

Board of Directors

Approved November 15, 2008

Some parts of this policy are likely to be modified as practices evolve. While the text, by its nature, centers on rules and responsibilities, its main purpose is to prepare for the fruitful and enjoyable life of the board, in the service of League health throughout the state.

Composition

The board consists of “the officers, seven elected directors, and not more than seven appointed directors” (Bylaws V-1). In practice, there have been few appointments.

Responsibilities: What the Bylaws Say

LWVIN Bylaws V-4

“The board shall have full charge of the property and business of the organization, subject to the instructions of the convention and the council.

- a. The board shall plan and direct the work necessary to carry out the program adopted by the convention or, as provided in Article XII-5, the council.
- b. The board shall accept responsibilities delegated to it by the board of LWVUS.
- c. The board shall encourage and support the work of local Leagues.
- d. The board is responsible for the organization and guidance of provisional League and member-at-large units.
- e. The board shall support the work of those inter-League organizations of which local Leagues in Indiana are a part.
- f. The board is responsible for the fiscal development of LWVIN.
- g. The board shall create and designate such committees as it may deem necessary.
- h. The board shall adopt state positions and act on those positions.”

General Guidance from the National League

League Basics (pp. 3-4) outlines responsibilities of the boards at all levels, with a focus on local Leagues. General responsibilities are given as follows:

“The board of directors is the administrative and policymaking team for the League. Board members often assume specific duties, but all members of the board are responsible for planning and decision-making in two broad interdependent areas:

1. Organization and Management: membership growth and participation; adequate financing and realistic budgeting; internal/external communications; visibility; and efficient administrative operations.
2. Program: advocacy (including study) and education (including voter services).

The board as a whole:

- Sets priorities and goals for the organization.
- Carries out overall planning and decision-making.
- Supports membership, development and visibility activities.
- Represents and promotes the League in the community.
- Safeguards the League's reputation for nonpartisanship."

Responsibilities of Individual LWVIN Board Members

The same outline (*League Basics*, p. 4) also lists responsibilities of individual board members. We augment that list to our own ends. Details concerning some responsibilities are given in separate policies.

Individual board members:

1. Are knowledgeable about the League's mission and work and about its bylaws, positions and policies. Prior experience provides much of this knowledge. Positions and rules are available on the websites of LWVIN and LWVUS, respectively. LWVIN positions and rules are also provided in hard copy. Hard copies of LWVUS material may be ordered.
2. Understand and abide by the League's nonpartisan policy. Board members must adhere to tighter restrictions than the membership at large.
3. Attend, prepare for, and participate in all board meetings, assigned committee meetings and organizational functions. Because number and length of board meetings are limited, much supporting material is distributed ahead of time. Board members are expected to review the information and the agenda, so that each meeting can focus on informed deliberation. In particular, they should check the draft of board minutes and confer with the secretary about possible corrections, in advance.
4. Support and attend other League activities. Participation at convention, council and Presidents Day is expected, because these events are followed by board meetings. Board members should also participate in regional workshops and in local League activities.
5. Check email nearly every day and respond to League business without delay. Members who expect to be away from email for more than a few days should notify the president.
6. Serve as liaison between the state board and one or more local Leagues.
7. Identify potential nominees for appointment by the board and for the nominating committee.
8. Promote growth and diversity in membership.
9. Assist in fundraising activities. Personal contributions by board members set an example for the membership.
10. Carry out individual assignments, and volunteer for such assignments.
11. Explain and promote the League in the State of Indiana.

Communication and Meetings

Email is crucial. It reduces the need for face-to-face meetings. Much information is transmitted by email. A few meetings on single topics are conducted via email.

Long meetings of up to six hours including lunch are scheduled four or more times a year, to start at 10 a.m. on a Saturday. (To save time, bring your own lunch.)

Short meetings, designed to last one hour, are held at the conclusion of convention, council and Presidents Day.

Telephone conferences can sometimes reduce the need for face-to-face meetings. They last for one hour.

Electronic meetings may occur whenever one issue requires a decision before the next regular meeting. They consist of a sequence of email exchanges over a period of a few days.

A training and planning session for the newly established board is held in May.

Mileage for travel to official functions is reimbursed.