



League of Women Voters of Polk County, Florida
Board of Directors Meeting
Thursday, October 23rd, 2025
The Well, 114 E. Parker Street, Lakeland FL 33801

Minutes

Board Members Present: Charlene Bennett (Zoom), Jen Cordova, Linda Donaldson (Zoom), Karen Freedman, Ben Graffam, and Jo Shim.

Board Members Absent: Katy Pace Byrd (exc.), Heather Bradman (exc.) and Litreace Coppit.

- 1) A Quorum was confirmed by Ben Graffam
- 2) The meeting was called to Order by Jo Shim at 4:15 PM
- 3) The Minutes for September's Board Meeting were approved
- 4) The Treasurer's Report was emailed to board members, and any questions about that report can be asked at the next meeting in November.
- 5) Jo Shim delivered her President's Report, recapping several league events of the past month, while also looking ahead to the next few months. She wants to encourage members to attend Lobby Days in Tallahassee on January 19 - 21. And she wants a great turnout at our Holiday gathering on December 11.
- 6) Two committee reports had arrived to the secretary, but not in time to be processed for today's meetings. A reminder that those reports are to be sent by the 15th of the month was given.
- 7) Pro Tem Committees
 - a. Ben Graffam updated the board on the current status of the Committee on Committees reports. A meeting of the committee chairs and the members of the Committee on Committees will be scheduled for early November (ASAP). Ben will make contact with the stakeholders for that meeting and keep people posted.
 - b. There are no new plans or actions regarding the Leadership Training Committee.
 - c. The Municipal Elections Committee continues to work toward their goal of increasing the voter turnout on Polk County. There are less than two weeks to election day!
- 8) New Business
 - a. Karen Freedman will be this year's Board member to serve on the 2025-2026 Nominating Committee. That committee is made up of Claudia Slate and Celena Clark.
 - b. **Linda Donaldson made a motion for the LWV Polk to develop a membership handbook that would be available in digital formats. The motion was seconded. Discussion on this handbook occurred. The motion passed with 5 members in favor, 1 opposed.**



- c. Forming a new Education Committee—[this issue was tabled until our next meeting.](#)

9) Unfinished Business

- a. The LWVPolk has made our reservation to be a part of the MLK Parade on January 17, 2026, with the use of a vehicle. Ben Graffam's pickup will be available that day (so will he).
- b. Review Board Goals—[this issue was tabled until our next meeting.](#)
- c. Review Calendar—[this issue was tabled until our next meeting.](#)
- d. The Tax Office Tour is scheduled for November 5, and it is still taking applicants.
- e. Ben Graffam updates the board on the progress for the new booklet to be released at our Annual Meeting. He and Cindy Sternlicht are overseeing that process. The two of them have been okayed to seek new and more sponsors for that booklet. They are also given permission to work with the wording for the Local Program in that booklet, a section full of inaccuracies, redundancies, and improper authoritative elements. They are aware that any changes **MUST BE APPROVED** by membership and so each change made will be reviewed by a team of members who not only have significant time with our program but also appreciate the nuance of language and meaning in such documents.
- f. Our Hospitality Committee (Jo, Ben and Karen) continues to meet and organize upcoming events. Presently there is no chairperson for this committee. It will, based on a motion in our last meeting, become a formal Committee or Team within the context of our Committee on Committees work (see above Pro-Tem a).
- g. Review planning for Hot Topics and other events November 2025 - March 2026
 - i. Our November 13 Immigration in Polk County Hot Topic will occur at The Well from 6:00 to 8:00 PM
 - ii. Our December 11 Holiday party will occur at the Well from 5:00 to 8:00 PM. There will be a performance from the George Jenkins High School Choral Ensemble.
 - iii. January – Planning meeting – Date: TBA
 - iv. February – Fundraiser - Date: TBA
- h. A new Telephone Tree will be emailed to Board Members this week.

10) Any Other Business (AOB)

- a. We need to be conscious of getting more (and various) thank-you gifts for the presenters who come to our LWVPolk events.

11) Our next board meeting will be Thursday, November 20th at 4pm

12) The meeting was adjourned at 6:00 PM.