

SIMPLIFIED LEAGUE RULES

WHAT WE DO

The work of the League is generally divided into **Voter Services** including registration drives, candidate forums, candidate questionnaires, etc., and **Advocacy** including working on the program adopted by the body annually, and other issues that arise during the year. League may tackle any issue for which there are precedences found on the *Impact on Issues* (LWV US) and *Where We Stand* (LWVAR). No League or League member may speak in opposition to the positions of the National and State Leagues.

HOW WE DO IT

The business of the League is managed in regular meetings of either the general membership or the board or of a team or committee or a combination of these, the number and timing of which are often spelled out in the bylaws. The bylaws will also include requirements for advanced notice, quorums, and the format of the meetings, such as abiding by Roberts Rules of Order.

ELECTED OFFICERS

The bylaws will state the number of elected officers and board members, terms of office, time of year of election, and required advanced notice and publication of nominees. A nominating committee often finds candidates, but there is always the opportunity to nominate from the floor of the meeting. Failure of a nominating committee to be appointed, meet, and identify candidates may be covered in the bylaws, but generally, in the absence of a nominating committee, the board as a whole becomes the nominating committee.

KEYS TO A SMOOTH MEETING

In holding meetings, especially if there is uncertainty, confusion, or a significant deviation from standard practice, I recommend appointing a parliamentarian and a 'good behavior' monitor. The parliamentarian can keep the business running smoothly. The good behavior monitor is someone who can call the members back into good order. At my church, we call it 'back into covenant', which has specific language requiring courtesy and good manners. The damage done by hasty speaking and lack of courtesy takes many, many days and apologies to mend.

ROBERTS RULES OF ORDER

Roberts Rules of Order is a great guide to running meetings efficiently, in a timely manner, and with good order. However, it is not essential that RRO be followed slavishly. For example, often a topic is brought up and discussed before a motion is made in order to clarify what the motion should be. Eventually, a motion is required so that you clear away the dust and debris of a free ranging discussion and everyone understands what they are voting for or against.

ONLY ONE PERSON SPEAKS AND ONLY AFTER BEING RECOGNIZED BY THE CHAIR

In formal meetings of the membership, as opposed to a committee or team meeting of a subset of members, the presider should recognize the speaker before that person is allowed to talk. A good meeting chair will ensure that everyone wanting to speak is heard, that speakers stay on topic, and are succinct. Disruptive, angry,

or the very elderly member (I have had to deal with all these) members need to be brought back into good order. The rest of the membership needs to be supportive of the meeting chair and the good behavior monitor.

WHO MAY BE A LEAGUE MEMBER

Each branch sets the dues and membership requirement in the bylaws. It is necessary that all forms of membership are spelled out. So, if there are student memberships with different dues, that must be included in the bylaws. This is true for honorary members, senior members, and any other type. National set the lower age limit at 16 with no upper age limit. Any gender or sex may be a member and any member has full membership with all the rights and privileges of membership.

WHO MAY BE AN OFFICER

As described by the bylaws, members, who have been presented as candidates for a leadership position at a general meeting of the full membership and are elected by a majority of votes cast, may be an officer. Vacancies are filled as described in the bylaws. Typically, a candidate is a member in good standing.

NONPARTISAN POLICY

No level of League, National, State or Local may support any political party nor any candidate for political office. Members who do not hold sensitive positions may be involved in political campaigns, political parties, partisan activities, and so on. However, to preserve the nonpartisan status of the League, holders of the following offices are excluded from partisan activities: President (or anyone who would serve as President should that office be vacant or those duties require a substitute), Voter Services leader/chair/liaison, Action leader/chair/liaison.

Any League sponsored activity which focuses on political races, candidates, or elections, must be crafted so that no party is excluded. This includes all third party or minor parties that receive Federal election funds (Libertarian, Green, etc.) or on the state and local level, who received more than some minimal number of votes (a few thousand out of many thousand, for example).

This list is not intended to be an exhaustive write up of the **Policy and Procedures** of how a League functions. There are many resources that provide a lot of information about roles, jobs, studies, nonpartisan requirements, and more. They are best accessed by using a search engine such as google. For instance, I googled "LWV How to Run a Study" and was taken to <http://forum.lwv.org/member-resources/article/guidelines-lwvus-studies>

In addition, Kim Lauth, klauth@lwv.org, is the liaison for Arkansas to National.

I am happy to try to find answers.
Nell Matthews, Spokesperson/Convener LWVAR
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