

Summary  
League of Women Voters of Tanana Valley (LWVTV)  
2021 – 2022 Program Planning

The LWVTV held two Program Planning meetings both using Zoom. The first was on February 13, 2021, and the follow-up meeting on March 19, 2021. Prior to the meetings, several resources had been provided to the membership on the [LWVTV website](#) to help with Program Planning. Shari George and Janna Miller led the discussion.

At the February 13, 2021, meeting about seventeen members attended and participated actively in reviewing League Positions and priorities at the US-level, the state-level and our local as well as discussing ideas for new studies. We went over the Program Planning process and its goals and then launched into a review of the LWV Unites States positions on Representative Government, International Relations, Natural Resources, and Social Policy. We discussed the LWVUS Priorities 2021 that focus on the For the People Act, the Voting Rights Act, redistricting, passage of the ERA, comprehensive immigration reform, the climate change crisis, quality healthcare, ending gun violence, and securing peace and justice abroad. There were no specific requests from LWVUS for organizational action, but it is always good to get reacquainted with national and remember the resource Impact on Issues is.

Following LWVUS, we studied the eighteen LWV Alaska positions. Our goal was to recommend either reaffirming, reviewing, or revising each position. The group recommended reaffirming the following LWVAK Positions:

- Capital Budget Process
- Constitution – Amending the Constitution by Initiative
- Constitutional Convention
- Alaska’s Statutory Initiative Process
- Voter Registration
- Energy
- Land Disposal
- Land Use
- Career Education in the Schools
- Child Care and Early Childhood Education
- Domestic Violence, Sexual Assault and Bullying
- Youth and Adolescent Needs
- Landlord-Tenant Relationships
- School Finance
- Judicial Appointment and Retention

We recommended reviewing the following LWVAK Positions for likely revision:

- Campaign Finance and Public Disclosure
- Legislative Process and Procedures
- Election Processes and Procedures

Considering the passage of Ballot Measure 2 (Alaska’s Better Elections Initiative) and LWVAK’s support of this ballot measure, each of these positions should be reviewed and revised as necessary to reflect current views. We urged the inclusion of language that specifically addresses the safety and security of the Alaska voting process at all levels.

We recommended that the LWVAK continue the study on a potential position addressing general support for PreK – Higher Education. Curriculum should be robust and varied; we would like to see voters and leaders support a solid and varied curriculum across all grade levels, not just emphasis on STEM, technology, and career education. The Liberal Arts and emphasis on civics and government are equally important in the education of our state residents. In addition, we would like to see the position advocate for the funding of the University of Alaska - the state's only higher education institution. Considering devastating budget cuts, we believe the LWVAK should form a position that supports adequate funding for public education at all levels.

We discussed several recommendations sent to the LWVAK Board by the LWV of Juneau. There was interest in the proposed ideas on both civil discourse, and fair and equitable taxation, but the group did not have enough information to vote on formal support.

The members also noted specific concern with current legislation before the Alaska Legislature that seeks changes in voter registration, voter assistance, and election practices and proposed changes to Alaska's merit-based judicial selection and retention procedures. There is also general concern with the baseless public distrust in the security of the election process and what steps we, as LWV, may be part of to refute this serious threat to a peaceful, democratic society. It is also clear that educating the public on changes to voting due to Ballot Measure 2 should be a key task for all the local Leagues and state League.

We discussed the newly forming Alaska Health Care Reform Working Group. It will be led by Dr. Carolyn Brown (LWV Juneau) with a goal of understanding health care gaps at the local level. Jennifer Schmidt and Phyllis Darrah volunteered to represent LWVTV.

We concluded Part 1 of Program Planning with our review of the LWV of Tanana Valley local positions. The group voted to:

- Reaffirm: Planning and Zoning, Boards, Commissions and Committees, Conflict of Interest (with addition of the word, public, to clarify), and Nondiscrimination.
- Review for potential revision: General Local Government
  - Consider wording addressing the City of Fairbanks and the City of North Pole's powers and circumstances that are different than the FNSB.
  - Consider how emergency medical/health powers might operate in future medical emergencies.
- Continue review: Road Service Area.
- No new local studies were recommended.

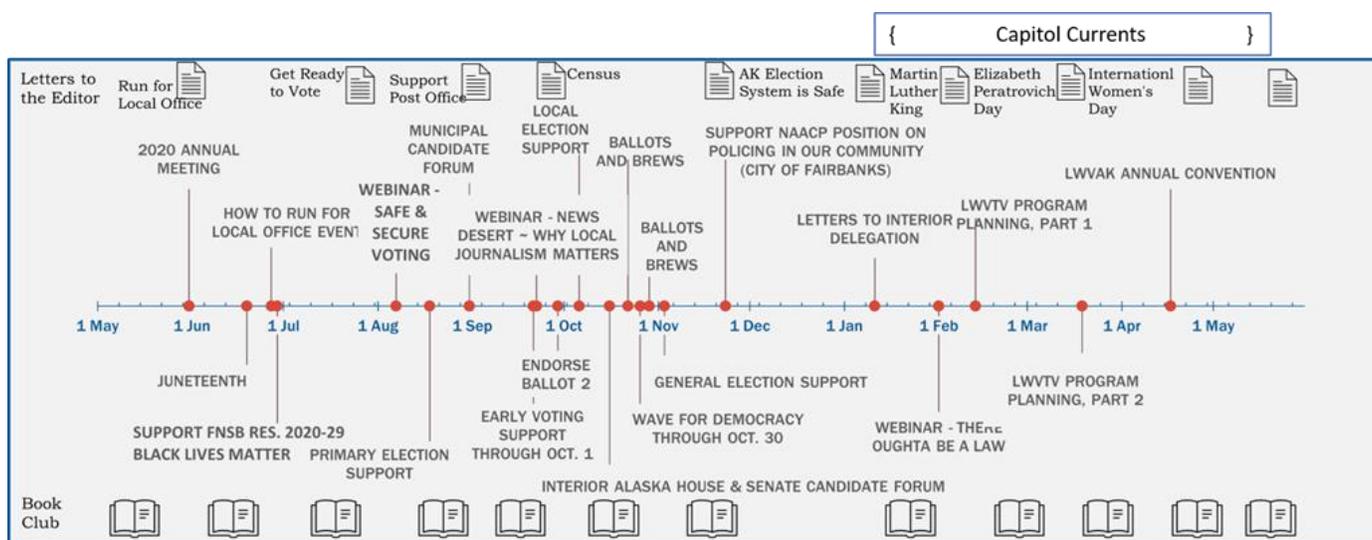
The group looked at an overview of the all the activities in which the LWVTV engages and a graphic illustrating the subset we have taken on so far this year. A complete review and discussion of our activities was postponed until our second local Program Planning meeting.

Our follow-up Program Planning meeting was held on March 19, 2021, with about eleven members participating. We focused on our local League activities – which ones to keep, if there are any that we should retire and if there is something new the membership should consider. The recommendations are then presented to the membership at our Annual Meeting for a vote. We also discussed potential subjects for our public Hot Topic series.

Below is a list of our current activities and a graphic illustrating what we have undertaken this year.

- Voting support at the Pioneers Home and FMH
- Get Out the Native Vote
- Support the FNSB Clerk and Division of Elections
- Registering Voters
- KUAC broadcasts of FNSB Assembly
- Book Club
- Celebration of Elizabeth Peratrovich Day
- Tanana State Fair
- Public educational events (Hot Topics)
- Active Letter to the Editor campaign and Commentary
- Outreach at events
- How to run for local public office workshops
- Redistricting
- Salaries and Emoluments Commission
- Greenstar
- FNSB Climate Change Task Force
- Diversity Council

Timeline of Activities so far – June 2020 – March 2021



Following a brief review of the results of the earlier Program Planning meeting we reviewed the timeline of activities and our current activities in the context of LWVUS general categories. First we discussed those activities supporting Representative

Government including voting rights, educating voters, the election process, and citizens' rights. Due to COVID-19 some of our traditional activities such as Naturalization ceremonies, the Fair and going to the Pioneer Home and Fairbanks Memorial Hospital were not possible. Next we reviewed activities falling under Natural Resources including environmental protection and pollution, and climate change and those addressing Social Policy focused on equality of opportunity. We used online polls of those attending to determine which activities we should keep, consider dropping or drop. The final recommendation was to keep all our current activities.

The meeting was then opened to broader discussion.

- We decided to expand "Greenstar" to "Environment and Sustainability" reflecting local needs, changes, and opportunities. Examples offered were the FNSB Recycling Center, solid waste, and landfill concerns, dealing with coal ash and other recycling activities beyond Greenstar.
- One member noted that LWVTV participation on the FNSB Ethics Committee might be a better fit than our participation on the Salaries and Emoluments Commission.
- A past activity was an "Observer Corps" from which specific members agree to attend local public meetings such as the School District Board meetings, City Councils, FNSB Assembly, Diversity Council, etc. and provide brief reports and potential call-to-action to the Board for broader distribution to the membership. This could encourage more member involvement and keep the LWVTV more current. We could solicit volunteers at the Annual Meeting. Statewide issues were also mentioned. The LWVAK is trying to form such a group to follow statewide activities.
- No new formal activities were proposed.

The group then briefly reviewed our Hot Topics from this year and discussed recommendations for topics in the coming year. LWVTV had conducted a poll of the entire membership Feb. 6 – Mar. 13 seeking prioritization of potential topics. The results were:

- First Place
  - How Alaska's elections will be different after the passage of Ballot Measure 2
  - Electoral College/other ways to run elections
- Second Place
  - Alaska's fiscal future
  - Voter suppression
  - Objectivity of the news
- Third Place
  - Money and politics
  - Energy in the Interior
- Other
  - Global climate change
  - Food security
  - Diversity, Equity & Inclusion
  - Criminal justice system
  - Policing in the FNSB
  - Human trafficking

During conversation voter suppression emerged as the top priority. The effects of Ballot Measure 2 and objectivity/lying in the news and social media are also high priorities. Earlier in the year, the Board had identified redistricting and judicial selection and retention as high priority topics for 2021 – 2022.