



League of Women Voters of Polk County, Florida  
Board of Directors Meeting  
Thursday, February 26<sup>th</sup>, 2026  
The Well, 114 E. Parker Street, Lakeland FL 33801

## MINUTES

**Board Members in Attendance:** Charlene Bennett (Zoom), Heather Bradman (Zoom), Katy Pace Byrd (Zoom), Litreace Coppit (Zoom), Linda Donaldson (Zoom), Karen Freedman (Zoom), Ben Graffam, and Jo Shim.

**Board Members not in Attendance:** Jen Cordova (excused).

- 1) A quorum was confirmed by Ben Graffam
- 2) The meeting was called to order by Jo Shim at 4:03 PM
- 3) The minutes for January's Board Meeting were approved
- 4) Katy Pace Byrd delivered the Treasurer's Report
- 5) Jo Shim delivered the President's Report, focusing attention on:
  - a. The Matters of the Heart FUNdraiser
  - b. The plan to make Coffee and Conversation meetings a monthly event
  - c. Arrangements to tour Options for Women
  - d. A thank-you letter from NAACP Lakeland Branch for our participation and financial support in their 2025 Freedom Fund Banquet
  - e. That Representative Canady (or her staff) will be keeping regular hours at the Lakeland Public Library
- 6) There were no specific requests from our Action Teams.
- 7) Pro Tem/Ad Hoc Committees
  - a. Charlene Bennett provided information regarding Options for Meeting Places around the county. Several places are available, with some of those being without charges. Her committee has a few more places to look at, and this will be an on-going concern.
  - b. Jo Shim added that a meeting with Mario and Sallie Stone occurred and that our goal is to maintain our relationship there for at least one more year with, basically, the same terms, though it will be hopeful for some meetings on Saturdays.
  - c. Karen Freedman updated the board on the work being done by the Nominating Committee. Some positions are filled by members eager to step into those positions, though we are still looking for a president, a vice president, and a president elect.
- 8) New Business
  - a. A review of our Bylaws has been tabled until a later date.
  - b. The Communications Action Team was asked to place a flyer requesting participation in a City of Lakeland Community Survey in the March Newsletter.



- c. A team to plan the Annual Meeting was created: Katy Pace Byrd, Linda Donaldson, Ben Graffam, Vicki Lowe, and Jo Shim
  - d. **Katy Pace Byrd made a motion for our League to support the LWV Port Washington-Manhasset Update on LWVUS Program Planning Survey, which includes a formal contact with the LWVUS to communicate our support.** The motion was seconded. Some discussion ensued which resulted in our commitment to help in any way we can to make this happen. The motion passed unanimously.
- 9) Unfinished Business
- a. Katy Pace Byrd shared information to update the board on the 2026 Budget Committee process. It was suggested that a line item might be added to allow the addition of new members as a sort of “scholarship” into the League. Katy said she would bring it to the committee’s attention.
  - b. Ben Graffam updated the board on the Annual Meeting Booklet, that it may be 28 pages, and that some investigation into whether the numerous notifications of bylaw revisions needs to be published. He was also given the go-ahead for contacting membership regarding the changes the Communication Action Team has made on our Local Program.
  - c. The board began discussions on potential policy for announcing the passing of members in our Newsletter. This will be a work in progress, and more discussion will ensue.
  - d. The board discussed the protocol for support/donation to Beacon Hill Fellowship for all they have done for us. This will be considered when the new budget is set.
  - e. Jo Shim reviewed planning for Hot Topics and other events from March to May 2026:
    - i. Revival of Coffee/Cocktails and Conversation
    - ii. March (March 17<sup>th</sup>) – Business/Informational meeting
    - iii. April (April 21st) – Legislative Update
    - iv. Annual Meeting May 2<sup>nd</sup>
    - v. May – (May 19<sup>th</sup>) - TBA (Suggestions – Young people in politics, Open-minded Mic Night, National Popular Vote)
- 10) Any Other Business (AOB)
- i. Linda Donaldson was asked to find a date and location for new member orientation in the near future
- 11) Our next board meeting will March 26<sup>th</sup> at 4:00 PM
- 12) The meeting was adjourned at 5:47 PM