



The Voter

The President's Report

I must apologize for my ignorance as I failed to note an important date in February. The League of Women Voters was founded 99 years ago on February 14, 1920 by Carrie Chapman Catt - six months before the ratification of the 19th amendment, which granted all women in the United States the right to vote. Seventy years earlier efforts to earn the right to vote for women began in 1848 at a gathering in Seneca Falls, NY. Numerous individuals gave much to the national campaign, including chaining themselves to buildings and fasting to the extent that some destroyed their health.

Much earlier on March 31, 1776, Abigail Adams in a letter asked her husband to "Remember the Ladies and be more generous and favorable to them than our ancestors. ... If particular (sic) care and attention is not paid to the Ladies we are determined to foment a Rebellion, (sic) and will not hold ourselves bound by any Laws in which we have no voice, or Representation."

Ninety-nine years after the formation of the League of Women Voters, the organization "encourages informed and active participation in government" by both women and men. The LWVOR continues a long and notable tradition, and I for one, will celebrate the 100th anniversary of the founding of the League of Women Voters in 2020!

Members who wish to become more involved in the Education Program are encouraged to contact Carol Plasil (483-4871 or carolplasil@comcast.net) and join her committee that meets on the 4th Tuesday of each month.

Harriett McCurdy

mccurdy46@hotmail.com or 865-332-6440

Connect with Us

Website: lwvoakridge.org

Facebook: League of Women Voters of Oak Ridge

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Lunch with the League



On **February 19**, **Robin Smith**, Chief of the Oak Ridge Police Department, spoke on the efforts being made to develop a strategic plan with a vision and mission statement. This is presented in detail on the Police Department's website, oakridgetn.gov/departments/ORPD/Home.

On **March 5** our speaker will be **Mark Watson**, City Manager, City of Oak Ridge. His topic is, "State of the City."

March 19: Dr. Lynn Sacco, Associate Professor, Department of History, Women's Studies: Topic TBD

April 2: Dr. Benita Albert, Retired AP and Math Teacher, ORHS: Topic: "Challenges in Public Education: Present and Future."

Lunches from the [Soup Kitchen](#) are available for \$8 on a first-come basis beginning at 11:30 a.m. The presentation begins at noon. Lunch with the League is open to the public and reservations are not required. We provide coffee, water and tea. Lunch with the League is at the [Unitarian Universalist Church](#), 809 Oak Ridge Turnpike.

Breakfast with the Legislators

Over 40 people attended the League's Breakfast with the Legislators, February 25th at the Oak Ridge Civic Center. Lt. Gov. Randy McNally, and Representatives John Ragan and Kent Calfee described current Legislative issues and answered questions from the audience.

The next Breakfast with the Legislators will be held Monday, March 25 at 7:30 AM at the Oak Ridge Civic Center.

~Dan Robbins

LWV 2019 State Convention

The 2019 League of Women Voters State Convention will be held April 6 - 7 at Middle Tennessee State University located in Murfreesboro. Registration can be done via the [LWV Tennessee website](#). Look for the link on the bottom of the page. Or, if you prefer a printed mail-in form, click the red "Here" button in the middle of the page. Alternately, you can find the link on the state LWV website, lwtv.org

Committee Reports

Education Committee

The Education committee of LWVOR met on Tuesday, February 26 to discuss items of interest in education. The committee will continue to monitor programs in Oak Ridge schools, proposed legislation in the State of Tennessee (such as Vouchers) as well as educational issues that may arise nationally. The committee will meet again on Tuesday, March 26, at 2:30 pm in the cafeteria of MMCOR. We encourage members to join us to study, learn, and advocate for issues that are vital to improving education in our city, state and nation.

~Carol Plasil

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 Meeting

Regular Meeting, February 19, 2019

Chair Wandell called the meeting to order. All were present except Commissioner Meredith.

The Commission passed a resolution honoring Jo Ann Garrett, which listed her many areas of service and "her true passion, the Anderson County League of Women Voters."

During the Appearance of Citizens, Karen Leigh criticized the animal shelter staff for limited hours and not allowing volunteers to help. She asked the Commission to appoint an advisory board.

Commission voted to approve a TIF for the construction of a Marriott hotel at the intersection of Highway 61 and the Interstate. The TIF will continue for ten years, or until the forgone taxes reach \$1 million. Only Commissioner Waddell opposed the TIF, pointing out that other hotels at the intersection have not received any tax break and that the hotel would use County resources. He gave the example of two EMS trips to motels in the recent weeks. The Commission voted to have the Motel/Hotel tax generated by the new hotel go to the general fund rather than Tourism and Chamber for the duration of the TIF. The Legislative Committee will work with the Law Director to draw up a Private Act to be approved



at the next Commission meeting. It will be submitted to the State legislature.

The Commission approved a resolution to support efforts in the State legislature to create a new professional license for a Doctoral Clinician. It is hoped that this will alleviate a shortage of doctors caused by "the cap placed on Residency programs across the U. S."

The Director of Schools reminded the Commission that the Board of Education has passed a resolution stating their opposition to vouchers. Commissioner Smallridge moved that the Legislative Committee draw up a similar resolution and present it to the Commission at the next meeting. This was seconded by Commissioner Denenberg and passed by voice vote.

The Mayor reminded the Commission of the importance of getting a thorough count for the 2020 census. The Commission passed a motion to authorize the Mayor to put together a Complete Count Committee to work on the project.

~Willa Reister

EQAB

Regular Meeting, February 7, 2019

Visitors: Ellen Smith, Mike Higgins (TDEC, Oak Ridge), Vicki Baumgartner (Dogwood Arts), and Doug Colclasure

City Staff Liaison: Sandy Sexton

Three new members, Ms. Kayla Wyatt, Dr. Atilio Anzellotti and Mr. Joel Hewett joined the board. The board elected Robert Kennedy to serve as chair, Wendy Doolittle as co-chair and Darcie Holcomb as secretary.

Sophia Krusen reported that the student council no longer pays for recycling at the High School. Students use water-refilling stations to reduce use of plastic bottles. Dr. Borchers will be invited to talk about recycling in the schools at a future EQAB meeting.

Mr. Kennedy gave an updated status of the proposed Environmental Management Disposal Facility. The Anderson County Commission withdrew the resolution of support before voting, and Roane County may withdraw its resolution of support given last October 15. Mr. Higgins, TDEC, reiterated that DOE, EPA, and TDEC must come to an agreement for the EMDF to move forward. DOE must get a ground water waiver to proceed.

As the City Tree Board, EQAB worked with Community Development to preserve some of the mature trees on the former ASME site. The stand of Darlington Oaks will remain, and the park area next to Badger Road expanded.

Vicki Baumgartner, Dogwood Arts, spoke to the possibility of Oak Ridge having a Dogwood walking trail. The City must apply for and pay to have a trail. The residents along the trail would have to agree, and a neighborhood representative would have to be on the Dogwood board.

TVA has responded to the Freedom of Information Act request sent by EQAB on February 26, 2018 asking for the details of the study that determined an electrical line along Pine Ridge was the best alternative for the National Nuclear Security Administration Y-12 Electrical Substation Project. Board members will sift through the large amount of data sent.

New board members will be briefed at the March 7 EQAB meeting.

~Kathryn Olsen, Observer

Oak Ridge Municipal Planning Commission

Regular Meeting, February 21, 2019

Nine commission members were present. Zabrina Minor-Gregg was absent. Community Development Director, Wayne Blasius, and planning staff members, Nathalie Schmidt and Jennifer Williamson, were also present.

The main business was approval of the Capital Improvements Program for FY 2020-FY 2025. The Planning Commission had held a work session with heads of city departments to discuss the various projects. Members then prioritized the projects (High, Medium, or Low) with emphasis on the FY 2020 proposals. Most of the high-rated proposals are either underway, such as the Senior Center and the Preschool, or receiving significant funding from grants or private donations. A new water treatment facility received the highest ranking from the Commission. The existing structure is old and needs replacing for the continued production of safe potable water. The plant will be located on the property with the raw water intake. Detailed engineering design and permits will be completed in FY2020 with actual construction to take place in FY 2021-22. The funding is expected to come from two loan programs (WIFIA and SRF) at an estimated cost of \$43 million. The Commission voted



unanimously to approve and transmit the CIP to City Council for consideration at its March meeting.

Mr. Blasius reported on the two open houses on the City Blueprint Plan held on February 5th and 7th. The staff is preparing the final draft of the plan to be discussed at a work session on March 14th and adopted at the March 21st business meeting. The final plan will be placed on the city web site with easy access to the summary and the opportunity to examine each section in more detail if desired. The Commission also intends to review the Blueprint Plan once a year to incorporate changes and keep it a living document.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:40 pm.

~Claudia Lever, member of Planning Commission.

Senior Advisory Board

The City of Oak Ridge Senior Advisory Board (SAB) continued its effort to establish a “senior volunteer transportation program” to replace the taxi coupon program that has provided discounted taxi rides to senior citizens and people with disabilities. (See the February Voter for background.)

The SAB met once each week for four consecutive weeks. At the most recent meeting, February 20, the board finished assembling the information for a grant application to Tennessee’s Senior Volunteer Transportation Network and voted to recommend that the City submit the grant request. Subsequently, City Manager Mark Watson advised the board that the request had been submitted, and SAB members learned that it was under active review by the decision-making panel.

As proposed, the program will be called “My Ride Oak Ridge” and will enlist volunteers to provide rides within Oak Ridge to people over age 60 (with an intention to expand later to include younger people who are unable to drive) who will pay \$6 per round-trip ride to help support the program. The City government will be asked to administer the program through the Senior Center and provide some financial support. The initial steering committee for the program consists of the 11 SAB members plus two other citizen volunteers. Steering committee members plan to work on a volunteer basis to get the program started and to provide the first ride before April 15 in order to qualify for the first year of grant funding.

At its March meeting, the SAB plans to (1) review results of a survey of taxi coupon users conducted to

assess transportation needs and (2) hammer out some details of implementing the volunteer program.

~Ellen Smith

Recreation and Parks Advisory Board

Regular Meeting, February 19, 2019

The following topics were discussed at the February meeting of the Recreation and Parks Advisory Board.

Velodrome: The Board agreed to move the velodrome discussion to the beginning of the meeting, with board business to follow. A large contingent of the area bicycling community filled the meeting room. Brad Spears, Parks Board Vice-President and a long-time proponent of the project, led the discussion. Brad was hopeful that the presentation would gain the endorsement of the Parks Board. Brad introduced the newly formed team that included local cyclists and construction experts: Jon Crowson (Project Manager), Bill Broussard (Marketing), Jimmy Deans (Initiative Leader) and Brad Spears (Community Leadership).

Brad described a velodrome as the “Bristol Motor Speedway for bikes.” The oval-shaped, closed-circuit track proposed for Oak Ridge would be 250 meters long and would require special bicycles that have fixed gears and no brakes, but can be slowed by resistance through the pedals.

Reasons for building a velodrome in Oak Ridge include: (1) the track would be the only one of its kind within 3-6 hours driving distance and would bring visitors and revenue to the city; (2) it would be multiuse (e.g., a concert venue), inviting community use; (3) it would be kid-friendly; and (4) the city already has momentum with various sporting events that draw participants and other visitors to Oak Ridge.

The structure would be wooden, would require 6-8 acres, could be in- or out-doors, and would cost about \$300,000. The project would be non-profit, with grass-roots fundraising and would be at no cost to the city; but depending on location, land might be leased from the city.

A lively discussion followed Brad’s presentation and Dan Robbins suggested that Brad present a detailed proposal to the Parks Board in two-three months. The Board agreed. The regular meeting followed.

Peace Bell Pavilion: Jon Hetrick noted that the weather has delayed final construction.



Trails: (1) Rails to Trails – The right of entry agreement has been signed with the contractors, studies and reviews are next, and design work may begin by August.

(2) Haw Ridge Skills Park – Fundraising is underway for the \$30,000 project.

Natural Asset Strategy: Ken Reuter has been working with DOE, the City of Oak Ridge, and Roane and Anderson Counties to promote a Natural Asset Strategy Study that will be performed by Legacy Parks.

Citizen Comments: Colin Colverson suggested developing a bike trail on a greenbelt in east Oak Ridge. The trail could be multi-use and would be good advertising to attract homebuyers to buy near the trail in Oak Ridge, rather than Knoxville. The Board asked Colin to make a detailed report at the next regular meeting of the Parks Board.

Doug Colclasure mentioned a possible tie-in of greenways with a Dogwood Arts trail.

Brad Spears introduced a new board member, Jerry Williams, who has a special interest in youth sports.

~Mary Lou Daugherty, Observer

This is Mary Lou’s final report as an observer. We are in need of a replacement for her. If you are willing to accept this position, please contact Joye Montgomery. She can be reached by email at montgomery102@comcast.net. Thanks.

Stewart Clifton Updates

To receive email updates from the state League lobbyist Stewart Clifton, send an email with your request to him at QA@LWVTN.org.

League Resources

Here are additional resources for information about the League of Women Voters:

Local: Oak Ridge – <http://lwvoakridge.org/index.html>

Knoxville: <https://my.lwv.org/tennessee/knoxvilleknox-county>

Chattanooga: <https://lwvchattanooga.wordpress.com/>

State: <https://www.lwv.org/local-leagues/lwv-Tennessee>

National: <https://www.lwv.org>

Membership Notes

We are sad to have to report the passing of LWVOR member David Reister. His wife Willa informed me that he passed peacefully on January 31. On behalf of the League, I want to extend our sympathy to Willa for her loss, and thank her for David’s participation in the League.

Corrections and Updates

Please contact Janis Williams, 483-1219 or J.Wymer.Williams@gmail.com, 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

Make checks payable to LWV Oak Ridge

*Donation to Education Foundation \$ _____

***Make a separate, tax deductible check payable to LWVEF**

Please send this form and your check(s) to:

LWV of Oak Ridge

P.O. Box 4073

Oak Ridge, TN 37831



PO Box 4073
Oak Ridge, TN 37831-4073
lwvoakridge.org

lwvor@comcast.net

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Dated Material - Please Deliver Promptly

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Oak Ridge, TN
Permit No. 148

*******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

- 5 Lunch with the League*** 11:45, lunch; 12-1. Speaker: Mark Watson, City Manager of Oak Ridge. Topic: "The State of the City."
- 12 Board Meeting*** 10 a.m. – 12 p.m.
- 19 Lunch with the League*** 11:45, lunch; 12-1. Speaker: Dr. Lynn Sacco, Associate Professor, Department of History. Women's Studies: Topic: to be determined.
- 25 Breakfast with the Legislators** 7:30 to 8:30 a.m., the Oak Ridge Civic Center Social Room. Open to all. Coffee and a light continental breakfast are served at no charge.

April

- 2 Lunch with the League*** 11:45, lunch; 12-1. Speaker: Dr. Benita Albert, retired AP and Math teacher. Topic: "Challenges in Public Education, Present and Future."
- 6-7 League of Women Voters of Tennessee 2019 Convention**, MTSU, Murfreesboro, TN
- 9 Board Meeting*** 10 a.m. – 12 p.m.

* 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.