

Nonpartisan Policy

Adopted 1993' (amended June 1994 & May 2007). This policy shall be reviewed annually by the Board of Directors and amended as deemed necessary to protect the credibility and effectiveness of the League of Women Voters of Manhattan-Riley County, Kansas.

The League of Women Voters of Manhattan-Riley County, Kansas is a political, nonpartisan organization that promotes political responsibility thorough informed and active participation in government and acts upon positions established through member agreement. The League is political because it takes action on public policy issues based upon positions established through member agreement. The League is nonpartisan because it does not support or oppose any political party, any candidate for elective office (whether or not under a party designation), any office holder, or any group that supports candidates.

The nonpartisan policy has proved to be most important in maintaining the credibility and effectiveness of the League and should be guarded carefully. It is important that both League members and the public understand this policy.

A. Nonpartisan Policy Concerning All League Members

The League, by promoting active citizen participation in government and the political process, encourages individual members to support the party and candidates of their choice. No member shall undertake any activity which may constitute a public statement of partisan position which could be attributed to the League.

The League membership roster is not to be made available for non-League use without Board approval.

B. Nonpartisan Policy as Applied to High Visibility Board Members

Board members holding a position of high public visibility shall limit their partisan participation to attendance at partisan function for the purpose of becoming informed about candidates and issues. The President, President-elect, Voter Service/Citizen Education Chair, Finance Chair, Treasurer, Voter Editor and other members who, in the opinion of the Board, hold high visibility positions will be restricted by this provision.

C. Nonpartisan Policy as Applied to Low Visibility LWV Positions

Board members holding positions of low visibility shall choose very carefully any partisan activities in which they intend to participate and keep foremost in mind the nonpartisan position of the League. Members with low visibility positions may contribute to campaigns or parties, work behind the scenes for a party of a candidate or in a campaign office, attend political functions, host a small political party or candidate function, display yard signs or bumper stickers, be a precinct committee person, serve on election boards and be poll watchers.

Board Members and Committee Chairs who desire to become more active in a political campaign or partisan political party than mentioned above shall seek the advice and consent of the Board as to whether the following activities would affect the community's perception of the League' s nonpartisanship and whether to require that member's resignation from the Board:

- a. signing advertisements or other published partisan materials,
- b. making public appearances on behalf of candidates or parties,
- c. serving as campaign manager, treasurer, or in a similar position.

D. Candidacy for Public Office

No Board member shall be a candidate for or serve in an elective office. Members may serve on governmental commissions at their own discretion. If the member is serving as an official League representative, the appointee must be fully aware of League positions as they relate to the commission's responsibilities.

E. Notification of Partisan Activity

Any Board member or Committee Chair shall promptly inform the President if he or she declares for elective office or determines to undertake partisan activities that may be inconsistent with the nonpartisan policy of the League of Women Voters of Manhattan-Riley County, Kansas.

The Board shall determine whether resignation from the position is appropriate, and, if so, when the resignation shall be accepted. Any public statement regarding the resignation shall be made by the President, not the resigning member, and shall avoid the appearance of endorsing the resigning member's partisan activities.

F. Monetary Contributions by the League

The League of Women Voters of Manhattan-Riley County, Kansas does not make monetary contributions to other organizations, nor does it contribute money to support special projects or activities of other organizations. If the Board decides to join a coalition for action, the Board makes the decision on contributing to the coalition, if appropriate.

G. Political Activities of a Spouse or Relative

The political activities of a spouse or relative of a Board member or Committee Chair shall be considered separate and distinct from the activities of the member.

H. Cautions!

No League member should solicit both political and League contributions from the same individual or organization within a 24-month period.

Political activity by a Board member not addressed by these guidelines will be reviewed by the Board as situations require.