items shall be voted on individually (two-thirds vote required).
6. Business of the Annual Meeting shall be further governed by those procedures outlined in *Simplified Parliamentary Procedure* based on *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised.*
7. These rules may be amended, rescinded, or suspended by a two-thirds vote of the voting members present and voting.

Current Assets as of April 30, 2025

Byline Bank Checking	$22,707
CD (6/28/25)	$20,950
CD. (11/13/25)	$10,000
CD (1/26/26)	$10,000
Total	$63,657

LWVOPRF Proposed Budget 2025-2026	Projection 7/2024-6/2025	Budget 7/2025-6/2026	Notes
REVENUE			
Annual Dues (FY26 Net of Payments to LWVIL/ US)	$11,306	$2,990	(A)
Centennial Sponsorship & Donations	12,274	-	(B)
Member Contributions	2,856	4,000	
Fundraising Income	447	1,500	
Interest from CD & Checking	977	775	
Total Operating Revenue	**$27,860**	**$9,265**	
OPERATING EXPENSES			
Advertising & Marketing	2,978	4,800	
Annual Meeting	677	700	
Committee Projects- Advocacy	-	100	
Committee Projects- Children/Youth/MOFP	100	250	
Committee Projects- Coffee and Conversation	250	600	
Committee Projects -Drinks & Dialogue	1,100	1,150	
Committee Projects- Environment	126	250	
Committee Projects- Great Decisions	(6)	25	
Committee Projects- Memorials/Museum/Gifts	247	360	
Committee Projects- Voter Services	582	500	
Communications-Wk-in-Preview/FB/Zoom/Website	239	250	
Consultant/Board	-	500	
Delegate Fees (CC; LWVIL; US & Inter League)	630	2,600	
Events- Centennial Celebration (Tickets less Exp)	2,714	-	
Events- Fall Kick-Off, Mix & Mingle, Other social	1,353	1,800	
Events- Hazel Hanson Award	100	100	
LMR, LMRR, ILO Member Fees	75	100	
Meeting Room Rental & Refreshments	-	700	
Member Services-Directory	163	350	
Misc. (Incl. Day in Our Village & Dues Scholarship)	153	300	
PMPs(Cook County)	311	325	
PMPs(LWVIL & US) *	9,952	10,300	(C)
Printing & Postage	695	600	
Treasurer Expenses	359	150	
Total Operating Expenses	**$22,798**	**$26,810**	
Net Revenue or (Deficit) before Transfer	5,062	(17,545)	
Transfer from Fund Balance (Per Policy)	-	7,245	(D)
Sub-Total	5,062	(10,300)	
Payment from dues revenue paid in FY25	-	10,300	
Net Revenue or (Deficit)	**$5,062**	**$0**	

Budget Committee: Sue Jaffee & Joan Petertil

Note (A) With the new Annual Dues policy enacted in 2025, leagues receive 20% of dues paid in by members with 80% going to LWVIL and LWVUS. Our portion more than under the previous policy.

Note(B) Total Gala Funds raised over 2 years: $24,700.

Note(C) Last year for the Per Member Payment due from prev. year; currently in cash accounts.

Note (D) Reserve transfer policy currently is a 5 year amortization of available fund balance.

Centennial Celebration at the Nineteenth Century Charitable Organization, drew more than 140 guests. The evening featured highlights in our chapter's 100-year history, toasted to the future and welcomed dignitaries including the top officials from Oak Park, River Forest and Forest Park.

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF OAK PARK AND RIVER FOREST 2024-2025 FOCUS/PRIORITY: ACTIVITIES

1. *Improve local League website/electronic/media communications to foster transparency, community engagement. and participation in government.*

- Publicized the U.S. League's transformation to a national portal, ChapterSpot, which is processing new memberships and renewals.
- Continued publication of weekly email and monthly newsletters to members.
- Continued weekly updates to the website with calendar, upcoming events and photos.
- Above-industry average open rate of between 60 and 65% of weekly emails and newsletters.
- Our Facebook account has 1,049 followers and our posts received more than 24,000 brief views over a 90-day period that included the recent local election cycle. 880 profiles have "liked" one or more of our posts.
- Updated our sponsor page to reflect our Centennial fundraising. The two-year campaign raised funds from more than 30 business and individual donors.
- Recorded membership information in local and US databases.
- Developed our Instagram account as an additional means of connecting with the public.

2. *Promote Civic engagement/education by presenting programs to the public on timely issues and serve as trusted source of information*

- The Fall Kickoff in September drew more than 60 people for a presentation on misinformation and disinformation. The panel included leaders of the LWV IL mis/disinformation task force and Michael Spikes, lecturer and director of Teach for Chicago Journalism at the Medill School of Journalism at Northwestern University. It was led by Beverly Tuck, Barbara Paterick and Belinda Lutz-Hamel, who also organized other civic engagement programs. Judy Crown moderated.
- Coffee and Conversation, formerly Second Tuesday, presented five programs at the Nineteenth Century Charitable Organization. In November, Braver Angels discussed how to talk about politics at Thanksgiving after the election when friends and family aren't on the same page. Other sessions covered the no cash bail program in Illinois, the Oak Park gay and lesbian community and an update on the United Nations convention on the elimination of discrimination against women.
- Drinks & Dialogue hosted four programs at Friendly's Tap in Berwyn. OPRF Superintendent Greg Johnson in January. In March, Jennifer Rook of the Thrive Counseling Center discussed mental health, in April climate expert Pamela Tate presented on saving the planet and saving money, and May featured law professor Steven D. Schwinn on state vs. federal law.
- Great Decisions met for discussions at Brookdale Oak Park and the Maze Branch Library. The Brookdale group led by Joan Pope had 19 people sign up and usually had 15 in attendance The Maze group led by Carolyn DeCoursey usually saw eight or nine participants.

3. *Continue voter service efforts to register, educate and provide information to voters.*

- Held Fall voter registration events in over 21 different locations in Oak Park, River Forest, Forest Park, Bellwood, and Harwood Heights.

Over 19 members volunteered to staff these voter registration events.

- Members passed out palm cards at community events for online voter registration.
- Worked with the Oak Park Village Clerk to do voter registration at senior facilities.
- Sponsored members to take the online Deputy Registrar Training with the County.
- Working with the Oak Park, River Forest, Forest Park, Elmwood Park, and Westchester Libraries, Peggy Kell moderated ten candidate forums in advance of the April Municipal election. This included five contested races in Oak Park, mayoral forums in North Riverside and Westchester, Proviso Township High School District trustee race, and the Library Board and School District 401 in Elmwood Park. These forums were recorded and posted on our website and on the VOTE411 website. Over 4,200 views of the candidate forums were made.
- Attended and registered OPRF High School students at a Fall and Spring Civics Learning Faire. Participated in the Fall Civics Learning Faire Panel Discussion.
- Registered voters at all Oak Park and River Forest senior living locations.
- 100 postcards were mailed to all citizens that our League had registered to vote this year. These postcards were sent to remind these voters to get out and use their voice in this election.
- Organized and ran the Mills Tower Resident Council Election.

4. Expand membership, build LWV brand and encourage participation to further LWV mission

- Our League chapter gained more than 47 new members since the November election, bringing membership to a recent high of nearly 220. Membership committee chair Joanne Susmilch reached out to the new members and held welcome parties at her home in the fall.
- Collected names of community attendees at League programs and followed up with them.
- Developed publicity plans for increasing awareness of our League and its activities.
- Increased advertising about LWV OPRF programs in Wednesday Journal.
- Staffed an LWV OPRF table at the Oak Park's Civic Fair and Day in the Village.

5. Encourage participation and engage all members in League advocacy and priorities.

- Advocated and wrote Letter to the Editor against the Safeguard American Voter Eligibility (SAVE) Act, which would suppress voting by women, people of color and rural voters and threaten our democratic electoral process. Promoted LWVIL calls to phone elected officials on Fridays.
- The Advocacy Committee, led by Marilyn Pearson, met with state legislators to obtain information and discuss priorities established by LWVIL. In 2024, the group met with Senate President Don Harmon and Speaker Chris Welch twice, with Senator Kimberly Lightford once, and with Representatives LaShawn Ford, Camille Lilly and Norma Hernandez. The group shared information on League initiatives involving protection of voter rights and addressing mis and disinformation.
- This spring, committee members attended Lobby Day and met with Harmon and Welch. Ann Courter, Jo-Ella Spratt and Belinda Lutz-Hamel volunteered for the LWV's Lobby Corps and met with legislators on May 7 in Springfield.
- Posted calls for legislative actions on FaceBook and Week in Preview.
- Created a work group to study and update the LWVIL position on firearms. Work is ongoing.

6. Partner with community organizations to accomplish shared goals on representative government, the environment, and voter services.

- Participated in Hands Off Day of Action on April 5 to protect threats to reproductive rights and democratic processes
- The Environment Committee, co-chaired by Beverly Graham and Marsha Borders, reached out to the OPRF High School Environment Club and encouraged the students to submit a film to the One Earth Film Festival. The film depicted construction of an artwork made of garbage.
- Committee members hosted Go Green tables at the Farmers Market and also on Saturdays during Plastic Free July. They spoke with shoppers about using alternate food storage containers instead of plastic.
- The Environment Committee manned a table at Barrie Fest in September and registered people to vote.
- The Environment Committee organized a forest preserve clean-up at Miller Meadow where elected officials joined members in cleaning up the area.
- The League partnered with Brookdale Senior Living for the annual “Mix and Mingle” membership event.
- Held a plant sale fundraiser with Good Earth Greenhouse.
- Continued membership in LWV Lake Michigan and LWV Upper Mississippi River Region.
- Completed centennial campaign fundraising with support from more than 30 local businesses including Byline Bank, Brookdale, Good Heart Work Smart Foundation, Oil-Dri and W.S. Darley, Baird & Warner, Downtown Oak Park, Gagliardo Group/Compass, Laura Maychruk Real Estate, Oak Park Arms, Oak Park Firefighters Local 95 and River Forest Animal Hospital.
- Worked with Fair Vote and CHANGE on a public presentation on the non-binding redistricting referendum question and the binding ranked choice voting question in the Oak Park election.

7. *Looking to restart/revitalize Observers program to monitor local units of governments.*

League of Women Voters of Oak Park and River Forest
Proposed Nominations for 2025-26

Board Officers:

Co-Presidents:	Judith Crown	2025-2027
	Beverly Tuck	2025-2027
Vice Presidents:	Tine Birnbaum	2025-2026
	Penny Wallingford	2025-2027
Treasurer:	Susan Jaffee	2025-2026
Secretary:	Mary Ann Porucznik	2025-2027

Directors:	Ann Courter	2025-2027
	Michelle Fitz-Henry	2025-2026
	Pat Johnson	2025-2027
	Belinda Lutz-Hamel	2025-2026
	Marilyn Pearson	2025-2027
	Joanne Susmilch	2025-2026

Committee Chairs 2025-2026 Appointed by the Board for one-year terms. Chairs may be appointed multiple times.

ADMINISTRATION: Peggy Kell

ADVOCACY: Marilyn Pearson

ARCHIVES: Mary Ann Porucznik

BUDGET COMMITTEE: Susan Jaffee & Joan Petertil

COFFEE & CONVERSATION: Pat Johnson & Beverly Tuck

COMMUNICATIONS: Peggy Kell & Leslie Lauderdale

DRINKS & DIALOGUE: Belinda Lutz-Hamel & Michelle Fitz-Henry

ENVIRONMENT: Marsha Borders & Beverly Graham

FUNDRAISING: Judith Crown & Beverly Graham

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS/GREAT DECISIONS: Edward White

LWVCC LIAISON: Leslie Lauderdale

LWV LAKE MICHIGAN LIAISON: Kelly McDonald

MEMBERSHIP DEVELOPMENT: Joanne Susmilch

MEMBERSHIP RECORDING: Suzanne Isaacson

NOMINATING COMMITTEE: Joanne Susmilch & Penny Wallingford

OBSERVERS: Amber Elmer & Joan Petertil

VOTER SERVICES: Peggy Kell

Standing Committees to be appointed by the Board of Directors: ByLaws, Financial Review and Political Activity Policy.

HAZEL HANSON AWARD: Jane Hastings



Jane Hastings
2025 Hazel Hanson
Award Winner

Jane Hastings has done a remarkable job as co-president and president of the OPRF League for the last 4 years. She has led our League through extraordinary challenges. Covid and the transition from lock down to in-person meetings and events was handled with sensitivity and common sense, with Jane prioritizing safety and participants' comfort level.

Jane guided us through our Centennial, organizing and supervising a fabulous Gala Committee. The Committee put on a fun and successful celebration dinner featuring remarks by the heads of our three local villages, an overview of the League's 100 year history and visual representations of our accomplishments which were also displayed at strategic locations in our villages.

The other major challenge that Jane faced was the National League's Transformation Road Map—a total restructuring of the administrative organization of the League. This is being done to keep the League current and relevant. Jane was, and continues to be, our representative and interpreter in this process. She provides feedback on implementation to the planners and is our conduit for information about this enormous undertaking, guiding our local League in making the necessary structural changes to comply with the new system.

Remarkably, she has done all of this while managing the regular business of the League—registering voters, presenting candidate forums and civic education, advocating with legislators for League positions, revising our by-laws and everything else that we typically do.

Jane's skills, talents and work ethic have not been limited to the League. She has a long history of fighting for social justice. She was born in Springfield, IL, our state capitol, where she attended local Catholic schools. After high school graduation, she was not inspired to go off to college immediately, so she worked for a year for the EPA. During that time she became interested in prison reform and she pursued her interest by getting a degree in Administration of Justice at Southern IL University.

After graduation she began her administrative career working in Juvenile Justice. She was successful in applying for a grant for a pilot program to separate juveniles from the general adult prison population. Her region covered 27 rural counties, working closely with law enforcement personnel, so she had to be creative and innovative in carving out safe prison space for kids.

She returned to school to pursue a Masters Degree in Public Administration, and began working for the Southern IL. Mayors' Association. This gave her an in depth political education!
Jane then moved on to the IL. Department of Children and Family Services in Chicago, serving in the Division of Youth and Community Services, which she describes as an "immersive learning experience". She worked on the Treatment Alternatives for Safe Communities, a national model diversionary program for helping kids involved with drugs get their lives back on track.
Next was a stint with a DCFS contractor, Chrysalis, where, as part of a settlement of a federal class action lawsuit, she designed and implemented programs for children in foster care. She supervised a staff of 13 as they worked to place troubled kids in the least restrictive environment that could provide the services and supports that were needed. Notably, she was successful in bringing foster children who had been placed out of state back to their communities so they could maintain relationships with their families.
Jane retired from her career Jane as a DCFS administrator for an intensive community based service system for severely emotionally disturbed children.
Jane's professional career was centered on juvenile justice and child welfare. She recently learned, through her sister's genealogical research, that there is an historical context for her career choice. Her ancestors came to the US from England in the 1600s, settling in Salem, MA, as committed abolitionists. Her great, great grandparents moved to Central IL where their barn was one of several local safe houses on the underground railroad for escaping enslaved people.
Jane's commitment to social justice seems to be in her DNA, so it is only natural for her to pursue the League's goals as well as working for the good of the community. Jane embodies the essence of the Hazel Hanson award.

About Hazel Hanson: Twice the president of our League, in 1953-55 and 1969-71, Hanson had a deep understanding of the organization, its work and principles. In 1987, she donated to establish an award to be given to a member who promoted the goals of the League and was active in the community. Hanson embodied this principle. As an Oak Park Village Trustee, she was instrumental in passing the Fair Housing Ordinance. She also was a member of the committee that planned the new library.