

LWVE Positions

5/10/2023

The League of Women Voters of Evanston (LWVE) takes educational and advocacy action at the local level, based on positions that have been developed over time by the League of Women Voters of the United States, the League of Women Voters of Illinois, the League of Women Voters of Cook County, and the LWVE, itself.

The LWVE's current positions fall into the categories of *Representative Government*, *Natural Resources*, and *Social Policy*. Whatever the issue, the League believes that efficient and economical government requires competent personnel, clear assignment of responsibilities, adequate financing, coordination among levels of government, effective enforcement, and well-defined channels for citizen input and review.

Representative Government

A. CITY OF EVANSTON

1. Government

Support for:

- The Council-Manager form of government
- The election of council members from wards
- The election of council members to allow for the diversity of the community to be represented
- Effective use of committees, boards, and commissions
- The development and implementation of a long-range plan
- The involvement of citizens
- Increased cooperation and communication between the City and institutions of higher learning
- Recreation programs that are diversified, well-publicized, and responsive to community needs
- A strong, well-funded library system

2. Budget

Support for:

- Sound fiscal policy, including long-range planning for capital improvements and effective budget controls
- The City's efforts to broaden its tax base

B. SCHOOLS (DISTRICT 65 AND DISTRICT 202)

1. Citizen Participation and Communication

Support for:

- Effective citizen participation in all planning and policy development
- Effective communication by District 65 and District 202 with all Evanston residents and effective means for residents to communicate with the Districts.

2. Policies, Plans and Goals

Support for:

- A district-wide plan for the use of community resources, including a well-organized, comprehensive volunteer program
- Racially integrated schools as a necessary condition for equal access to education
- Services for children with disabilities
- Efforts to reduce the achievement gap among children of different races

Natural Resources

A. ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

1. Resource Protection

Support for:

- Natural resources being conserved and protected to assure their future availability
- Controlling pollution of these resources in order to preserve the physical, chemical and biological integrity of ecosystems and to protect public health
- Natural resources being managed as interrelated parts of life-supporting ecosystems, including Reclamation and reuse of natural resources
- Minimizing the consumption of nonrenewable resources
- Government policies which promote stewardship of natural resources such as water and soil

2. Recycling and Elimination of Harmful Chemicals

Support for:

- Reuse and recycling of solid and hazardous waste
- Reduced exposure to pesticides and toxic chemicals
- Encouraging use of non-toxic alternatives
- Informing the public about the use of pesticides

3. Local Initiatives

Support for:

- The City's efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions through its Climate Action Plan
- The continued prioritization of sewer maintenance
- Exploring alternative solutions to flooding and pollution

B. LAND USE

1. Downtown Development

Support for:

- Mixed-use approach to downtown development which promotes a balance between retail, cultural, recreational, residential, and office facilities
- A coordinated, comprehensive planning for downtown development
- Balanced development of public transportation and parking in the downtown

2. Neighborhood Business Areas

Support for:

- The formation, strengthening and coordination of area merchants' associations and neighborhood groups
- Greater concern for pedestrians in neighborhood business areas and a greater emphasis on the use of public transportation

3. Zoning

Support for:

- Zoning policies that prioritize equity, lower housing costs, and the reduction of segregation, and that focus on resident wellbeing and housing stability
- Reducing zoning restrictions and streamlining approval processes to encourage the use of land and buildings in creative and impactful ways and to create more affordability
- Regulations that guard against overcrowding or unsafe conditions, but opposes mandating familial structures as a way to regulate these things
- A strong and effective rental property inspection and enforcement program that requires compliance with City ordinances and holds responsible parties accountable
- A proactive education program and increased public understanding of the need for and benefits of affordable housing and why and how zoning and other policies and practices must support and accommodate such housing
- A regional approach to affordable housing and zoning, and collaboration with area municipalities

4. Preservation

Support for:

- Effective implementation of Evanston's preservation goals
- Improvement and revitalization of neighborhood business areas with an emphasis on preservation

Social Policy

A. HOUSING

Support for:

- Housing policies that prioritize equity, lower housing costs, and the reduction of segregation, and that focus on resident wellbeing and housing stability
- Strong and effective enforcement of Federal, State, County and City Fair Housing Laws, and the City's Tenant/Landlord Ordinance and Condominium Regulations
- An affordable housing plan to achieve an adequate supply of affordable housing throughout the City; a plan that includes priorities, specific actions, quantifiable goals and timeframes and is updated regularly
- A strong and effective rental property inspection and enforcement program that requires compliance with City ordinances and holds responsible parties accountable
- A proactive education program and increased public understanding of the need for and benefits of affordable housing and why and how zoning and other policies and practices must support and accommodate such housing
- Training opportunities to address specific housing-related concerns of target populations
- A regional approach to affordable housing and zoning, and collaboration with area municipalities
- A variety of options to incentivize the financing and development of affordable housing, including using the Affordable Housing Fund to provide gap funding and utilizing non-cash resources

B. HUMAN RESOURCES

1. Police

Support of measures to foster increased communication and cooperation between police and all segments of the community.

C. COMMUNITY HEALTH AND WELLNESS

1. Individuals with Mental Illness

Support for:

- Comprehensive and coordinated services for children, youth, and adults with a diagnosed mental illness in both state facilities and community-based programs.
- Needs of individuals with a diagnosed mental illness, including high-quality community-integrated housing.
- Coordination of services for formerly hospitalized individuals with a diagnosed mental illness.

2. Services for Older Adults

Support for:

- Small-group housing for older adults in Evanston.
- Effective enforcement of Evanston's Long-Term Care ordinance.
- Adult day-care facilities, as needed, in Evanston.
- Community involvement with Evanston's housing for older adults and residential councils within such homes.
- Other services and housing alternatives to nursing homes.

D. SUPPORTIVE SERVICES

Support for:

- Income assistance and supportive services for all low income individuals and families
- An effective, adequately funded emergency assistance services program
- Sound welfare practices
- Coordination of the human services network in Evanston