



The Voter

The President's Report

One of the major goals of the League of Women Voters is to educate voters. To help achieve that goal, the Oak Ridge League (LWVOR) offers an opportunity for constituents to meet with our state senators and representatives. Our local elected representatives have chosen to participate in Breakfast with the Legislators for decades and we appreciate the time they spend with us.

On the fourth Monday of each month when the state Legislature is in session, some or all of the legislators from Anderson and Roane Counties arrive at 7:30 a.m. in the Social Room of the Oak Ridge Civic Center to meet for about an hour with area residents.

The League provides the coffee and a light breakfast, and League members Dan Robbins and Charlie Hensley chair the gathering. Legislators who are able to attend share information about issues before the Tennessee Senate and/or House that are of interest to Oak Ridge constituents. Following their short presentations, members of the audience have the opportunity to ask questions of their legislators, and the legislators can respond. Questions and answers are time-limited so that a maximum number of people can participate. The sound system provided by the Civic Center makes it possible for all present to hear the questions and the responses. The Breakfast ends at 8:30 when the legislators head to Nashville.

I encourage League members to attend Breakfast with the Legislators. This is an early start to the day, and it is a valuable opportunity to listen and speak in person to our local legislators. The first Breakfast is at 7:30 a.m. on January 28. Check the calendar in *The Voter* and our website, <http://lwvoakridge.org/index.html>, for the dates of the Breakfasts and other League activities.

Harriett McCurdy

mccurdy46@hotmail.com or 865-332-6440

Connect with Us

Website: lwvoakridge.org
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Emily Jernigan, Voter Editor
Marian Varner, Webmaster

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Lunch with the League



On **January 15** our speaker is **Dr. Pat Freeland**, Professor and Associate Head, Department of Political Science at UT. Her area of research is women and politics.

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

This legislative session the LWV will once again host Breakfast with the Legislators the fourth Monday of each month the Legislature is in session, beginning at 7:30 a.m. on January 28 at the Oak Ridge Civic Center. Senators Randy McNally and Ken Yager and Representatives John Ragan and Kent Calfee are invited to participate.

If Oak Ridge schools are closed for snow or inclement weather, the breakfast will be cancelled.

~Dan Robbins & Charlie Hensley

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, December 3, 2018

Chair Tracy Wandell called the meeting to order. Commissioners Mead and Meredith were absent. The meeting scheduled for November 19 was rescheduled to this date out of respect for Commissioner Jameson. Four Oak Ridgers - Ellen Smith, Jerry Creasey, Martin McBride, and Robert Kennedy - spoke during the "Appearance of Citizens." They urged that Commission request from DOE and TDEC a 90-day extension of the DOE comment period on the proposed nuclear waste

storage site. The motion to request the extension passed with only Commissioner Fritts voting against it. The proposed amendment to the zoning regulations was referred to the Planning Commission with Commission approval. Amendment would require that the County send registered letters to adjacent property owners announcing proposed zoning changes and to place signs describing the changes on the property. County would prepare and mail letters and place signs and property owner asking for the zoning change would reimburse the County.

The Mayor requested permission to offer \$300,000 for a building in District 3 for the Senior Center. Commissioners know what building is under consideration but the information is not yet public. The Mayor stated that she would be making this very low offer to get negotiations going, "It is not binding in any way." Motion for permission passed with Commissioners Waddell, Fritts, Denenberg, Creasey, and Scott voting against.

Commission voted to pre-pay the \$94,000 outstanding on the USDA loan used to build the Briceville Public Library.

The Director of Schools explained that the schools are entering into the \$11,825,500 phase 2 of energy efficiency upgrades with Energy Systems Group. Part of the upgrade will rekey every school so badges will replace keys system wide.

Commission approved the use of County equipment in the upgrade of Blankenship Field in Oak Ridge. The Blankenship Field Revitalization Foundation will repay the County for any costs associated with using the equipment.

An attempt was made to pass a motion to hold one Commission meeting each quarter in the morning. Vote on the motion was tied so motion failed.

A motion to ask the Law Director to call a meeting of the Ethics Committee passed unanimously.

~Willa Reister, Observer

EQAB

Regular Meeting, November 1, 2018

Members present: Wendy Doolittle, Darcie Holcomb, Sophia Krusen, Donald Miller, Kaela O'Dell, Kelly Smith, Erin Van Berkel.

In Robert Kennedy's absence, Kaela O'Dell chaired the meeting.

At the November 7 DOE-EM (Environmental Management) landfill public meeting, board secretary Darcie Holcomb presented the EQAB's statement of findings. Recent well sampling at the proposed disposal site, Central Bear Creek Valley, indicates the groundwater table does not meet TDEC (Tennessee Department of Environment & Conservation) and EPA requirements. Some of the other concerns with that site are the appropriateness of the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERLA, also known as Superfund) process for a clean site, mercury storage, and cost/benefit of local versus storage in western US.

The public can submit written comments about the proposed landfill until December 10. Those comments may be submitted to John Michael Japp, OREM FFA Project Manager, DOE Oak Ridge Operations, P.O. Box 2001, Oak Ridge, TN 37831, John.Japp@orem.doe.gov.

Under new business, the EQAB Annual Report and an EQAB Environmental Awards Program were discussed. EQAB will ask the City to include instructions for recycling and other environmental services in utility bills.

~Kathryn Olsen, Observer

Recreation and Parks Advisory Board

Regular Meeting, November 8, 2018

Citizen Comments: Doug Colclasure noticed, while doing restorative work at the cedar barrens near Jefferson Middle School, that the old tennis court on the school grounds is no longer used. He suggested it could be reutilized for other recreational activities.

Tree Lighting and Awards Ceremony (Mellissa McMahan): Program planning is underway for the

ceremony, scheduled for November 30 at 6:30 p.m. The impressive agenda will feature band music, the Linden choir, remarks by Matt Reedy and Mayor Gooch, and refreshments. Jon Hetrick showed slides of the attractive program and distributed a press release. Later in the meeting the Parks Board selected Tom Dunigan, from a list of eight nominations, to receive the first annual City of Oak Ridge Recreation and Parks Achievement Award. The award, established to honor individuals who have made significant contributions to the Oak Ridge Recreation and Parks activities, will be presented at the Tree Lighting Ceremony.

International Friendship Bell and Peace Pavilion (Alan Tatum): Following the very successful ribbon cutting ceremony on September 20 (about 400 people attended), the patio, precast benches, and grading have been completed. Work on paths is in progress, garden planting is in place, nameplates will be finished soon, and three carbon fiber beams will be remade by early December.

Trails (Brad Spears, Dan Robbins): The Rails to Trails application has been submitted to CSX and surveying and design work are in progress.

The property owner in Happy Valley will discuss trail development with Legacy Parks. It is hoped that the land will become an LLC, multi-use property. The Greenway sign near the football stadium is missing.

Natural Asset Strategy (Jon Hetrick, Dan Robbins): Ken discussed a plan for the integration of natural assets and hopes to convene a consortium of experts in the field. He is seeking funding for the project from Anderson County and the City of Oak Ridge.

Recognition Program (Alan Tatum): The program was established to honor individuals who have made significant contributions to the Oak Ridge Recreation and Parks activities. The Board discussed various aspects of the program, including qualifications of the nominees, the number of nominees, and a name for the event. Alan asked for more nominations to add to those already submitted.



Velodrome (Brad Spears): The velodrome committee held its first meeting on October 22. They expect to have a cost estimate from a world-renowned architect for presentation at the December meeting of the Parks Board. Because of state-wide interest in the project, funding should not be an issue, provided the land can be obtained from the city at no cost (“borrowing” the land has been suggested).

Director’s Report (Jon Hetrick): (1) Ground was broken for the new Senior Center, with expected completion by October 2019, and for the Scarboro preschool with expected completion by December 2019. (2) A pre-construction meeting was held on turf replacement at Blankenship field; 8000 square feet of turf will be required. (3) Jon is pleased with the new staff and the progress made at Centennial Golf course. (4) The City Manager received a letter from DOE asking the city to stop work on the BORCE (Black Oak Ridge Conservation Easement) trail development.

~Mary Lou Daugherty, Observer

Roane County Commission

Regular meeting, November 9, 2018

Hearing of Delegation: No one spoke.

County Attorney: Attorney Greg Leffew discussed pending legal business of the County and answered questions from the commissioners. He noted that the deadline is December 22, 2018, for the 10-year period of statute of limitations for a lawsuit regarding the coal ash spill at the Kingston Fossil Plant. The estimated cost of the litigation for the County is \$100,000 and the County will have to prove that TVA purposely withheld information about safety and other issues to win the suit.

County Executive: Ron Woody stated that he had placed two letters on the Commissioners’ desks that will be filed for both November and December regarding the 2008 TVA coal ash spill at the Kingston Fossil Plant. One letter is for Shari Meghreblian, Commissioner of the Tennessee Department of Environment & Conservation (TDEC). The second

letter is to Senator Yager and Representatives Calfee and Travis.

Additional letters regarding the TVA ash spill will be sent to US Senators Alexander and Coker, and Congressmen Fleischmann and Burchett.

Mr. Woody also has talked with Laura Connor of the Health Department about reestablishing the County Board of Health (TCA 68-2-601).

A detailed article concerning deception by TVA and Jacobs Engineering of toxicity and resulting health hazards to workers was published in the *Knoxville News Sentinel* Thursday, December 6, 2018.

New Business: Thirteen Resolutions were discussed and passed.

The resolution to issue \$7.1 million of debt to pay for capital projects for the Midway and Oliver Springs area schools gave way to a heated argument between Interim Director of Schools Gary Aytes and Commissioner Junior Hendrickson.(More details were published in the *Roane County News*, November 23, 2018 issue).The resolution passed 13 to 1.

A resolution amending the General Purpose School Fund reflecting changes in Revenue/Expenditure for the 2018/2019 fiscal year failed.

~Hella Peterson, Observer

Membership Notes

Welcome New Member!

Diane Weaver
100 Erskine Lane, Apt. E 15
Oak Ridge, TN 37830
865-687-0422

Janis Williams has a new email address:

J.Wymer.Williams@gmail.com.

Please contact Janis Williams, 483-1219 or

J.Wymer.Williams@gmail.com, with membership corrections. and updates.

Financial Review Committee

The financial review committee met on November 6 to review the LWVOR financial records for the past



fiscal year (7/1/17 - 6/30/18) as required in the bylaws. The committee found the records well organized, with no discrepancies. Thanks to **Harriett McCurdy, Marti Salk, Joye Montgomery, and Pat Bryan** for performing this needed review. A special thanks to **Janis Williams** for her tireless and competent work as our treasurer.

~Pat Bryan

Editor's Note

I have had the great pleasure of serving as Editor of *The Voter* since 2009. After almost 10 years it is time for me to pass this job on to someone else. Bill Moore has agreed to become the new Editor. I will work closely with him, and Abbie, to help ensure a smooth transition. Thank you, Bill!

Although I'm resigning my position, I have no intention of disengaging from the League and its activities. The League's mission and work are a significant part of our vibrant democracy. The LWV, at the national, state, and local levels, represents fairness, openness, compassion, and decency in politics and all areas of our lives. *The Voter's* Observer Corps reports are one of the few remaining ways of getting detailed and objective information about what happens at some of our area board and commission meetings. These local entities are where democracy starts, and it's important to stay as informed as possible about decisions and discussions that affect our community. We need more observers, and welcome volunteers.

Articles about the incredible opportunity that our Breakfast with the Legislators represents—an outstanding example of a decades-long collaboration in which our our area elected state officials make themselves available to discuss their plans and perspectives, and listen to questions and comments from the people they represent—help us understand more about the views of our representatives and the concerns of community members who speak at these events.

Thank you to Marian Varner, our webmaster, who puts every issue of *The Voter* and the Observer Corps articles on our website, and to Christy at Precision Printing for her ongoing help with the paper version. Thanks also to the 11 League presidents who submitted columns for every edition. Mary Ann Reeves deserves a special thank you for many articles and ideas in addition to the president's column. I especially want to thank Mary Uziel who has regularly served as my proofreader. She is a treasure trove of information, an outstanding editor, and a font of knowledge and insight about League history and customs, and local politics.

I will miss my monthly connection with those I've worked with on a regular basis throughout my tenure, and look forward to reading *The Voter* that Bill Moore and his team will publish.

I want to join the League of Women Voters

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

Individual annual dues _____ \$60

Household annual dues _____ \$90

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*Make a separate, tax deductible check payable to LWVEF

Please send this form and your dues, payable to:

LWV of Oak Ridge
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Oak Ridge, TN 37831



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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

January

- 8 Board Meeting*** 10 a.m. – 12 p.m.
- 15 Lunch with the League*** 11:45, lunch; 12–1. Speaker: Dr. Pat Freeland, Professor and Associate Head, Department of Political Science, UT. Topic: "Women and Politics"
- 28 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.

February

- 5 Lunch with the League*** 11:45, lunch; 12–1. Speaker: TBD
- 12 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.