

The Voter

The President's Report

Immigration — the ABCs

We are experiencing enormous change due to the transition to a new presidency as well as the widespread use of social media to create real news, fake news, and alt news. It is now especially incumbent upon us to seek out facts from fictional rhetoric or misleading part-truths.

One of the first Executive Orders (EO) issued by our new president bars refugees from 7 predominately Muslim countries from entering the U.S. It should be noted that not one person from any of these countries has killed an American on American soil. This order is currently on hold as it is being challenged in court on claims of civil rights violations.

Subsequent to the EO, two memos recently issued by the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) provide guidance for a significant change in priorities for mass detention and deportation of undocumented immigrants living in the U.S. These current detention and deportation activities are aggressive and a source of significant strife, concern, and fear within our communities.

Other anticipated actions will be limited until Congress approves funding (the Executive Branch cannot do this) required for more extensive implementation of immigration policy (building a wall; many more personnel; more detention facilities).

Because of these changes regarding immigration activity, and the heated rhetoric and misinformation, now seems to be a good time to learn more about immigration and migration definitions.

The most common "immigrants" are refugees, asylum seekers, temporary foreign nationals, and undocumented immigrants (those who have entered the country on visas that have expired or who entered with no visa). As evidence of the complexity of U.S. policy, we currently have over 185 different types of visas for people wishing to enter the U.S.

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Mary Ann Reeves (865-693-6286)

maryannreeves1@att.net

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Emily Jernigan, Voter Editor

Marian Varner, Webmaster

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Mary Ann Reeves

President's Report continued

Refugees are persons living outside the U.S. who have applied for refugee status as outlined in the 1951 Convention relating to the status of Refugees. They are usually escaping from war-torn countries in fear for their lives and the lives of their families. They undergo extensive vetting procedures overseas, including biometrics. This process takes about 2 years. They are assigned a country and cannot choose the country or city. Additional vetting is done in the U.S. for those who come here. When accepted, they have legal status, can work, and apply for citizenship after a five-year waiting period. This is the group cited in the Presidential EO.

Asylum seekers are individuals who appear at the U.S. border or are already in the U.S. They are requesting asylum citing a reasonable fear of persecution if returned to their country of origin. If accepted they will also have legal status.

Temporary foreign nationals who come to the U.S. for work, vacation, visitation, employment, and more. Before entering the U.S. they must go to a U.S. embassy in their country and apply for a visa. This process can be rigorous depending on the country of origin and the reason for their visit. They can stay in the U.S. only under the terms of their visa.

Undocumented immigrants are those who are in the U.S. without legal status. They may have entered the U.S. under a visa (which they let expire) or they may have crossed the border illegally. Most undocumented immigrants come from Mexico and Central America or Canada. This group is the group that are currently being detained and sent into deportation by the two memos from DHS.

Some quick facts about undocumented immigrants: Being in the U.S. and undocumented is a civil offense, not a criminal offense. However, if caught crossing the border, the offense is a felony.

All persons residing in the U.S., including those here illegally, are protected by U.S. law including due

process. However, since the offense of being here is a civil one and not a criminal one, the U.S. does not automatically offer a lawyer.

Most are here with their families or are providing income for their families in their country of origin. Undocumented immigrants who are felons were already a priority for detention and deportation.

They pay all the same taxes (sales, property, etc) that U.S. citizens must pay for a total of \$11.6 billion in 2013.

They pay more in payroll taxes than they will consume in benefits. Most pay federal income taxes through an IRS Individual Taxpayer Identification Number or have taxes deducted from their paychecks.

It is estimated that they paid \$100 Billion into Social Security over the last decade but are not eligible for those benefits.

In spite of taxes paid, they are not eligible for welfare, food stamps, Medicaid, and more.

Based on U.S. law and Supreme Court rulings, they are eligible to send their children to public school and can receive emergency care in a hospital. These workers fill an important economic niche in the U.S. Mass deportation will cause economic and humanitarian crises.

There is no "get in line" for entry to the U.S., and most options under current law are very specialized and numerically restricted.

Please see article on the LWV position on immigration elsewhere in this *Voter*.

League Committees

Education Committee

The next meeting of the committee will be on March 28 at 2:30 p.m. in the Methodist Medical Center Secret City Café.

For more information about the education committee please contact **Brenda Parker** at 670-1339, or brendaparker@wildblue.net.



Lunch with the League



On **March 7** **Mary Ann Young**, Deputy Sheriff and Director of Alternatives to Incarceration, will tell us about, "Alternatives to Incarceration Programs in Anderson County."

On **March 21** **Matt Tillery**, Director of Community Services, Cherokee Health Systems, will discuss, "Health Care."

Sandwich lunches from the [Sweet Café](#) in Norris are available for \$8. Lunch with the League is open to the public. Reservations are not required, and we provide coffee, water, and tea.

Breakfast with the Legislators

The next session for Breakfast with the Legislators will be **Monday, March 27**, 7:30 to 8:30 a.m. at the Oak Ridge Civic Center Social Room. The League has hosted the discussions with our area Tennessee legislators for 30 years.

During these events local legislators have an opportunity to discuss upcoming legislation and issues. Attendees will be able to express their opinions and ask questions directly to those who represent our districts in the Legislature. There is no charge for these events, and they are open to all.

Subsequent breakfasts will be held on the fourth Monday of every month the legislature is in session. If the Oak Ridge schools are closed for snow or inclement weather, the breakfast will be cancelled.

~Betsy Smith

LWV Position on Immigration

The League's position on Immigration was announced by the National Board in 2008. The League has lobbied in support of the DREAM (Development, Relief, and Education for Alien Minors) Act which provided a pathway to citizenship when certain requirements were met. The legislation passed the House but lacked enough votes to overcome a filibuster in the Senate.

The League's position on immigration lists criteria the U.S. should use for legal admission to the U.S. and the administration and enforcement thereof.

Specifically addressing unauthorized immigrants already in the U.S., the position states, "In achieving overall policy goals, the League supports a system for unauthorized immigrants already in the country to earn legal status, including citizenship, by paying taxes, learning English, studying civics and meeting other relevant criteria. While policy reforms, including a path to legal status, remain unachieved, the League does not support deporting authorized immigrants who have no history of criminal activity."

~Mary Ann Reeves

Observer Corps

LWVOR members attend meetings and report their observations of the meeting they attend. These notes are not official minutes. Contact the specific committee for official information. Longer versions of some of these reports may be posted on our website.

[Anderson County Commission](#)

Regular meeting, February 21, 2017

Commissioners had a lively, two-hour long discussion about finding a place for an animal shelter on the 290-acre Blockhouse Valley reclaimed landfill site. Animal Control Officer Brian Porter described the current holding facility. He would like to build a full service shelter. To start fund raising for the new facility, Mr. Porter and his supporters asked that Commission give them permission to use 10 acres of the Blockhouse site. Retired Commissioner Robin Biloski reminded Commission that the shelter would be funded by private money and that \$33,000 has already been donated. Commission unanimously passed a motion allowing at least three acres and not more than ten to be used for the shelter. The Conservation Committee will decide how much land and where it will be on the site.

A large contingent of senior citizens attended the meeting to ask Commission to buy a building and expand the senior center. Their present building is

rented and there is a \$315,000 grant available for an expanded center that can only be used on a building owned by the county. The first step toward purchase would be an appraisal of the current building. Mr. Emert asked that the appraisal be postponed. He and other Commissioners have found what they think is a much better building and do not want to waste money on an appraisal of a building that may not be bought. Mr. McKamey pointed out that the Center is funded by State and Federal money; the County pays nothing. They have been looking at buildings for years and it is time to act. Commission voted to wait 60 days before having appraisal done. As the disappointed seniors left, one man made a moving plea for a place for lonely widowed people to socialize.

Mayor Frank asked Commission to pass a motion allowing her to seek a free appraisal. She felt that this would show seniors that they are not forgotten. Motion passed unanimously.

The Mayor announced that the County has received a \$50,000 State Tourism grant to expand the boat launch at Anderson County Park.

The Mayor asked Commission to pass a motion in support of a State Senate bill that would improve Medicaid reimbursement to Tennessee EMS systems. Mr. Mead cautioned that supporting a bill that might be drastically amended is buying a pig in a poke. Mr. Hitchcock moved that the matter be referred to Legislative committee. Commission agreed.

HR Director Russell Bearden gave a glowing report on the Thrive Health and Wellness clinic in the Courthouse. He noted that the County has 2 ½ times the national average in drug prescriptions per person.

Commissioner White moved to appoint Doyle "Tippy" Teno as Delinquent Tax Attorney; it passed.

Commissioner Iwanski moved to have Purchasing Department head Tony Foreman report to the Finance Director. He now reports to the Finance Committee. Mr. Foreman argued that his department is changing procedures and training new staff. He asked that his department continue to report to the

Finance Committee until he had been in office for a year, on June 30. Despite his objections, the motion passed with Commissioners Wandel, Vowell, Isbel, White, and Hitchcock voting against.

~Willa Reister, Observer

Recreation and Parks Advisory Board

February 9, 2017, meeting

The following 2017 Work Plan was approved.

The International Friendship Bell Pavilion (Alan Tatum): This committee will work with, and report to, the City Manager, City Council, and Parks Director. Fundraising efforts will continue, the design for the pavilion will be finalized, and construction activities will be supported. Alan reported that UT architectural students will develop conceptual designs for the gardens around the pavilion. The fundraising goal is \$750,000; current donations and pledges, mainly from corporations, total about \$645,000. In the next phase of the fundraising, solicitation letters will go out to Oak Ridge businesses and households.

Trail Development (Ray Garrett, Ken Rueter, Brad Spears, Kevin Hoyt): Development of the extensive network of trails in and around Oak Ridge will continue. The trails include East Fork Poplar Creek, North Ridge, Gallaher Point/Bend, North Boundary Greenway, and the Black Oak Ridge Conservation Easement. Kevin Hoyt will evaluate the possibility of integrating the UT Arboretum trails with city trails. Ken will pursue grant opportunities.

Rails to Trails (Ray Garrett, David Kitzmiller, and Dan Robbins): The Board will participate in the master planning of the project, providing support for acquisition and public input sessions. Negotiations with CSX are expected to commence in late spring.

Oak Ridge Blueprint (Jon Hetrick): The City of Oak Ridge has asked the Planning Commission to develop a master plan to "make Oak Ridge better." The kickoff meeting for the "Oak Ridge Blueprint" project is scheduled for January 26, 2017, at High Places Church. Members of other boards and commissions



are encouraged to participate; the project will focus mainly on housing and recreational parks.

Long Range Planning (David Kitzmiller, Alan Tatum, and Kevin Hoyt): The Capital Improvement Plan will be reviewed, updated, and prioritized in an annual report. This includes capital maintenance and amenities. The 5-K run, sponsored by the Arboretum, is still under consideration.

Promotion Collaboration with Explore Oak Ridge (Naomi Asher, Dan Robbins): Naomi will prepare a comprehensive, integrated plan for marketing Oak Ridge Recreation and Parks that will include a 20-minute presentation, a video, and a brochure. She will update and distribute the Community and Corporate Donation Guides. Dan will work with the National Park Service on matters pertaining to Recreation and Parks.

Events (Naomi Asher, Kevin Hoyt, Ken Rueter, and David Kitzmiller): Projected community events include Community Bike Rides, Free Kids Fishing Day, Oak Ridge Velo Classic, and the Butterfly Festival at UT Arboretum.

Director's Report (Jon Hetrick): Jon and his staff have been extremely busy following their move to the Scarboro Community Center. Development of the 8th rowing lane is in progress and the retaining wall and concrete replacement for the Greenways trail are complete. Jon will hire a company to write grant proposals for the installation of the artificial turf at Blankenship Field and is developing an RFP (requests for proposals) for the actual work. A date has not been set to begin planning the Badger Road Building renovations and the permanent Senior Center facility. Jon said the Oak Ridge Blueprint meeting on January 26 was successful, and staff will compile the questions and comments from attendees.

~Mary Lou Daugherty, Observer

Senior Advisory Board

At the February meeting Pat Gengozian was elected chair, replacing Elizabeth Batchelor who chose not to

run for reelection. Bob Smallridge is Vice-Chair. Jackie Nichols, Lisa Plante, and Paul Smiddy are new board members.

The Senior Center is now open at the Oak Ridge Civic Center, with card games, pool and lunches, and meals-on-wheels operating in the new quarters. Volunteer drivers are needed for the meals program. City Council member Chuck Hope has encouraged the board to play an active role in discussions of relocation and eventual choice of the site, in the area of the Civic Center, for a new center or addition to the current space. He reported that Studio 4, also the architect for the preschool site-selection and construction effort, continues to work on the new senior space project. They will need input from the board on specific needs. Financing for the new space should be included in the upcoming city budget.

~Marty Adler-Jasny

Roane County Commission

Hearing of Delegation: Wade Creswell with Roane Alliance talked about the Roane County Chamber Ambassador team, an outreach effort for non-profits. Substance abuse aid was addressed by Brad Taylor and Sara Harrison. For every one dollar spent on prevention the county saves \$14 in later expenses. Ashley Freeberg announced a "recovery court" date of 6 p.m. on February 17.

County Attorney Greg Leffew discussed the transfer of documents. Procedures are moving along on county maintenance cases. The Zumstein case costs for Roane County are \$12,000 in attorneys fees. Roane County Utility is set for trial on the issue of who owns an 8 mile section.

Roane County Executive Ron Woody announced that State Highway 70 widening is scheduled for completion in August 2019. Agriculture buildings are excluded from inspection about building codes. No permits are needed.

The 2017 budget process has started. Mr. Woody discussed various funds, saying that the general fund

is supported by property tax. About 4% of revenue is placed in capital investments. School, bridges, and jail will be in future projects. In 2008, \$9M was borrowed that is not callable until July 2018. Paying interest early could save \$2M.

The K-25 site will change to management by CROET. Roane County does not want any more government, non-tax-paying buildings.

Special orders: Recognition of the 2017 Volunteer Firefighters of the year: Regina Durham, Jim Thacker, Capt. Michael Ferrell, Lt. Frances Henderson, Robbie Shillings, and Capt. Charles Hiatt.

Old Business: Several resolutions were passed including appropriation of funds to secure an option on the Kingston Dollar General Store property and potential other properties near the Roane County Courthouse and Jail area.

New Business: Resolutions were passed honoring: Hunter Clark for outstanding football performance and a 4.0 grade point in Harriman High School. Joe Pace for his outstanding football, basketball, and baseball accomplishments.

They requested that the Tennessee General Assembly and Tennessee Department of Transportation name a state bridge or road honoring PFC Elbert Jackson "Jack" Witt, (MIA Korean War). Nine additional New Business resolutions were passed.

~Hella Peterson, Observer

EQAB

January 19, 2017, meeting

There was no quorum, but several ongoing and upcoming items were discussed.

Board Membership: Four positions are open for 2017. Anyone interested in serving on EQAB is encouraged to contact the city manager's office.

Tree Plan: Ms. Bogard briefed the board on her presentation for City Council to consider. Laying the groundwork for an Oak Ridge Tree Plan, EQAB has, with area partners, been focusing substantial effort over the last few years on an inventory of city tree

canopy and other relevant projects, such as the tree workshop held last November at the UT Arboretum. A cohesive tree plan, as has been adopted in Knoxville and Chattanooga, will be recommended to council on the basis of important economic/ environmental benefits, and its impact would add another dimension to the existing Climate Action Plan. With council's agreement, the Tree Plan will include creating a position of city forester, as a long-term goal.

100,000-Tree Day February 25: Ms. O'Dell announced this statewide event, a Tennessee Environmental Council initiative, to furnish native tree seedlings at no cost to everyone willing to plant them. Details are posted on the city website. Orders must be placed by February 21; trees are to be picked up at Jackson Square.

Mary Saethre, of Keep Anderson County Beautiful, updated the board on the outdoor improvement project at Robertsville Middle School.

At the Planning Commission's January 26 meeting providing an opportunity for citizen input toward the creation of a city blueprint, EQAB is to have a table for information and conversation with the public. Officers will be elected at next month's meeting.

~Marion Burger, Observer

Anderson County Commission

Regular meeting, January 17, 2017

Tony Foreman of Purchasing Department presented three contracts for renewal for EMS transportation and Clinton Library software maintenance. All were approved. He also announced a resignation and subsequent opening in the Purchasing Department that will require a search to fill the position.

Dr. Parrott, Director of Anderson County Schools, introduced Randy McKamey as the new football coach of Clinton High School. He updated the Commission on the status of state testing and said the schools aggregate results increased in measurable areas. A \$5 million grant was awarded by TN Economic Development.

The County Mayor submitted a review of the Debt Management Policy and an acknowledgement that with an issuance of debt a cash flow forecast must be conducted. She also announced receipt of two grants



related to tourism and fitness. There were 20 new home permits between September 1 and October 31, 2016. TDOT improvements to the Claxton, Clinton Highway exchange is still under study.

William Jones, General Sessions Clerk, asked for additional temporary help with the IT department as they continue hardware and systems replacement in response to the system breach. The request was referred to the Budget Committee for a funding review.

Finance Director, Natalie Erb, discussed more positive trends YTD in the self-insurance funds deficit. No additional information was provided for the EMS fund deficit. She also announced that the budget process has begun. Among several budget expenditures, the Commission approved a \$10,000 contribution to Oak Ridge's Friendship Bell project and \$10,000 for substitute legal counsel. There was some discussion for \$5000 and fund resources for the newly organized Charter Commission. It was noted that most of the costs are normally related to legal fees and that for most issues, Anderson County uses the services of Law Director, Jay Yeager, to assist the Charter Commission. Discussion also followed on the addition of a resource to act as a tax attorney, fund allocation, and the impact on the Law Director's office that currently provides this service. Finally, approval was made to accept a grant of \$60,204 from CMAC Anderson County Cleaner Operations Vehicle grant, with \$20,051 matching funds on behalf of the county expected to be exercised in 2018.

Information on a study for Oak Ridge General Sessions Court to be housed in the Daniel Arthur building was presented by Commissioner Phil Yager. His major points were the desire to maintain a presence in Oak Ridge; the annual cost to lease the current building in comparison to moving to a building owned by the county; and the expiring lease on June 30, 2017. He asked for approval to seek bids for renovation of the Daniel Arthur building. Discussion followed on the renovation requirements, contributions by Oak Ridge, and a lack of other choices. The Mayor shared the degree of public interest in this issue and an opinion from the Secretary of State regarding provisions of a second court under the Private Act. There was some discussion about timing of the bid process initiated by Commissioner Hitchcock. Law Director Jay Yeager offered good

explanation of the normal bid process and his recommendations. The motion to solicit bids through the Purchasing Dept. passed.

A request was presented for adopting a resolution from the Retired Teachers Association regarding public education and vouchers being considered at the state level. Commissioner Mead moved to ask the Law Director to construct a resolution that parallels that of Oak Ridge Schools, Clinton City Schools, and the Anderson County School Board for forwarding to our State Legislators.

~Kathy Edwards, Observer

Membership Notes

Welcome, New Member!

Jill Wray
16 Rivers Run Way,
Oak Ridge, TN 37830
865-567-1378

Please contact **Janis Williams**, 483-1219 or janisor@bellsouth.net, with membership corrections and updates.

I want to join the League of Women Voters

Name _____
Address _____
City _____
State and Zip _____
Phone (Day / Work) _____
Phone(Evening) _____
Email _____

Individual annual dues _____ \$60

Household annual dues _____ \$90

*Donation to Education Foundation \$ _____

*Make a separate, tax deductible check payable to LWVEF

Please send this form and your dues, payable to:

LWV of Oak Ridge
P.O. Box 4073
Oak Ridge, TN 37831



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Oak Ridge, TN 37831-4073

lwvoakridge.org

lwvor@comcast.net

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*******OUR SNOW POLICY*******

If Oak Ridge Schools are closed due to weather, League meetings that day are cancelled. If they are simply delayed, we will hold meetings as scheduled. However, please be safe and use your best judgment.

Calendar

March

- 7 Lunch with the League*** 11:45, lunch; 12–1. Speaker: Mary Ann Young, Deputy Sheriff and Director of Alternatives to Incarceration. Topic: "Alternatives to Incarceration Programs in Anderson County."
- 14 Board Meeting*** 10 a.m. – 12 p.m.
- 21 Lunch with the League*** 11:45, lunch; 12–1. Speaker: Matt Tillery, Director of Community Services, Cherokee Health Systems. Topic: "Health Care."
- 27 Breakfast with the Legislators** 7:30–8:30 a.m. Oak Ridge Civic Center Social Room
- 28 Education Committee** 2:30 p.m., Methodist Medical Center Secret City Café

April

- 4 Lunch with the League*** 11:45, lunch; 12–1. Speaker: Rev. Jake Morrill, Pastor, Oak Ridge Unitarian Universalist Church. Topic: "Status of Community Organizing Project in Oak Ridge."
- 11 Board Meeting*** 10 a.m. – 12 p.m.
- 18 Lunch with the League*** 11:45, lunch; 12–1. Speaker: Dr. Michael Fitzgerald, Professor of Political Science and Senior Teaching Fellow, The Howard H. Baker, Jr. Center for Public Policy". Topic: "U.S./Russia Relations."

* Unless otherwise specified, Lunch with the League is at the Unitarian Universalist Church, 809 Oak Ridge Turnpike at Laboratory Road. Board Meetings are in the Main Conference Room, UT Resource Center, Rutgers Ave. at the Turnpike.