



Voter

Inside

President’s Message pg 2
 Worth Noting.....pg 3
 CMAL pg 4
 LWV MN LWV US pg 5
 Protect Voting Rights..... pg 6
 Population Facts pg 7
 Take Action.....pg 8
 LWV US pg 9
 Common Cause..... pg 11
 Election Reform..... pg 12
 Redistricting..... pg 14
 LWV Dues pg 15
 Observer Reports..... pg 17

2012 Membership Dues

It’s that time of year again! You will be receiving your invoice for your LWV SLP 2012 membership dues. Remember, the annual dues are on a calendar year now, from January 1 through December 31, 2012.

First Year Introduction Special \$25
 Single: \$45
 Household: \$70
 Support/member-at-large: \$50
 Voter Newsletter only: \$10

Questions? Contact Judy Cook, Membership Chair, 952-928-9846 or jcook42@comcast.net.

Efficiency tip: Pay your dues at the next Unit meeting. The LWV SLP Invoice is on page 15.



January Calendar

January 5, 2012 - 7 pm

LWV SLP Board Meeting
 Host: Eilseen Knisley

January 14, 2012 - 12:30 pm

LWV SLP Unit 2 Meeting
 Topic: DVD Photo ID and Muslims in Minn
 Location: Parkshore Card Room

January 21, 2012 -10:30 am

Legislative Interviews
 Location: Union Congregational Church
 3700 Alabama Ave. S.

Upcoming Events

February is Black History Month

February 7, 2012 - 7 pm

LWV SLP Board Meeting
 Host: Judy Cook

February 15, 2012 - 12:30 pm

LWV SLP Unit 2 Meeting
 Topic: Voter Photo ID
 Location: Parkshore Card Room

February 16, 2012 - 7 pm

LWV SLP General Meeting
 Topic: “What’s So Bad About Photo ID?”
 Location: City Hall
 Assigned Allyson Sheldrew & Barb Person

You’re Invited

All members of League of Women Voters St. Louis Park are invited to the monthly board meetings. These meetings are used for reviewing LWV SLP finances and planning. Please contact the host if you need directions.

President's Message

Very best wishes for a very happy and blessed new year! Do you make a New Year's Resolution? If so, please add your plan to help make sure your friends and family have the facts about the upcoming legislative discussion on the voter suppression bill. There's still a good possibility that it will be a constitutional amendment proposal for the November ballot. A bit of good news is that the Justice Department declared it legally unenforceable and that it could be discriminatory against minorities in violation of the Voting Rights Act. We plan to study this issue in more depth in February.

The Voter Photo ID proposed amendment is antithetical to everything that LWV has stood for in our 91 year history. Both nationally and in Minnesota, LWV has been one of the strongest and most outspoken opponents of Voter Photo ID proposals. Unlike many of the other issues on which LWV has a position, people turn to us as the authoritative voice for the opposition to these proposals.

As I write this, the Senate Republicans have just chosen Senator Senjem as their new majority leader. The legislative political landscape is often unpredictable in Minnesota but this year seems especially so. That makes it an especially good time for our legislative interview to get a sense from our representatives about current issues, predictions for session outcomes (no penalty for being wrong!), and lively discussion about topics that matter to our members. Please join us on January 21 for a conversation and chili. Details are in other parts of this **Voter**. Thanks to Eilseen Knisely who is our tireless Voter Services Coordinator for putting this together.

Thanks to Dorothy Karlson for organizing a successful and fun fund-raising event. On December 15 and 16, members wrapped books at the Ridgedale Barnes & Noble bookstore. We received close to \$300 in "tips" for our efforts. It was a fun activity and a good chance to talk to people about the work of the League. There were several reports of \$20 tips from people partly to support our work and to thank us for the beautiful wrapping jobs. The funds are going to our High School Senior scholarship fund which will support a promising senior in college.

Make a note to attend your precinct caucuses on Tuesday, February 7th starting at 7 p.m. We are expecting some Resolutions from LWV Minnesota for members to present. We'll include them in the next **Voter**.

Who would ever guess that I would end the January note with a wish for snow!!!

Aggie Leitheiser, LWV SLP President, 952-938-6255

Highlights from the LWV St. Louis Park Board meeting:

- Reviewed plans for the Barnes & Noble Fundraiser
- We made 772 calls during the Phonathon!
- Confirmed January 21 as the date for the Legislative Interviews
- Signed up for Chili Luncheon tasks
- Confirmed Gift Wrapping details for Dollars for Scholars fundraiser
- LWV Minnesota Council is set for May 5 at the Arboretum
- CMAL will be January 14 at Richfield
- We are looking for ideas on how to increase membership



Worth Noting

YOU BE THE JUDGE

The 2008 election brought greater attention to election related issues and Common Cause Minnesota used this opportunity to improve Minnesota's election system. They identified some of the key lesson learned from the recount and spent the last two years pushing for reforms. Read the full report - they include:

- Moving the primary up so that military voters could have adequate time to vote; and
- Centralizing the way absentee ballots are processed and ensuring that voters are notified if there are problems with their ballots. These bills were vetoed last year, but a bi-partisan compromise was reached this year.

Common Cause is now focused on helping recruit election judges for the November 2010 election. The integrity of the voting process is dependent on those working at the polling places on Election Day. In general elections, approximately 30,000 election judges are needed to staff more than 4,100 polling locations throughout Minnesota.

This is why it is essential that you step up to help make sure Minnesota polling places have the workers they need for everything to run smoothly in the coming elections.

If you're interested in becoming an election judge or in finding out more about what it would entail, visit www.youbethejudgemn.org

More information is noted on pages 12-13.

Voter ID Speaker & Outreach Training: Saturday, Jan 21, 10 am to noon

All LWV members are invited to participate in this training at the LWV office in St. Paul or via a simultaneous webcast! Web links will be sent out to allow you to connect from anywhere in the state.

During the training, you'll walk through how to make a presentation about voter ID and how to respond to frequently-asked questions and common misconceptions.

In addition, local LWV members will share how they have found and created opportunities in their communities to engage with the members of public around the voter ID issue. From formal program events to house parties to presentations to a variety of groups, our members are getting the word out and making a difference.

Mark your calendars. Details of this event will come out in January.

Recycling

Save your old printer cartridges, cell phones and laptops. We can turn them in for cash to support our Dollars for Scholars fundraising efforts.

Bring your items to any Unit meeting.

Test Your Knowledge

Who has a higher participation rate at the polls: young men or young women?

Answer on page 15

December 1, 1955 – Rosa Parks refuses to give up her seat and sit in the back of a Montgomery (AL) bus; her arrest ignites the Montgomery Bus Boycott

CMAL**Submitted by Dorothy Karlson****CMAL QUARTERLY MEETING****JANUARY 21, 2012****Change of Venue!****Woodlake Lutheran Church****7525 Oliver Ave. South****Richfield, MN 55423****(Enter Parking Lot from Newton Ave North of 76th St)**

9:30 am Registration/Refreshments
10:00 am Program
11:00 am Q&A
11:50 am Announcements

The second Quarterly Meeting will focus on the Met Council as the first one did. This time we will look at the interactions between the counties and the cities with the Met Council. We want to highlight what is working well, what needs improvement and what are specific problems with individual counties and cities.

We have chosen two of the outer counties and one city. **It will be a panel discussion featuring:**

- **Anoka County Commissioner, Carol LeDoux**
- **Washington County Commissioner, Dennis Hegberg**
- **Shoreview City Council, Ady Wickstrom, former President of CMAL**

As mentioned before:

CMAL (Council of Metropolitan Area Leagues) was created in 1962 with the goal of increasing the knowledge and effectiveness of metropolitan area Leagues and the public in addressing metropolitan governmental issues and problems. This makes CMAL 50 years old. All members of local LWVs in the seven county metro area are automatically members of CMAL and are invited and encouraged to attend the Quarterly meetings.

For more information contact:

Helga Emrich, 651-738-9085

emrichs@comcast.net

Geneva MacMillan, 952-934-3000

Meandmao2@aol.com

LWV Minnesota

During the legislative session, we let members know by email whenever a new issue of the *Capitol Letter*™ is posted. If you would like to get on the list-serve to receive notice, please email Sherri Knuth, Public Policy Coordinator, at sknuth@lwvmn.org



Educate. Advocate. Reform.

Dec 14, 1961 – President's Commission on the Status of Women established to examine discrimination against women and ways to eliminate it

LWV United States

The Iowa Caucuses occurred on January 3rd – an early kickoff to what will surely be a long and intense election year 2012. Instead of the usual New Year's resolutions, LWV is putting together a list of **Election Year Resolutions/Hopes** for the upcoming year:

1. Ensure all eligible voters are [registered to vote](#) and can [exercise their right](#) to vote without having to overcome unnecessary and restrictive hurdles.
2. [Educate the electorate](#) on the candidates and issues on their ballots and help them find their polling place.
3. Encourage informative and productive debates between candidates so voters can learn about their elected representatives through more than just sound bites.
4. Fight to make sure election outcomes are decided by voters, [not by special interest money](#).
5. [Promise clean air](#) for children and their families, and change the discussion to the important issues facing Americans in 2012.

We have many challenges ahead of us, but working together with our state and local leagues and all of our supporters, we know we can succeed.

Do you have other Election Year Resolutions or Hopes? [Share them with us on the comments of the blog.](#)

Wishing you a safe and happy New Year,

Elisabeth MacNamara

President, League of Women Voters

Press Release

ATTORNEY GENERAL HOLDER MUST RE-COMMIT TO PROTECTING VOTING

December 12, 2011 | by Alison McQuade

Contact: LWVUS- Kelly Ceballos (202) 263-1331; kceballos@lwv.org

Attorney General Holder Must Re-commit to Protecting Voting Rights as New Voter Suppression Laws Sweep the Country

Austin, TX – The League of Women Voters of the United States and the League of Women Voters of Texas (LWV) call on U.S. Attorney General Eric Holder to re-commit the United States Department of Justice (DOJ) to protecting citizen voting rights in response to the numerous new voter suppression laws sweeping the country.

On Tuesday, December 13th in Austin, Texas, Mr. Holder delivered a long awaited speech on voting rights and the role of the DOJ in enforcing those rights. LWV urges Mr. Holder to denounce the voter suppression laws and recommit the DOJ to aggressively protect the voting rights of all U.S. citizens.

“DOJ’s record over the last three years has been mixed on voting rights enforcement,” according to Elisabeth MacNamara, President of the LWV. “We applaud DOJ’s objections to the unfair Texas redistricting plan passed by the legislature and call on the Department to enforce the National Voting Rights Act (NVRA) with the same vigor,” she said. “We are hopeful that Mr. Holder chose Texas to deliver his speech so that he can highlight the numerous issues that threaten to suppress the vote in next year’s elections. The various threats to voting rights in Texas alone include non-compliance with the NVRA, a new voter photo identification law, new restrictions on voter registration drives, and the discriminatory and politically motivated redistricting maps,” said Karen Nicholson, President of LWV Texas.

Nationally, there has been an unprecedented increase in voter suppression laws. In 2011 alone, eight states have passed new restrictive photo ID laws, three states have passed laws requiring proof of citizenship as a prerequisite to voting, two states have made it more difficult for groups like the LWV to register eligible voters and five states have passed legislation that would eliminate or shorten the period of early voting. In addition, we could see new suppression laws passed in Michigan, Ohio, Minnesota, Virginia and Pennsylvania before the 2012 elections.

“This assault on voters is one of the greatest self-inflicted threats to our democracy in our lifetimes. These new laws threaten to silence the voices of those least heard and rarely listened to in this country – the poor, the elderly, racial and ethnic minorities, the young and person’s with disabilities,” MacNamara said.

The DOJ must act forcefully and without delay if they hope to ensure fair elections in 2012. LWV stands ready to assist Mr. Holder in protecting the foundation of our democracy and will continue to work to ensure every eligible voter is allowed to vote and have their vote counted in 2012 and beyond,” MacNamara concluded.

Population and Resource Facts

Submitted by Barbara Aslakson

Population & Resource Facts

We made the news recently. There are now 7 billion of us on the planet. This is not really good news. This was a doubling in 45 years.

Every day we add 9,000 people per hour (net gain, births-deaths). We add 200,000 people per day.

What does this mean?

Farmland, forests, fresh water, fish stocks, vital minerals and other resources decline. They are finite and cannot expand with our increases in population. We are already above a sustainable level.

Wisconsin is the same size as Bangladesh where over 150 million struggle to survive.

Sustainable world population is estimated to be less than 2 billion at **half** the consumption level of an average American.

Truly sustainable population is essential to avoiding more famines, resource wars, misery, suffering and early death.

Working to reduce population is working on ALL major problems.

See worldpopulationbalance.org.

Dollars for Scholars!

Thanks go to LWV members Barbara Downey, Barb Person, Eilseen Knisely, Allyson Sheldrew, Aggie Leitheiser, Judy Cook, Shirley Simmons, Betty Hardacker, Deb Brinkman and Dorothy Karlson who volunteered their time to wrap gifts at Barnes & Noble Book Store to earn money for scholarships. Almost \$300 was earned to be contributed to Dollars for Scholars.

Why Dollars for Scholars?

LWV SLP is working to create a scholarship to support a St. Louis Park High School student who is interested in political science. Our goal is \$500 for a 2012 graduate. ***If you would like to donate to worthy cause, please send your donation to Barb Person.*** Other fundraising efforts include the Phonathon, recycling and a targeted marketing letter-writing campaign.



Action Alert

Clean Air – Make the Promise

LWV US President Elisabeth MacNamara joined us in Minnesota for a whirlwind visit from November 1st through November 4th. The purpose of her visit was to promote the Clean Air Promise. LWV is spearheading this grassroots effort to underscore support for the Environmental Protection Agency and strong clean air protections. Elected officials, community leaders, and citizens are all being asked to make the promise. President MacNamara delivered the message that "This is not a pledge. Public health is a promise that we make to each other."

Visit www.peoplenotpolluters.org to take the Clean Air Promise.

ACTION ALERT: Make the Clean Air Promise

In 1970, Congress made a promise to future generations by passing the Clean Air Act to protect us from pollutants like smog, soot and mercury. It is up to us to keep that promise and to make our own promise to generations to come. For too long, the debate about pollution has focused on "overregulation" and featured false assertions that environmental protections hurt our economy. Clean air is an issue of public health. This is not about corporate bottom lines.

Urge your Senators and Representative, other elected officials, and community leaders to make the "Clean Air Promise:"

I promise to protect America's children and families from dangerous air pollution. Because toxics and pollutants such as mercury, smog, carbon, and soot, cause thousands of hospital visits, asthma attacks, and even deaths, I will support clean air policies and other protections that scientists and public health experts have recommended to the EPA to safeguard our air quality.

Visit www.peoplenotpolluters.org to take the Clean Air Promise.

More from The League of Women Voters United States

ADVOCACY

LWV US Legislative Priorities (NEW)

In January, the LWV US Board of Directors will be setting LWV Legislative Priorities for the upcoming year. Setting these priorities **for LW VUS action at the national level** is an annual responsibility for the Board. Once again, the Board is soliciting suggestions for LWV US advocacy priorities from members. If you are interested in making suggestions to the Board, please consider the goals and criteria as listed below. While the LWV US has numerous positions under which we might take action, the Board must prioritize and consider those issues where we might be able to make a difference.

According to the LWV US *Impact on Issues*, the goals for setting priorities to guide the LWV advocacy work are to: (1) Enhance LWV's effectiveness by concentrating resources on priority issues; (2) Build LWV's credibility and visibility by projecting a focused and consistent image; (3) Ensure that LWV has sufficient issue and political expertise to act knowledgeably; and (4) Enable LWV to manage resources effectively. In setting legislative priorities, the Board considers the following: (1) Opportunities for LWV to make an impact; (2) Program decisions made at Convention and/or Council; (3) Member interest; and (4) Resources available to manage effectively.

If you would like to make suggestions for LWV US advocacy priorities, please email Advocacy Committee Chair Judy Duffy: jduffy@lwwv.com. Please indicate whether the suggestions are from an individual member, a committee, board or membership meeting. Suggestions must be received by January 15.

LWV Endorses H.R. 2572, Clean Up Government Act of 2011 (NEW)

LWV and coalition partners sent a [letter to House Judiciary Chair Lamar Smith and Ranking Minority Member John Conyers](#), endorsing the Clean Up Government Act of 2011. H.R. 2572 would restore important tools for federal prosecutors fighting public corruption.

Save Presidential Public Financing and the Election Assistance Commission (NEW)

LWV and other concerned organizations oppose H.R. 3463, legislation that would repeal the presidential public financing system AND terminate the Election Assistance Commission. Read the letter [here](#).

More from LWV US, continued ...

EDUCATION FUND (Redistricting; Elections)

Redistricting: LWV VA Says “No” to Partisan “Do-Overs” (NEW)

LWV Virginia sent a message to statewide media last week urging state leaders to follow their constitutional obligation of finalizing a congressional redistricting plan before the end of the year. Not doing so could force the state to move its primary schedule and generate massive confusion for voters and local elections officials. LWV also spoke out against published comments from a lawmaker indicating the state legislature could revisit agreed-upon redistricting plans when the state moves to one-party control in January. See *Washington Post* coverage [here](#).

Elections: LWV’s Youth Engagement Work Highlighted in Student Leadership Mag (NEW)

LWV’s High School Voter Registration program, VOTE411.org and nationwide youth engagement efforts were highlighted in the November cover story of *Leadership for Student Activities*, a national magazine reaching tens of thousands of school administrators and advisors. What is your LWV doing to engage young voters in 2012? Talk about it at your next board meeting, and visit the Members section of the new website for many free voter service resources!

Elections: LWV Florida Fights to Stop Voter Suppression (NEW)

The LWV FL, in coalition with other state advocates, has filed a lawsuit asking a federal court in DC to deny pre-clearance of four controversial provisions of a new voter suppression law in their state. This week eleven state legislators have been hit with subpoenas. Read more [here](#).

Media Opportunity: Recognize Bill of Rights Day (NEW)

December 15 is Bill of Rights Day. It’s an easy way to remind your community about the work we are doing, speak to the value of being a member of LWV and generate free publicity! Customize [this media template](#) to generate visibility for your LWV during this busy holiday season.

COMMON CAUSE MINNESOTA



Common Cause Minnesota is a nonprofit, nonpartisan citizen's lobby dedicated to improving the way state government operates. We have helped pass Minnesota's most important ethics and campaign finance reforms. With your help, we intend to advance a new round of initiatives that will once again make Minnesota a national model for government reform, increasing accountability to citizens and limiting the power of special interests.

Openness and transparency in government are critical to the strength of our democracy. Referring to the benefits of openness and transparency in government, U.S. Supreme Court Justice Louis Brandeis said, "Sunlight is the best disinfectant." With funding from the Otto Bremer Foundation, Common Cause Minnesota will lead a coalition to shine a brighter light on multiple aspects of state government, opening up processes and information to public scrutiny.

A recent poll conducted by the Joyce Foundation in the Midwest found that the public is very concerned about improving openness and transparency in state government. Empowering average citizens to take a more active role in government is at the heart of what Common Cause is all about. Currently, most government information is only used by insiders who know where and how to access it. Common Cause Minnesota wants to open this information up and empower citizens to hold their elected officials accountable for their decisions. It is important for Common Cause Minnesota to provide this type of service to voters to ensure that government decisions are made in a fair and non-partisan manner.

Despite having a reputation as a good-government state, Minnesota's sunshine laws have not kept pace with the advances in technology that can make government more transparent and open.

Accomplishments

Common Cause Minnesota helped pass a small bill that will have a big impact on making state government more open and transparent. This legislation requires the state to develop a plan and data standards on how it can put more government data online for everyone to use. This has the potential to unlock a lot of valuable data that could improve people's lives - data that currently languishes in file cabinets throughout the state.



ELECTION REFORM



This November is your opportunity to be the judge, **AN ELECTION JUDGE.**

This November is your opportunity to be the judge.

Election judges play a crucial role in ensuring the strength and integrity of the voting process. By establishing well run polling places, they help secure our rights as citizens of this nation. That is why we are calling on you to voice your support for your community by becoming an election judge.

It is critical that we have polling stations in Minnesota that are staffed with competent and caring individuals. No one who is eligible to vote should be turned away, and we should not have people leaving because of long slow-moving lines.

In order to prevent this, we are searching for Minnesotans who are committed to the democratic values and ideals which we pride ourselves upon in this great state. If you are committed to this belief, stand up for it and become an election judge today.

What's the job of an Election Judge

Election judges are essential to our democracy. Election judges are officials that staff local polling places, administer election procedures, and ensure that the rights of voters are protected on Election Day. Serving as an election judge provides an opportunity to learn about the elections process and is a great service to our community.

Duties of an Election Judge

- Set up the polling place
- Operate voting equipment
- Direct voters to the correct line
- Register individuals to vote
- Ensure all qualified voters are permitted to vote
- Demonstrate how to vote
- Distribute ballots to voters
- Assist voters
- Close down polling place following voting
- Determine results after polls close
- Certify the polling place results

You Be the Judge, continued ...

Serving as an Election Judge

Election judges may be asked to serve in the precinct where they live or elsewhere in the county or state.

- Election judges are assigned to work with several other election judges in a polling place.
- Election judges serve on General Election Day .
- Election judges may be asked to serve during a special election.

Qualifications to be an Election Judge

To be an election judge you are required to meet all of the following qualifications:

- You must be eligible to vote in Minnesota
- You must be able to read, write, and speak English
- You cannot be a spouse, parent, child, or sibling of any election judge serving in the same precinct
- You cannot be a candidate or the spouse, parent, child, or sibling of any candidate on the ballot in that precinct

To be a Student election judge you must meet three qualifications:

- College students at least 18-years-old may serve as election judges
- High school students 16-years-old and older may serve as trainee election judges

Desired Qualifications of an Election Judge

- Ability to communicate clearly with voters
- Comfortable with assisting and serving a diverse population
- Ability to remain impartial and not exert influence over voters
- Physical and emotional stamina
- Attention to detail
- General math skills
- Fluency in a second language

Time Off From Employment to Serve

You may take time off from work to be an election judge.

- You must give your employer at least 20 days written notice, and you must attach the hour/pay rate form you will receive from the township board or city council that appoints you to the notice.
- Your employer may reduce your salary/wages by the amount you are paid as an election judge during the time you are away from work.
- Your employer may restrict the number of its employees serving as election judges to no more than 20 percent at a single work site.

Do I Get Paid?

Yes, you can get paid or you can donate your pay to a nonprofit. Wages for being an election judge will vary by county. It is important to remember that your employer can reduce your salary or wages by the amount you are paid as an election judge during the time you are away from work.

QUESTIONS
CALL 612.605.7978

Redistricting MPR News

Will taxpayers pay legal fees in redistricting battle?

Posted at 12:54 PM on December 24, 2011 by Tom Scheck ([1 Comments](#))

Filed under: [2012](#), [MN Legislature](#), [Mark Dayton](#), [Redistricting](#), [U.S. House](#)

One interesting part of the legal battle over redrawing the state's political boundaries is who is paying the attorneys in the case. A five judge panel has oral arguments over the proposed maps on Jan. 4. The court appointed panel is likely to determine the makeup of the state's political boundaries for Minnesota's 8 congressional districts and the 201 legislative districts. The state has to redraw the state's political boundaries once every ten years to ensure that each citizen is guaranteed equal representation under the U.S. Constitution and the Constitution of Minnesota.

Attorneys representing the Republicans and the Democrats have been working to influence the court to adopt their proposed set of maps and redistricting criteria. [MPR News](#) has already reported that the public may never know who is paying the bulk of the legal fees in the battle. It's also possible that the high-profile attorneys in the case could receive taxpayer money for their efforts.

Arguments are being made before the panel to declare the state's current political boundaries unconstitutional because the boundaries don't provide equal representation under the U.S. Constitution. If the court declares the boundaries unconstitutional, federal law could allow the court to order "a reasonable attorney's fees as part of the costs" under the Civil Rights Act. (Note: It shouldn't come as a surprise that the boundaries don't meet constitutional muster since the entire point of redistricting is resetting the boundaries after the once-a-decade census is taken).

There is some precedent for the court to award fees to attorneys involved in the redistricting battle. In 2002, the redistricting panel at the time ordered the state of Minnesota to pay \$368,430 to the four sets of attorneys in the case. The panel relied on the argument that the all of the parties "prevailed" in the case and were awarded the funds. The panel put forward a set of maps that relied on input from all of the parties involved.

One key question for the current five-judge panel is how they will interpret which party prevails in the case. It's unlikely that the panel will adopt a set of maps that are identical to the proposals put forward by the parties. If history is a guide, the court will draw a new set of boundaries that relies on input from all of the parties involved. If that's the case, all of the parties could be eligible for attorney's fees from the state's treasury.

To date, the five-judge panel tasked with drawing the state's political boundaries has been reluctant to address the issue. The court heard arguments on the matter in October but declined to act at the time. Presiding Judge Wilhelmina Wright issued an order Friday saying she will not allow arguments on the constitutionality of the current boundaries at its hearing on Jan. 4.

One group that could prevent taxpayer money from being spent on attorney's fees is Gov. Dayton and the Republican-controlled Legislature. The two sides have until Feb. 21 to agree on a set of maps. If that happens, the court won't have to step in and take over the process. Gov. Dayton and GOP legislators have said, however, that it's unlikely they will reach an agreement.

Editor's Note: One comment in response to this article noted that taxpayers would not be responsible for paying legal fees for redistricting, but did not indicate who would be responsible for this cost.

Judy Cook is coordinating the 2011 – 2012 Observer Reports. If you can attend a City Council Meeting or School Board meeting and type up a brief review of the meeting, please contact Judy at 952-928-9846. Remember to wear your pin at the meetings – our presence at the meetings is noted and appreciated.

Test Your Knowledge - Answer

Since 2004, young women have led the turnout increase witnessed among young adults overall. In both 2004 and 2006, young women voted at rates seven and three points higher than young men.



**2012 MEMBERSHIP DUES STATEMENT
Due Date: January 1, 2012**

Category	Amount
Active Member, Unit _____	\$45.00
Supporting Member, Unit 1	\$50.00
Family Membership	\$70.00
Total Enclosed	\$_____

Please make checks payable to LWV SLP

Send to: Judy Cook, Membership Chair
4010 Highwood Road
St. Louis Park, MN 55416



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS
Making Democracy Work®

This page left intentionally blank

Observer Reports

Observer Coordinator: Judith Cook 952-928-9846

City Council Meeting, December 5, 2011, Aggie Leitheiser, Observer

Paul Omodt was not in attendance.

1. Public Hearing and approval for Off-Sale Liquor License for Tina, Inc doing business as St. Louis Park Liquor at 6316 Minnetonka Boulevard through March 1, 2012.
2. Proposed, Budget, Tax Levy and Truth in Taxation Public Hearing. Operating budget of \$29,720,000 which is 1% increase. Levy increased by 5%. The city is beginning to pay of fire station bonds.
3. Amendment to the Planned Unit Development for Park Village Center (at 100 and Excelsior Blvd) for a new 6,600 square foot retail/restaurant, conversion of the entire first floor of the existing theater building to retail use, elimination of all theater use on the site, modifications to the site and parking layout south of the theater building, and changes to the McDonald's site including a small building and drive-through expansion. Approved with Sanger opposed.
4. Request to rezone 3901 and 3921 from Neighborhood Commercial to general Commercial and to permit a carwash with a variance to distance requirement between a carwash and adjacent residential property. Discussion of hours, noise, lights, traffic and the significance of the zoning change, including lack of restrictions on a future owner. Motion to deny failed. Motion to approve with restriction of closing time to be 9 pm rather than the requested 10 pm passed with Sanger and Mavity opposed.
5. Established Greensboro Condominium Association Housing Improvement Area passed with Ross abstaining.
6. First Reading of Ordinance amendment to Chapter 8 regarding appeal process for rental housing licensing and set second reading for December 19, 2011.
7. All items on the Consent Calendar passed.

City Council Meeting, December 19, 2011, Deb Brinkman, Observer

The meeting was called to order at 7:35 pm. Paul Omodt was absent. The minutes from previous meetings were approved with corrections.

Public Hearings. The Motion passed unanimously to adopt the First Reading of an Ordinance vacating a landscape easement for the Ellipse II. The Second Reading is scheduled for January 17, 2009.

Resolutions, Ordinances, Motions and Discussion Items all passed.

- Ellipse II Preliminary Plat, Preliminary PUD and Variances. All motions were approved after discussion regarding landscaping, trees and parking. The council wants to be sure parking does not impact the neighborhood.
- Minnikahda Mobil Service Station Rezoning ordinance passed after brief discussion which included an apology from the owner.
- First Reading of an ordinance amending Chapter 36-33 of the St. Louis Park Code of Ordinances.
- Adoption of the 2012 Budgets, 2012 Final City and HRA Property Tax Levies, 2012 – 2016 Capital Improvement Plan and 2012 Utility Rates passed after discussion of the importance of earning public trust by being good stewards of the budget.
- 2012 Employee Compensation. The 2% increase is the first in several years.
- The City Manager Evaluation was accepted noting that the 360% review was done in closed sessions. We are fortunate that our City Manager, is at or exceeds expectations.

Communication. In recognition of Phil Finkelstein's last meeting, Phil said 'Thank You'. Both Phil and Paul will receive a plaque.

LWV SLP OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS FOR 2011-2012

OFFICERS:

President: Aggie Leitheiser
Vice President: Debbie Blake
Secretary: Allyson Sheldrew
Treasurer/W.Metro: Barb Person

BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

Observer/Publicity: Judy Cook
Voter Service: Eilseen Knisely
Membership: Judy Cook
CMAL: Dorothy Karlson
Voter Editor/Web: Deb Brinkman

YES! I WOULD LIKE TO JOIN THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF ST. LOUIS PARK

Name (Family Member #1): _____

Name (Family Member #2): _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Membership Dues

- First Year Introduction Special \$25.00**
- Voter Subscription Only \$10.00
- Single Active Attending Member \$45.00
- Supporting/Member-at-Large \$50.00
- Family Membership (household) \$70.00
(Dues and subscriptions are not tax deductible.)

**Make checks payable to LWVSLP
and send check & this form to:**

Judy Cook
4010 Highwood Lane
St. Louis Park, MN 55416
Jcook42@comcast.net
(952-928-9846)



4327 Alabama Avenue, South
St. Louis Park, MN 55416

Aggie Leitheiser, President
(952) 938-6255
aggieleit@comcast.net

Judy Cook, Membership
(952-928-9846
Jcook42@comcast.net

Deb Brinkman, Editor
(612) 803-6142
deb.brinkman@gmail.com

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

LWV Mission Statement

The League of Women Voters, a nonpartisan political organization, encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy. <http://www.lwvmn.org/local/Leagues/SLP>