



# The Voter

## *The "Election Integrity Commission" Sham*

Mary Ann Reeves

This May, President Trump signed an executive order creating the "Presidential Advisory Committee on Election Integrity." This committee is chaired by Vice President Mike Pence, and the vice-chair is Kris Kobach, Kansas Secretary of State. All recent election panels have had a Republican and a Democrat as co-chairs, and although this committee is supposedly bipartisan, with two Republican chairs it does not meet that criteria.

The LWVUS has unabashedly dubbed this committee a sham and an assault on the critical principle of democracy: the right to vote.

This sham committee has one purpose: to create severe voter suppression either by the wrongful removal of eligible voters or by making the right to register and vote extraordinarily difficult.

This process has begun with the committee requesting sensitive voter data from every state, including names, addresses, dates of birth, political party affiliation, past voter history, partial SSN, and more. Never before has such private data been requested by any commission, particularly one that has no clear oversight. Dozens of Secretaries of State have said that they will not comply with the requests for this sensitive voter data. Given the recent Equifax breach of confidential information on 143 million Americans, there is even more concern about the ability of this election committee to securely maintain the very personal data that it does get.

Mr. Kobach and several other committee members, including the Heritage Foundation's Hans von Spakovsky and the Family Research Council's Ken Blackwell, are among the nation's most ardent advocates of strict voter ID laws that suppress voting by minorities, the elderly, first-time voters, and low-income Americans. The League supports the right to vote by **all** eligible voters.

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### *Connect with Us*

Website: [lwvoakridge.org](http://lwvoakridge.org)

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**Emily Jernigan, Voter Editor**

**Marian Varner, Webmaster**

**Precision Printing and Graphics supports the League of Women Voters of Oak Ridge by helping with costs for printing and folding *The Voter*.**

Several of the committee members and others, including President Trump, promote the idea of rampant national voter fraud, which could not be and has not been proven. For example, they support inaccurate claims that millions of people voted illegally in the 2016 election. Decades-long studies that show that in-person voter fraud is extremely rare, and this accusation is false.

Clearly this committee is indeed a sham as stated by the LWVUS. It is being guided by a number of opponents of free and open elections. It does not have a history of honesty and integrity that would ensure the their process is conducted in a transparent, secure, and fair manner.

The real problems with our election system are polling place closures, cuts to early voting, onerous voter ID laws, and the illegal purge of registered voters. To learn more, visit <http://lwv.org> or the Brennan Center for Justice of NYU Law School, "a nonpartisan law and policy institute that seeks to improve our systems of democracy and justice," <https://www.brennancenter.org>. The Center is, "...at the center of the fight to preserve and expand the right to vote for every eligible citizen."

The League is dedicated to ensuring that all eligible voters have the opportunity and the information needed to exercise their right to vote.

*Editor's note: Mary Ann Reeves is Immediate Past President of LWVOR, and is a current board member. Since we do not currently have a president, board members will be responsible for the column traditionally prepared by the president. Thank you, Mary Ann*

### ***Lunch with the League***



On **October 3**, **Jessica Steed**, Chair, Oak Ridge Public Schools Education Foundation (ORPSEF), will talk about "ORPSEF and Its Work with Oak Ridge Schools."

On **October 17**, **Marc DeRose**, Executive Director, Explore Oak Ridge (formerly Convention and Visitors Bureau), will tell us about "Current and Future Initiatives to Promote Tourism and Business in Oak Ridge."

On **November 7**, **Maggie McNally**, Director of Women's Services, YWCA Knoxville, will discuss "New YWCA Services Coming to Oak Ridge & Anderson County."

Lunches from the [Soup Kitchen](#) are available for \$8. 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.

### ***LWVTN Fall Workshop***

The League of Women Voters of Tennessee Fall Workshop will be held on Saturday, October 28, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. CDT at Casa Azafran, 2195 Nolensville Pike, Nashville, TN. Cost is \$20 per person. Register at <http://www.lwvtn.org>.

Invited speakers include Amanda M. Marlin, Broadband Director, TN Department of Economic Development; Kent Sylar, MTSU Professor; and Stewart Clifton, LWVTN Lobbyist. Topics include Broadband in Tennessee, Redistricting, Water Quality, the Upcoming 2018 Tennessee Legislative Session, and various election and voter registration matters.

### ***Financial Review Committee***

**Pat Bryan** chairs this year's Financial Review Committee. Other members are **Marti Salk**, **Harriet McCurdy**, and **Janis Williams**.



## 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.

### Roane County Commission

September 11, 2017, meeting

In the Zumstein case, the Court of Appeals ruled that the County is not liable for paying Mr. Zumstein’s legal fees, incurred because he challenged, in court, an appraisal value of his real estate property. The case may be appealed to the state Supreme Court.

In the Crystal Cove Road problem area one owner refused right of way for the County. Approval must be secured before road work can begin.

In the Pioneer Village a survey found one lot on private property. Right of way issues have to be resolved before work on roads can proceed. Citizens questioned why work on roads had not begun.

#### **County Executive Report:**

The Roane Heritage Commission sponsors a luncheon on October 2, 2017. The cost is \$50.

The 2018 budget is before committee.

On October 3 there will be a celebration to honor one of Tennessee's favorite sons: Jim Henry.

#### **New Business:**

Election of a chair for the commission resulted in 9 votes for the continuation of Mr. Berry.

Commissioner Brummet came in second with 6 votes. Commissioner Ellis will again be Chair Pro Tempore. Commissioner Ferguson declined to serve on the Committee on Committees. He stated that he considered the money each member receives while meeting (\$95) wasteful, considering the poverty of some Roane County citizens. He feels that the compensation (\$195) per person for the regular meeting should be sufficient for each. Chairman Berry stated that the issue could be revisited to address the issue.

Commissioner Bell stated that a representative from the city of Kingston should be included in the election of membership to the Budget Committee.

Fourteen additional resolutions of county business were passed.

~Hella Peterson, Observer

### EQAB

September 7, 2017, meeting

Each member briefed the board on their designated action item. Kaela O’Dell recommended that fewer goals should be proposed in EQAB’s draft Tree Plan since there is some dissent from city staff about the current plan. The board hopes that a more modest request for City resources will succeed in getting Council’s approval.

The urgency of a Tree Plan was at the heart of the letter Gray Dean read to the other members, in which EQAB points out the threatened extinction of Oak Ridge’s ash trees, due to the infestation by the emerald ash borer. More broadly, this letter makes the case for the City to contract the services of a certified arborist.

Darcie Holcomb is searching for grant funding for community tree planting projects. Next February the Tennessee Environmental Council holds the Tennessee’s largest-ever such event. EQAB will solicit volunteers for planting and maintenance of the tree seedlings that Oak Ridge receives (intended for private and/or public property). Parks and Recreation Director Jon Hetrick will designate municipal planting sites.

Student representatives Adithyan Sujihkumar and Tripp Chinn were asked to draft a volunteer recycling program plan for ORHS football games.

~Marion Burger, Observer

### Oak Ridge Municipal Planning Commission

September 21, 2017, meeting

Eight commission members were present. Sharon Kohler and Hans Vogel were absent. Staff

members Wayne Blasius, the new Community Development Director; Jordan Clark and Kelly Duggan were present, as was Bryan Mills from Public Works.

Garry Phillips requested a rezoning of 0.45 acres at 500 Oak Ridge Turnpike from B3 to B2. This is at the corner of California Ave. and the Turnpike. The building was most recently used as a mattress store. The applicant wants to open a dental office on the property, which is not a permitted use in B3. Rezoning would allow any of the uses permitted in B2. The commission voted to recommend the rezoning to City Council, which will hold a public hearing before considering the request.

The commission discussed a Zoning Ordinance Text Amendment for Driveway Location and Spacing. Staff recommends amending the ordinance to reduce the distance from property line requirements for driveways from 10 feet to 5 feet on all properties developed for single- and two-family residential uses, and removing the 20 foot spacing requirements between driveways in all residential zones. It also will establish criteria for greater reductions to be authorized for residential properties in the Manhattan Overlay District. This will have the benefit of getting more cars off the street onto approved parking spaces. The commission approved the amendment and recommended it for consideration by City Council.

The commission reviewed the progress of the City Blueprint plan. The next neighborhood meeting will be the East Side Residential area on, September 28, from 5:30 to 7 p.m. at Glenwood School. The City Blueprint was discussed at a work session with City Council on September 19. Planning Commission shared a tentative calendar of additional Blueprint meetings and discussed other issues of interest with City Council.

The Planning Commission encourages all residents to attend any of the neighborhood Blueprint

meetings even if they have missed the one for their area.

*~Claudia Lever, Observer, Commission member*

### Anderson County Commission

*September 18, 2017, meeting*

Chairman Emert called the meeting to order. All commissioners were present except Steve Mead. Commissioner Emert explained that Commissioner Mead had a stroke and is resting comfortably.

Three citizens from Braden Flats asked Commission to help them get Highway 116 repaired. They would like a guardrail to stop cars and school buses from going over the edge into the valley 150 feet below. Commissioner Isbel read a letter from TDOT. TDOT explained that they have examined 116. There is not room for a guardrail between the edge of the pavement and the edge of the precipice. The only solution would be to remove some of the rock face opposite the drop off. This would be very expensive and TDOT studies show that there is not enough traffic on the road to warrant the expenditure. Commissioners agreed that there was a serious problem but could not offer any help.

Commission elected officials for next year. Commissioner Isbel will be Chair, Commissioner Warfield will be Vice-Chair, and Commission McKamey will be Parliamentarian. They were all elected by acclamation.

Mayor Frank presented for the third time a list of nominees for the Conservation Board. Law Director Jay Yeager declared that Commissioner Warfield may remain on the Board. Although he was not nominated by the Mayor he was confirmed by the Commission and his term has not expired. This left two openings. Commission Fritts was elected to one of them. Mayor Frank will nominate someone to the second in 2018.





The Oak Ridge Montessori School is closing. Commission voted to release them from their \$669/month lease on their facilities in the County-owned Daniel Arthur building.

Commission voted unanimously to ask TDOT to include a greenway in the Edgemoor Road development plans. This would connect the proposed County nature preserve with the Melton Hill Greenway in Oak Ridge.

Law Director Jay Yeager reported that the renovation for the General Sessions Court building in Oak Ridge has run into problems. Roof repairs and a crawl space where the contractor thought there was a concrete slab will add to cost. Judge Roger Miller and Court Clerk William Jones are asking for changes. Commissioners were concerned that any additional costs will come from the already strapped General Fund Balance.

Commission voted to refer all requests for additional spending to the Budget Committee for approval.

Mr. Yeager announced that the Senior Center has moved into their new building. They find that they need more space. They would like to use the offices now rented to a driving school for \$800/month and the garage promised to the sheriffs department.

Commission voted to give County employees one more holiday each year. Commission Vowell made it clear that this does not eliminate the possibility of a raise in next year's budget.

District Attorney Dave Clark reported on the lawsuit against the drug companies accused of using false advertising to contribute to the opioid epidemic. He has decided not to join the Tennessee Attorney General's lawsuit. He is exploring options and attempting to work with other counties. He will have an announcement soon.

~Willa Reister, Observer

### Membership Notes

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

#### *In Memoriam*

We remember with fondness and extend our sympathies to the family of Marion (Sal) Francis Batty Smith, age 91, who died September 11, 2017. She was a 50-year member of the Oak Ridge LWV.

#### *I want to join the League of Women Voters*

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
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Individual annual dues \_\_\_\_\_ \$60

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## Calendar

### October

- 3 Lunch with the League\*** 11:45, lunch; 12–1. Speaker: Jessica Steed, Chair, Oak Ridge Public Schools Education Foundation (ORPSEF). Topic: “ORPSEF and Its Work with Oak Ridge Schools.”
- 10 Board Meeting\*** 10 a.m. – 12 p.m.
- 17 Lunch with the League\*** 11:45, lunch; 12–1. Speaker: Marc DeRose, Executive Director, Explore Oak Ridge (formerly Convention and Visitors Bureau). Topic: “Current and Future Initiatives to Promote Tourism and Business in Oak Ridge.”
- 28 LWVTN Fall Workshop** 10 a.m. – 3 p.m. CDT, Casa Azafran, 2195 Nolensville Pike, Nashville, TN

### November

- 7 Lunch with the League\*** 11:45, lunch; 12–1. Speaker: Maggie McNally, Director of Women’s Services, Knoxville YWCA. Topic: “New YWCA Services Coming to Oak Ridge & Anderson County.”
- 10 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.