Observer Corps
2019
LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS DANE COUNTY (LWVDC)
OBSERVER CORPS ORIENTATION AND TRAINING

WHY JOIN THE LWVDC OBSERVER CORPS?

"The League is a non-profit, non-partisan, national organization whose purpose is to promote informed and active participation of citizens in government at all levels."
(LWVDC Purpose)

Observing local government meetings can build trust and respect between the governmental agency and the LWVDC. Over time as an Observer, you will become more familiar with the elected officials, citizen appointees and staff who serve on the committee or council and with the committee’s processes and protocols. When issues arise that would be of interest to the LWVDC, you will be well placed to understand the history and context of the issue and to alert the LWVDC leadership that action should be considered. Informed action by the LWVDC leadership to either support or oppose the proposed change can draw positive attention to the League from elected officials.

In other words, you would be the eyes and the ears, but usually not the voice of the LWVDC.

WHAT DO OBSERVERS DO?

In general, Observers consistently attend meetings of selected committees to monitor compliance with the Wisconsin Open Meetings Act and to observe the business of the meeting to identify issues that should be brought to the attention of the LWVDC leadership. If you cannot attend a meeting, the Observer Corps Coordinator will seek a substitute.

- More specifically you would begin by attending a two-hour training about the role of an Observer.
- You would then select which governmental entity you would like to observe based on your interests. You may observe more than one committee.
- You can research the responsibilities and goals of the committee, the participants and the meeting times and locations in advance using the links at the end of this document.
- While attending the meeting, you should wear a LWV button.
- You should create your own file for copies of agendas, handouts and your notes about the meeting.
- During the meeting, you should NOT speak or even ask questions of the meeting participants. While this may seem overly cautious, the goal is to observe, not to participate. Even asking a question may be wrongly attributed to the LWVDC by meeting participants or others including the media.
• After the meeting, you will complete and submit the one-page Observer Corps Report through the LWVDC web site.
• The information in the report will be downloaded to a spreadsheet for review by the Coordinator. Any issues identified will be called to the attention of League leadership. The spreadsheet will also be helpful in building a history of committee processes and decisions for future Observers.

HOW WOULD AN OBSERVER KNOW IF AN ISSUE IS IMPORTANT TO THE LEAGUE AND WHAT SHOULD THE OBSERVER DO?

Observers are not authorized to speak for the League without the express permission of the LWVDC President or designee but are asked to identify and report issues to League leadership. Issues of concern should pertain to any of the published Positions of the national, state and local Leagues. Links to these Positions are at the end of this document. As you gain experience, it will become easier to decide which issues need quick attention.

When you decide that the League should be aware of an issue, you should directly notify the Observer Corps Coordinator or the LWVDC President or designee. Including the issue on the Observer Corps Report alone is not adequate notice for the League to take action. If you are uncertain about an issue, it should be reported.

HOW CAN YOU CHANGE COMMITTEES OR YOUR ROLE AS AN OBSERVER?

Learning how a government committee works takes time. You may decide, after attending meetings, that observing a different committee would be more interesting or productive. Or perhaps a new subcommittee or task force is being formed that that is more closely matched with your interests. You should discuss the proposed change with the Observer Corps Coordinator.

As you become more familiar with the committee you are observing, it may become more difficult to maintain a neutral position. You may feel strongly enough about an issue that you want to participate instead of observing others. Or, committee members who have become accustomed to your presence may seek input from you. This is not a problem as long as you notify the Observer Corps Coordinator in advance that you are no longer an observer of this committee. At the outset of your new role, you should announce that you do not represent the Dane County LWV. Be aware that some participants or attendees may still regard what you say as coming from the LWVDC.
League Principles

Whatever the issues, the League believes that government policy, programs and performance must meet these criteria:

- Competent personnel with clear responsibilities
- Coordination among agencies and levels of government
- Adequate financing
- Effective enforcement
- Well-defined channels for citizen input and review

Read LWVDC positions in the following areas:

Government Responsibilities and Procedures (/government-responsibilities-and-procedures)
Administration of Justice (/administration-of-justice)
Social Policy (/social-policy)
Natural Resources (/natural-resources)
School Districts (/school-districts)

Read LWVWI positions:

2018 Summary (https://docs.google.com/document/d/1g6-py3PBTmsxl6YUT_JC_FmiKdQtoOFcVvGW0frj3XcA/edit) | By topic

Read LWVUS positions:


2019

LINKS TO ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

League of Women Voters United States – Summary of Positions

League of Women Voters Wisconsin – Positions
https://my.lwv.org/wisconsin/positions

League of Women Voters Dane County – Positions
https://www.lwvdanecounty.org/our-positions/

LWVUS Resource Guide

Power point about Open Meetings Act

Summary of Robert’s Rules of Order for meetings:

City of Madison
www.cityofmadison.com/city-hall/committees
City of Madison – Legistar
https://madison.legistar.com/Departments.aspx

Dane County
https://board.countyofdane.com
Dane County Committees - Legistar
https://dane.legistar.com/Departments.aspx
Dane County Committees – Granicus
https://dane.granicus.com/boards/wi/4d5ebc9bd2aa4f36

Dane County School Districts
http://www.madisonwithkids.com/schools-districts.html
To receive news releases from Dane County – email kuhl.lauren@countyofdane.com and request that you be added to the list. Mention that you are with the LWVDC.

To access televised/recorded meetings:
http://www.cityofmadison.com/information-technology/city-channel

To obtain a current meeting schedule for Madison:
http://www.cityofmadison.com/clerk/meeting-schedule

U-Tube video produced by LWV about the legislative process in State of Wisconsin
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=znJeclcxdMA
SUGGESTED COMMITTEES FOR OBSERVERS
(Observers may choose any committees and are not restricted to this list.)

1. GOVERNMENT RESPONSIBILITIES AND PROCEDURES
   Dane County Board of Supervisors
   Personnel and Finance – County Budget oversight

   City of Madison Common Council
   City of Madison Finance committee

2. ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE
   Public Protection & Judiciary Committee (county)
   Criminal Justice Council (county)
   Police and Fire Commission (city)

3. SOCIAL POLICY
   Health & Human Needs Committee (county – may be televised soon)
   Human Services Board (county)
   Board of Health for Madison And Dane County (county and city)
   Early Childhood Care and Education (city)

4. NATURAL RESOURCES
   Publics Works and Transportation Committee (county)
   Transportation Policy and Planning Board (city)
   Committee on the Environment (city)

   Capitol Area Regional Planning Commission (county and city)
   Environment, Agriculture & Natural Resources (county)
GOVERNMENT RESPONSIBILITIES AND PROCEDURES

A. Local Government Relationships within Dane County [adopted 1972]

Support of:

1. County responsibility for housing, solid waste, health and multimodal transportation that includes airports
2. Shared responsibility by county and local units for parks
3. County responsibility for air pollution while working toward regional and state responsibility
4. Mandatory procedures for citizen participation at the study, planning, and administrative stages of the above services


B. Municipal* Budget Procedures [#1-3 adopted 1978; #4-10 adopted 1980] (* municipal refers to county, town, village or city)

Support of:

1. Local government adherence to minimum statutory requirements,\(^1\) recognizing that statutory change might be necessary to force compliance with these requirements by municipalities.
\(^1\)Statutes mandate that budgets include:
- previous year's actual revenues and expenditures
- all existing indebtedness
- all anticipated revenues
- all proposed expenditures
- revenues and expenditures for current year (actual figures for at least six months)
- listing by fund of all anticipated unexpended or unappropriated balances
- budget summary.
In addition, state law requires adequate notice of public hearings and meetings dealing with budgets, and requires that copies of proposed budget details be readily available to citizens prior to budget hearings.

1. Well-publicized budget hearings using means such as local newspapers, public service announcements on radio and television, and making proposed budgets available in libraries, banks, and other places

2. Line-item budgeting as basic and necessary for accountability

3. The inclusion of program information and performance measures in the county and city budgets. Small cities and villages which could generate such information could add it to their budgets.

4. The use of side-by-side narrative to explain special items, significant increases in expenditure of revenues, new programs, or programs dropped. Such narrative should be used sparingly, with an economy of words, for clarity.

5. The inclusion of a statement policy by the chief executive outlining the policy goals of the budget. Such a statement is desirable at all levels and is necessary at the city and county levels.

6. Towns should precede their annual meetings with public hearings prior to the formulation of the budget.

7. Citizen participation at all levels of the budget-making process, most importantly at the needs assessment level and at public hearings

8. Inclusion of a detailed account of expenditures of special revenues

9. Inclusion of a table of contents or index for Dane County and Madison budgets. This is desirable for other units of government if the complexity of the budget warrants it.

C. Finance - Madison [adopted prior to 1972]

Support of:

1. Improved procedures for budgetary analysis and review of local governments, including the use of program budgeting as a tool in determining costs of alternative means of realizing public goals

2. Analytical and advisory role of the city Finance Director as distinct from and subordinate to the policy making role of elected officials
D. Mayor - Madison

Support of:

1. Four-year term for the Mayor of Madison

E. Economic Impacts of Development [adopted May 1987]

Support of:

1. Compiling economic impact information and preparing an analysis early in the decision-making process for development projects with the potential for significant economic impact in the community or region

2. League believes that this will lead to better decisions and that the long-term consequences of making development decisions without trustworthy information outweigh the cost of such compilation and analysis.

3. When economic impact analysis is undertaken, it is highly important to determine both who benefits from and who pays for a project. The analysis should include long-term effects on revenue and expenses for municipalities as well as on revenue for other government units (e.g. school and VTAE districts, counties). Immediate effects on revenue and expenses, while not a high priority, are also important.

4. The economic impact analysis should also include information about property value trends.

5. An economic impact analysis should include an analysis of changes in employment that can be expected from the project, such as the net number of jobs created or lost (long/short-term, skilled/unskilled) and a documented need for jobs with differing skill levels within the community.

6. Economic impact analysis should include an analysis of the influence of the development project on the demand for housing, and information on the existing low/medium/high income housing mix, the single and multiple family dwelling inventory, and trends in achieving mixed-housing neighborhoods

Recent LWVDC Statements, Studies, and Position Updates

Taxpayer Bill of Rights (TABOR) January, 2005
Testimony at Hearing of Dane County Redistricting Subcommittee November, 2015 (Based on state positions on Apportionment.)
Statement to the Dane County Board in support of Resolution 32 ALLOWING HOMELESS INDIVIDUALS TO USE COUNTY DESIGNATED ADDRESSES FOR THE PURPOSES OF RECEIVING AN ID. June, 2016 (Based on national position on Voting Rights.)

Statement to the Dane County Board in support of the Independent Citizen Redistricting Commission September, 2016

Request that Mayor Soglin adequately fund the Madison City Clerk’s Office August 1, 2016

Request that Mayor Soglin adequately fund the Madison City Clerk’s Office August 1, 2017

Request that Mayor Soglin ensure convenient bus service to DMV at new Excelsior Drive location September 18, 2017

Request for Madison Common Council to sponsor a budget amendment for bus service to new DMV location October 17, 2017

Statement to the Dane County Board in support of recording all meetings of standing committees October 24, 2017

Statement to the Dane County Board in support of temporary suspension of Wisconsin’s voter ID law October 26, 2017

Correspondence with UW-Madison Chancellor’s Office regarding access to student voter IDs July 25–November 9, 2017

Letter to members of the Personnel and Finance Committee re funding for voter ID education November 14, 2017

Message sent to County Board President Sharon Corrigan and Supervisor Heidi Wengleitner (among others) as part of an email discussion about greater public access to county committee deliberations November 14, 2017

Letter to Judge James Peterson about voter photo ID concerns November 28, 2017

Response from Judge Peterson December 1, 2017

Statement at press conference in support of Madison’s civil rights complaint against WisDOT for DMV move January 4, 2017

Letter to US DoT in support of Madison’s civil rights complaint January 10, 2018

Statement to the Dane County Board Budget Hearing in support of efforts at making engaging citizens in public meetings September 13, 2018

Statement to Wisconsin Legislature Joint Committee on Finance opposing extraordinary session legislation December 3, 2018

Statement to Sun Prairie Committee of the Whole supporting budget amendment to improve elections February 6, 2019
ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE

1. **Juvenile Detention Dane County** [adopted 1976; reviewed 2003]
   Support of:

   1. Principle of juvenile detention primarily as a holding function with secure detention to be used only for those who pose a serious threat to themselves or others or who are likely to run away prior to adjudication, with a diversification of nonsecure facilities to be provided for all others

   2. Improved care for all children detained, separated from the adult population, including protection, medical care and a full range of activities

   3. An adequate number of well-trained personnel at all levels, including professionally qualified intake workers available around the clock

2. **Dane County Jail** [adopted 1976; reviewed 2003]

   Support of the following principles in treating those persons incarcerated in the Dane County Jail:

   1. Basic human needs should be met. Specifically, an individual incarcerated in the jail should have an adequate diet, security of person, medical care, sanitary conditions, privacy and religious freedom.

   2. A program of rehabilitation activities which will seek further to avoid criminalization and facilitate reentry into society should be provided. Such activities should include: access to legal counsel, counseling as necessary, and access to family in suitable facilities for visiting. Recreational activities should be available and should include opportunities for exercise. Inmates of the jail should have access to the community in the form of resource persons and work release with educational programs and opportunities being made available both inside and outside the jail.

   3. Equality of opportunity for inmates of both sexes should be guaranteed.

Recent LWVDC Statements, Studies, and Position Updates

The League presented a **statement to the Madison Common Council on June 7, 2016**, supporting the proposed review of Madison Police Policies and
Procedures. This statement was based on state positions on law enforcement and equal rights, and national positions on Social Policy: “Promote social and economic justice, and the health and safety of all Americans.”

The League presented a statement to the City of Madison Public Safety Review Committee on May 9, 2017, and also to the Equal Opportunities Commission on May 11, 2017, supporting the report of the President’s Work Group on Police and Community Relations. A slightly modified version was presented to the Madison Common Council on May 17, 2017. This statement was based on state league positions on Law Enforcement “Support of: Law enforcement policy locally developed by cooperative efforts of citizens and law enforcement agencies using state guidelines, but reflecting local needs.” and Equal Rights “Support for equal rights for all regardless of race, color...disability...” and on national positions on Social Policy: “Secure equal rights and equal opportunity for all. Promote social and economic justice, and the health and safety of all Americans.”

On June 6, 2017, the League presented a statement to the joint meeting of the Public Protection and Judiciary and the Health and Human Needs Committees of the Dane County Board of Supervisors regarding plans for the Dane County Jail.

Letter to Dane County Executive Joe Parisi about funding a restoration center (July 28, 2017)
Letter to the Dane County Board related to the Dane County jail and related items (October 30, 2017)
Statement to the Madison Police Department Policy and Procedure Review Ad Hoc Committee (July 26, 2018). We urged the committee to request that staff track the committee's decisions as it develops its report to the Common Council, so that the committee and the public can see what the committee is deciding.
Statement to Madison Common Council concerning the final report of the Madison Police Department Policy and Procedure Review Ad Hoc Committee (October 30, 2018). We urged the council to fund a service contract for a final report of the committee to be written.
Comment on Department of Homeland Security Immigration and Customs Enforcement Bureau (ICEB) proposed rule Apprehension, Processing, Care, and Custody of Alien Minors and Unaccompanied Alien Children (October 30, 2018).
SOCIAL POLICY

1. **Health Care** [adopted 1978; updated 2003]

   Support of:

   1. A county-wide health department, either single county or city/county to provide:
      1. Retail food store inspection, environmental protection services and communicable and non-communicable disease services guided by state standards
      2. Consumer protection services and vital statistics record keeping
      3. Home care services either by direct provision of such service or by purchase of service from non-governmental agency

2. **Housing and Community Development** [adopted 1964-69, expanded from Madison to Dane County, 1983, Updated 2002]

   Support of:

   1. Primary concern for human needs assuring that all people have decent affordable housing accessible to transportation, other neighborhood resources and social services as needed
   2. Public and private programs to provide standard (safe, decent and sanitary) housing with dispersal of sites and integration of housing and services
   3. Coordination of housing policy at all government levels with continuous updating of information related to housing supply and demand
   4. Responsible inclusive zoning, building and housing codes, and community planning; periodically updated and effectively administrated and enforced, to prevent blight and preserve housing stock
   5. Use of local, state and federal funds, as well as other financial incentives, for redevelopment and rehabilitation of housing
   6. Effective public relations and information on plans and objectives to stimulate citizen understanding and participation.

3. **Human Rights** [adopted 1972; moved from Madison to Dane County 1980; rewritten 2003]

   Support of programs for the preservation of human rights, including:
1. An active equal opportunities ordinance with coverage in fields of public accommodations, fair employment practices, and fair housing and provisions for adequate enforcement procedures
2. Opposition to discrimination in the employment of qualified personnel in local government for all populations protected by law

4. **Human Services – Dane County** [updated 2001]

Support of:

1. Improving of support services for people in need through efforts to maintain or improve worker case load, provide well trained staff, increase allocation of funds and make emergency support services available on a fee or sliding fee scale to all citizens.
2. Services to children providing for:
   1. early identification of problems and programs for remedial action.
   2. interventions which seek to meet the needs of the individual child and to minimize out-of-home placements.
   3. public supported interventions and treatment for eligible children at risk.
   4. programs available to other children on an ability to pay
3. Day care providers offering care and protection for children of low-income families as well as other cases of demonstrated need, with public support for such care.
4. Public agencies having responsibility and adequate staff for casework services and oversight of purchase of service providers (POS).
5. Each board integrated in the Human Services Board should have its specific service area represented in an advisory capacity to the Board. League supports citizen membership on the Human Services Board.

The Human Services Board is expected to:

1. serve clients more effectively by providing a single point of accountability and responsibility
2. provide comprehensive planning and policy development
3. establish uniform management and equitable resource allocation

5. **Long Term Care for the Elderly and Persons with Disabilities** [adopted 1990; revised 2005]
Support of:

1. A system of programs and support services that enable those with long term care needs to live as independently as possible in their communities and to avoid long term institutional care.
2. A long term care system that has the following components:
   1. a computerized information and assistance program which is comprehensive, current, and accurate, easily accessible, and, through public education and outreach, is known to individuals, families, and the community;
   2. a program for assessing individual need, developing a plan of care that reflects a person’s preferences, and managing that plan, updating it as necessary;
   3. strong coordination and cooperation among both public and private agencies that plan and determine policy for the long term care system and those that develop and deliver services.
3. Quality assurance that is essential for the well being of individuals who need long term care.
   1. Care management personnel must demonstrate knowledge and integrity in the provision of health care and social support services.
   2. Direct care workers must receive proper training and supervision, as well as competitive wages and benefits, to assure quality lives for people who need long term care.

Recent LWVDC Statements, Studies, and Position Updates

Long Term Care System in Crisis
Statement for Dane County Public Hearing September 9, 2004
Statement for Dane County Public Hearing October 24, 2004
Statement Supporting City of Madison Ordinance to Provide Sick Leave Benefits to Employees December 14, 2005 and January 17, 2006
Long Term Care in Dane County 2005 [PDF file]
Statement for Dane County Public Hearing on the Proposed Budget October 25, 2007 [PDF file-not available]
Statement Regarding Board of Estimates Report to the City of Madison Common Council November 6, 2007 [PDF file]
AN OUNCE OF PREVENTION: Quality Early Care and Education for Dane County February, 2008 [PDF file]
Statement to the Madison Common Council August 17, 2009 [PDF file]
Statement In Response to the Dane County Department of Human Services
Proposed Budget September 8, 2009 [PDF file]
Statement to the Mayor in support of daycare funding September 29, 2010
Comments to Medicaid.gov on Wisconsin proposal for waiver to reform BadgerCare July 14, 2017
NATURAL RESOURCES

National and Wisconsin League Land-Use Positions
At the national level the League of Women Voters has stated its recognition that "land is a finite resource, not just a commodity and believes that land ownership, whether public or private, implies responsibilities of ownership." Further, "Each level of government must bear appropriate responsibility for planning and managing land resources." And, "...citizen participation must be built into the planning and management of land resources at every step." In addition, the Wisconsin League has many land-use positions that underlie and reinforce the validity of those held by the Dane County League.

Dane County League Positions on Land Use
In 2004 positions taken from 1972 onward were placed in a new structure. (A history of the positions is available in the LWV-Dane County office.)

Support of:

1. **Land Use Planning in Dane County**
   The League supports policies and practices that:

   The League of Women Voters supports efforts to maintain the environmental quality of both the urban and the rural parts of the county, specifically through:

   1. **Protecting Natural Resources**
      1. Conserve in permanent open space significant natural resources: wetlands, forests, wildlife, farmlands, both the quality and quantity of ground water, and will reduce flooding problems.
      2. Protect natural resources and linkages outside the open space corridors such as scientific areas, glacial features, and other isolated environmentally sensitive areas
      3. Acquire and preserve wetlands and the adjacent uplands and shoreline along lakes, streams, creeks, their headwaters and springs, as well as woodland areas and areas of significant topography
      4. Assist in implementing the Dane County Water Quality Plan
      5. Include any additional green space preservation plans that are adopted by Dane County
2. **Urban Development**

1. The League supports cluster types of urban development with small lot sizes and more shared open space.

2. League objectives should strengthen the role of the downtown area of Madison as a regional center for a wide variety of activities, including government, office activity, retail stores and entertainment.

3. The League encourages rehabilitation of physically deteriorating portions of existing urban areas with emphasis on “in-filling” of vacant or under-used parcels that are in the urban service area.

4. The League supports expenditures for sufficient public parks and recreation areas to meet the needs of the users.

5. The League supports the detailed delineation and implementation of the system of environmental corridors within urban areas.

3. **Outlying Areas or Rural, Non-Farm Areas**

The League supports:

1. Reducing urban sprawl through buffer zones between communities and land-use districts

2. Efforts to enhance Dane County’s essential character by preserving the unique assets of the outlying communities such as

   1. Their autonomy
   2. The small town atmosphere
   3. The close relationship of government and citizen
   4. Their variety of ages, occupations, and cultures
   5. Their natural areas – parks, marshes, ponds, creeks
   6. Their historic sites

3. Using open space to achieve separation of communities and help guide urban growth

4. Continued preservation of the physical and biological resources within the countywide open space corridor system as adopted in the Regional Development Guide.
5. Allowing only low-impact recreational uses of natural resource protection areas

6. Restoration of upland prairies, woodlands, and wetlands

7. Continued implementation of the Nine Springs E-Way and Cherokee Marsh long-range plans

8. Linking public lands and trails of various political jurisdictions to communities and population centers to amplify the availability and recreational use of these lands

9. Providing access to lakes and streams and water-based recreation trails for use by canoes, kayaks, and similar watercraft.

10. Prohibiting non-farm development in wetlands and floodplains and restricting it to areas containing soils unsuitable for agriculture.

4. Planning Fundamentals
   1. Comprehensive master planning at each governmental level
   2. Regional planning
   3. Administrative and professional staffing
   4. Coordination of planning efforts among departments within the county government
   5. Cooperation of planning commissions with other governmental units and with each other
   6. Support of these criteria against which to weigh conflicting land-use demands: density, energy conservation, green building, access to public facilities
   7. Development of further planning criteria such as: economic, monetary, social and resource costs;
   8. Acquiring land for outdoor recreation, open space, scenic beauty, and fresh air
   9. Providing funds for park maintenance

5. Planners' Responsibilities
   The League believes that planning agencies must
   1. Anticipate population growth and development pressures
2. Identify environmental corridors and wetlands and other natural resources
3. Identify population growth areas and coordinate school building with communication and transit systems within the population centers
4. Consider joint action among municipalities on acquisition and maintenance of parklands
5. Educate pertinent government employees, public officials, and the citizenry

6. Planning Tools
   The League believes governmental units must use certain tools if they are to implement their plans for guiding development, preserving open space, protecting environmental quality, and providing adequately for housing needs
   1. Realistic and effective zoning regulations, including meaningful agricultural zoning
   2. Extraterritorial planning and zoning powers
   3. "Cluster development" and "planned unit development" regulations
   4. A vigorous and ongoing program of land acquisition though gifts, grants, leasing, easements or outright purchase, even if capital budgeting is required
   5. Active pursuit of donations and grants from public and private sources
   6. Restricting the timing and location of development by control of utility services
   7. Tax concessions
   8. Legal devices by property owners to keep land undeveloped when it is in the public interest to do so

7. Citizen Involvement
   The League believes that citizen members of planning boards and commissions should be persons actively interested in the community and representative of a range of interests and experience.
1. They should be able to consider the needs of the entire area in their jurisdiction.

2. They should be chosen for overall competence rather than solely for any professional expertise.

3. In the case of any conflict of interest, a member must abstain from discussion and voting.

4. New members should be offered an orientation program.

5. Citizens should receive pertinent land-use information from their government regularly.

2. Transportation Systems and Plans in Dane County

Support of an Integrated, Multi-Modal Transportation System

1. The League of Women Voters supports an integrated, multi-modal transportation system that provides for those of all ages and abilities access to schools, jobs, housing, services, education, and other destinations.

Support of Transportation Planning: [adopted prior to 1972]

2. The following principles in transportation planning:

   1. Coordination

      1. With land use
      2. With other governmental units
      3. Among all modes of transportation
      4. Between immediate and long-range solutions, maintaining flexibility for the future

2. Preservation of high environmental quality with attention to aesthetics, prevention of pollution and preservation of neighborhoods, the downtown area, and open spaces

3. Consideration of people's needs as well as safety, convenience and cost

3. Recognizing that the local public transportation system is a responsibility of local government, the League supports its inclusion in comprehensive transportation planning and its adherence to the above principles
4. The League also supports expansion of public transit in area covered, upgrading its service, and initiating efforts to encourage the public's use and participation

**Support of Railroads:** [adopted 1984]

5. Railroads as an integral part of the public transportation system (freight and potentially passenger)

6. Subsidies for railroads of economic importance

7. Government purchase and maintenance of abandoned railroad, track, or track for which abandonment has been approved, if the track is considered important to local economies

8. County financial contributions for railroad preservation within the county, recognizing that railroads may be a part of a multi-community network

9. Preservation of Dane County's railroad corridors

10. Development of excess right-of-way in accordance with local land-use plans

**Support of Local and Regional Transit Systems:** [adopted 5/13/1992]

11. Continued efforts to include additional Madison area communities in contracts with Madison Metro and Metro Plus

12. County participation in funding and coordination of federally mandated services with significant state and federal aid. Consideration should be given to participation of the private sector and help for smaller communities that might be forced to close down transit systems under the costs of federal mandates.

13. Enabling state and county legislation for a regional transit district (without specifying metropolitan or county)

14. High priority be given to certain criteria

   1. Fiscal and regulatory control by a general purpose government

   2. Long-term commitment by communities who join a regional system

   3. A central dispatch system for Dane County specialized transportation services with careful study of its implementation
15. High or medium priority be given to:
   1. Tax or assessment (fiscal) equity through periodic review of differing service levels in a regional system
   2. Keeping Madison Metro service high, while permitting flexibility in routes
   3. Funding of transportation needs must be considered as a major budget item together with other needs of “transit-disabled” citizens

Recent LWVDC Statements, Studies, and Position Updates

Statement to the Dane County Board, 10/24/05

Energy position, 6/07

Statement on Regional Transit Authority (RTA), 6/07

Statement to the Transport 2020 Finance and Governance Subcommittee, 2/09

Statement to the Dane County Environment, Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee, 10/05/2010

Statement on Regional Transit Authority (RTA), 2/11

Statement to the Dane County Board in support of the Clear Lakes Initiative, 2/2/2012

Statement on Dane County Budget, 10/14

Statement in support of CRANES amendment, 1/17

Statement in opposition to AB 109 before the Assembly Committee on Local Government, 3/8/17

CRANES statement in support of Dane County Board Resolution 649 (4/20/17) County Board Resolution 649 creating the Healthy Farms Healthy Lakes Task Force

Statement to the DNR opposing permits for the Foxconn campus to emit toxic air pollutants (4/14/18)
SCHOOL DISTRICTS

1. Long-Range Planning - Dane County [adopted 1982]
   1. When developing long-range plans for educational and facility needs, school districts should consider economic factors, enrollment patterns, community needs and evaluation of current programs.
   2. Citizens should be involved throughout the long-range planning process.
   3. School districts should cooperate with other appropriate governmental units in planning for a school district’s facility needs.
   4. The intended use of school district property should be consistent with the housing and growth plans of affected municipalities.
   5. Planning for consolidation or expansion of a district’s facilities should include discussion of alternatives by both the public and the school board.

The following positions, 2–5, express the common themes found in the previously separate LWVDC school district positions for Madison, Verona, Stoughton, Middleton-Cross Plains, and Sun Prairie, adopted 1974-1980; they were adopted in the following consolidated form 5/8/1996.

   1. Individualized, child-centered instruction which gives each student
      1. close personal contact with teachers, and
      2. equality of opportunity, recognizing that equality does not necessarily mean uniformity
   2. Pupil-teacher ratios which take into account the special learning of each child
   3. Consistent, fair and firm enforcement of existing rules by teachers, with administrative and parental support, and faculty supervision of students for the protection of their rights to learn
   4. Equal educational opportunity throughout each district, though not necessarily identical services, with sufficient flexibility in programs to meet student needs
   5. Flexible structures, methods, and programs for students at all levels, recognizing the possibility of higher costs

   1. A standard process for public participation in budget development to include:
1. public notice informing citizens when an individual school budget is being prepared in order to encourage citizen involvement at that level, and
2. an opportunity for participation on program and policy issues before budget recommendations are initially submitted to the school comptroller
2. The development of the objectives for the school district before the budget is accepted by the Board of Education to serve as a guide for budget decisions
3. A format for the working copy of the budget document which includes:
   1. a statement outlining the recommended policy goals of the budget, and
   2. a side-by-side narrative to explain special items, significant changes in expenditures or revenues, new programs and programs dropped
4. A budget document format which includes summary information on all revenues and all expenditures
4. **Qualifications and Evaluation** [adopted 1996]
   1. A high degree of professional competence in the district staff [with appropriate certification or licensure]
   2. Employment of an adequate counseling staff to ensure personal and family counseling upon student request or when educational problems are involved
   3. Evaluation and supervision procedures which:
      1. set standards for continuing evaluation of teachers, instructional program and quality of teaching
      2. set standards for continuous evaluation of the school administrators and the counseling staff
      3. provide input into the development of the evaluation standards from a wide variety of persons such as school board members, administrators, teachers and parents
4. Employment of a professionally qualified director of curriculum and instruction
5. **Public Involvement** [adopted 1996]
   1. Open channels of communication among and between administrators, district residents, students, teachers, and parents
   2. Open communications within the schools and throughout the district with sufficient information provided in advance of planned school board discussion and action
3. Increasing communication between parents and teachers by using such methods as parent-teacher conferences and parental involvement in school activities.

4. Use of citizens to broaden the school board's base of information, to use community expertise, and to open up communications between the board, the administration, and the public.