

League of Women Voters of Hingham

Bylaws

2012

PRINCIPLES

The League of Women Voters believes in representative government and in the individual liberties established in the Constitution of the United States.

The League of Women Voters believes that democratic government depends upon the informed and active participation of its citizens and requires that governmental bodies protect the citizen's right to know by giving adequate notice of proposed actions, holding open meetings and making public records accessible.

The League of Women Voters believes that every citizen should be protected in the right to vote; that every person should have access to free public education which provides equal opportunity for all; and that no person or group should suffer legal, economic or administrative discrimination.

The League of Women Voters believes that efficient and economical government requires competent personnel, the clear assignment of responsibility, adequate financing and coordination among the different agencies and levels of government.

The League of Women Voters believes that responsible government should be responsive to the will of the people; that government should maintain an equitable and flexible system of taxation, promote the conservation and development of natural resources in the public interest, share in the solution of economic and social problems which affect the general welfare, promote a sound economy and adopt domestic policies which facilitate the solution of international problems.

The League of Women Voters believes that cooperation with other nations is essential in the search for solutions to world problems, and that the development of international organization and international law is imperative in the promotion of world peace.

BYLAWS

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF HINGHAM

ARTICLE I

Sec. 1. The name of this organization shall be the League of Women Voters of Hingham, hereinafter referred to in these bylaws as LWWH or as the League. This local League is an integral part of the League of Women Voters of the United States, hereinafter referred to in these bylaws as LWWUS, and of the League of Women Voters of Massachusetts or LWWMA.

ARTICLE II

Purpose and Policy

Sec. 1. Purpose. The purpose of the LWWH shall be to promote political responsibility through informed and active participation of citizens in government.

Sec. 2. Policy. The LWWH may take action on selected government measures and policies in the public interest in conformity with the Principles of the LWWUS. It shall not support or oppose any political party or candidate.

ARTICLE III

Membership

Sec. 1. Eligibility. Any person who subscribes to the purposes and policy of the League shall be eligible for membership.

Sec. 2. Types of Membership

A. **Voting Members**. Citizens at least 18 years of age who join the LWWH shall be voting members of the LWWH, LWWMA and LWWUS. Those who have been members of the League for 50 years or more shall be life members, excused from the payment of dues.

B. **Associate Members**. All others who join the League shall be associate members.

ARTICLE IV
Officers

Sec. 1. Enumeration and Election of Officers. The Officers of the LWVH shall be a President or Co-Presidents, a First Vice-President, a Second Vice-President, a Secretary, and a Treasurer who shall be elected for terms of two years by the general membership at an Annual Meeting and take office immediately. The President or Co-Presidents, the first Vice-President and the Treasurer shall be elected in odd-numbered years. The second Vice-President and the Secretary shall be elected in even-numbered years.

Sec. 2. The President or Co-Presidents. The President or Co-Presidents shall have such powers of supervision and management as customarily pertain to the office; shall preside at all meetings of the organization and the Board or designate another person to do so; shall be, ex-officio, a member of all committees except the Nominating Committee; may sign or endorse checks, drafts and notes in the absence of the Treasurer; and shall perform such other duties as the Board may direct. In the event of the absence, disability, resignation, or death of the President, the Vice Presidents, in order of their rank, shall assume the office. If no Vice President is able to serve as President, the Board shall fill the vacancy from among the elected directors.

Sec. 3. The Vice Presidents. The two Vice Presidents shall in the event of absence, disability, resignation, or death of the President, possess all of the powers and perform all of the duties of that office until the Board designates a replacement. The Vice Presidents shall perform such other duties as the President or Co-Presidents and the Board may designate.

Sec. 4. The Secretary. The Secretary shall keep minutes of all meetings of the League and of all meetings of the Board of Directors. The Secretary shall notify all Officers and Directors of their elections. The Secretary shall sign, with the President or Co-President, all contracts and other instruments when so authorized by the Board. The Secretary shall perform such other duties as the President and Board shall direct.

Sec. 5. The Treasurer. The Treasurer shall perform such duties as customarily pertain to the office; arrange for an independent annual audit of the books; and, at the direction of the Board, maintain deposits in authorized financial institutions.

ARTICLE V
Board of Directors

Sec. 1. Selection, Qualification and Term of Office. The Board of Directors shall consist of the Officers of the League, four (4) elected Directors and not more than four (4) appointed Directors. Of the elected Directors, two (2) Directors shall be elected in the even-numbered

years, and two (2) Directors shall be elected in the odd-numbered years for a two-year term, or until his or her successors have been elected. All Directors shall be voting members of the League. The elected members shall appoint such additional Directors, not exceeding four (4), as they deem necessary to carry on the work of the League. The terms of the office of the appointed Directors shall be one year and shall expire at the conclusion of the next Annual Meeting.

Sec. 2. Powers and Duties. The Board of Directors shall have full charge of the property and business of the organization, with full power and authority to manage and conduct same, subject to the instructions of the membership at Annual Meeting. It shall plan and direct the work necessary to carry out the Program as adopted by the National Convention, the State Convention and the Annual Meeting. It shall select delegates to State Convention and Council and to National Convention. The Board shall create and designate special committees, as it may deem necessary to complete various duties as specified in these bylaws.

Sec. 3. Executive Committee. The Board may appoint an Executive Committee consisting of no fewer than four (4) members of the Board. The Executive Committee shall exercise such power and authority as may be delegated to it by the Board and shall report to the Board on all actions taken by it between regular meetings of the Board.

Sec. 4. Meetings. There shall be at least nine (9) regular meetings of the Board of Directors annually. The President may call special meetings of the Board of Directors and shall call a special meeting upon the written request of five (5) members of the Board. Three (3) consecutive absences from regular Board meetings without excuse shall constitute a resignation.

Sec. 5. Quorum. A majority of the members of the Board of Directors shall constitute a quorum. Any one or more members of the Board may participate in a meeting by means of conference telephone or other similar equipment allowing all persons participating in the meeting to hear each other at the same time. Participation by such means shall constitute presence in person at a meeting

ARTICLE VI Meetings

Sec. 1. Membership Meetings. There shall be at least four (4) meetings of the membership each year. The Board of Directors shall determine the time and place. Special meetings of the members may be called by the President, the Board of Directors or upon written request of ten (10) percent of the voting members.

Sec. 2. Annual Meeting. An Annual Meeting shall be held between April first and June first, the exact date to be determined by the Board of Directors. Absentee or proxy voting shall not be permitted. The Annual Meeting shall:

- a) Adopt a local program for the ensuing year

- b) Approve minutes from the previous year
- c) Elect officers, directors, and members of the Nominating Committee
- c) Adopt an adequate budget
- d) Transact such other business as may properly come before it

Sec. 3. Quorum. Twenty (20) percent of the membership shall constitute a quorum at all business meetings of the LWVH, provided written notice of the meeting is sent to the membership at least one (1) week in advance.

ARTICLE VII Nominations and Elections

Sec. 1. Nominating Committee. The Nominating Committee shall consist of three (3) members, one of whom shall be a member of the Board of Directors. The Chairman and one member, who shall not be members of the Board, shall be elected at the Annual Meeting for a term of one year. Nominations for these offices shall be made by the current Nominating Committee. The other member shall be appointed by the Board of Directors immediately following the Annual Meeting. Any vacancy on the Nominating Committee shall be filled by the Board of Directors. Any voting member may send suggestions for nominations for Officers and Directors to this Committee.

Sec. 2. Report of Nominating Committee and Nominations from the floor. The report of the Nominating Committee of its nominations for Officers, Directors, and the members of the succeeding Nominating Committee shall be sent to all members one (1) month before the date of the Annual Meeting. Immediately following the presentation of this report, nominations may be made from the floor by any voting member provided the consent of the nominee shall have been secured.

Sec. 3. Elections. The election shall be by ballot; when there is but one nominee for each office, the election may be by voice vote. A majority vote of the voting members present and voting shall constitute an election to office. Absentee or proxy voting shall not be permitted.

ARTICLE VIII Program

Sec. 1. Principles. The Principles are concepts of government adopted by the National Convention and supported by the League as a whole. They are the authorization for the adoption of national, state and local program.

Sec. 2. Program. The Program of the LWVH shall consist of action to implement the Principles and those governmental issues chosen for concerted study and action.

Sec. 3. Procedure. The local Program shall be adopted according to the following procedures:

- a) The Board of Directors shall consider recommendations submitted by the voting members 30 days prior to the Annual Meeting and shall formulate a proposed local Program.
- b) The proposed local Program shall be sent to all members two (2) weeks before the Annual Meeting.
- c) A majority vote of the Annual Meeting shall be required for adoption of items in the proposed local Program as presented to the Annual Meeting by the Board of Directors.
- d) Recommendations for local programs submitted by voting members 30 days prior to the Annual Meeting but not recommended by the Board of Directors may be considered by the Annual Meeting, provided that the Annual Meeting shall order consideration by a majority vote. A two-thirds vote is required for adoption.

Sec. 4. Program Changes. Changes in program, in case of altered conditions, may be made provided that

- a) Information concerning the proposed changes has been sent to all members at least two (2) weeks prior to a general meeting of the members at which any change is to be discussed; and
- b) Final action by the membership is taken at a succeeding general meeting of the membership where, in the case of a Board-recommended change, a majority vote is obtained; or in the case of a non-Board recommended change, a two-thirds vote is obtained.

Sec 5. Member Action. Members may act in the name of the League only when authorized to do so by the appropriate Board of Directors.

ARTICLE IX National Convention, State Convention and Council

Sec. 1. National Convention. The Board of Directors at a meeting before the date on which the name of the delegates must be sent to the national office shall select delegates to that Convention in the number allotted the LWVH under the provisions of the Bylaws of the LWVUS.

Sec. 2. State Convention. The Board of Directors at a meeting before the date on which the names of delegates must be sent to the state office shall select delegates to that Convention in the number allotted the LWVH under the provisions of the Bylaws of the LWVMA.

Sec. 3. State Council. The Board of Directors at a meeting before the date on which the names of delegates must be sent to the state office shall select delegates to that Council in the number allotted the LWVH under the provisions of the Bylaws of the LWVMA.

ARTICLE X
Financial Administration

Sec. 1. Fiscal Year. The fiscal year of the LWVH shall commence on the first day of July each year.

Sec. 2. Dues. Annual dues, in the amount ratified by Annual Meeting, shall be payable by January 31st. Minimum annual dues shall reflect National and State per member payments. Any member who fails to pay his or her dues within three (3) months after they become payable shall be dropped from the membership rolls. A new member, joining after June 30th, shall pay 50% of the current dues rate.

Sec. 3. Budget. A budget for the ensuing year shall be submitted by the Board of Directors to the Annual Meeting for adoption. The budget shall include support for the work of the League as a whole. The proposed budget shall be sent to members one month before Annual Meeting.

Sec. 4. Budget Committee. A Budget Chairman and at least two (2) members, none of whom shall be a Board member, shall be appointed to the Budget Committee by the Board of Directors at least six (6) months prior to Annual Meeting to prepare a budget for the ensuing year. The Treasurer shall serve as an ex-officio member of the Budget Committee. The Budget Committee shall submit the proposed budget to the Board of Directors for approval two (2) months prior to Annual Meeting.

Sec. 5. Distribution of Funds on Dissolution. In the event of dissolution for any cause of the LWVH, all monies and securities which may at the time be owned by or under the absolute control of the LWVH shall be paid to the LWVMA. All other property of whatsoever nature, whether real, personal, or mixed, which may at the time be owned by or under the control of the LWVH shall be disposed of by any officer or employee of the organization, having possession of the same, to such person, organization, or corporation for such public, charitable, or educational uses and purposes as may be directed by the then Board of Directors of the LWVH.

ARTICLE XI
Parliamentary Authority

Sec. 1. Parliamentary Authority. The rules contained in Roberts Rules of Order Revised shall govern the organization in all cases to which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with these Bylaws.

ARTICLE XII
Amendments

Sec. 1. Amendments. The Bylaws may be amended by a Two-thirds vote of the voting members present and voting at the Annual Meeting, provided that the amendments were submitted to the membership in writing at least one month in advance of the meeting.

Updated 1986 with amendments of:

April 1966	May 1974
April 1968	May 1978
April 1971	May 1981
April 1973	May 1982
	May 1983
	May 1987
	May 2012

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF HINGHAM
Non-partisanship Policy - June 1968

As Amended March 6, 1972
 Sept. 8, 1975
 June 28, 1976
 June 12, 1977
 Aug. 29, 1977
 Aug 28, 1978
 Oct. 20, 1981
 Nov. 19, 1985

The By-Laws of the League of Women Voters state that the League “shall not support or oppose any political party or candidate”. This policy of non-partisanship has always been a source of strength to the League and must be zealously guarded. It is essential that League members understand and accept this policy and strive constantly to interpret it to the community, because only to the extent that the community is convinced of the League’s genuine non-partisanship, and therefore of its unselfish purpose, will the League be able to render effective service.

The adherence of the local League to this policy is primarily the responsibility of the local Board and each of its members.

To insure the confidence of the public in the League’s non-partisanship position, the following policy has been formulated.

A. Activities of the Board Member

1. No Board Member may hold or be a candidate for elective public office. If a Board Member’s spouse is a candidate for elective public office, resignation will be at the Board’s discretion.
2. The President or Voters Service Chairman may not indicate her preference for any party or candidate by the display of buttons, stickers, etc. nor may she sign nomination papers.
3. No Board member shall be elected Committee Member of a political party.
4. Every Board Member has a special responsibility to avoid statements or actions or use of her name in behalf of any state or local candidate, another group, organization, or issue that are likely to cause public misunderstanding of the League’s non-partisanship position. Officers should be consulted if the Board Member is in doubt.
5. If public political activity of the spouse of the President or Voter Service Chairman were likely to cause public misunderstanding of the League’s non-partisanship position, resignation shall be at the discretion of the Board.
6. It is acceptable for a Board member to engage in certain political activities. For instance:
 - a. Any Board Member may attend, but not sponsor, coffee parties, etc. for a particular candidate.
 - b. A Board Member may serve as an appointed member on a committee or an advisory and/or study nature.
 - c. Any Board Member may participate in official polling place duties.

B. Future Service on the Board

1. When a resignation has been necessary in line with this policy, the member may not be re-elected or re-appointed for at least six months or when deemed appropriate.

C. Activities of Other League Members

1. League Observers must be neutral while observing a particular committee. They may ask questions of an informal nature.
2. There are no restrictions of the activities of other League members. Individuals should, however, use discretion at the local level.

It is the duty of the Board and/or the Nominating Committee, when recruiting a Board or committee member or observer, to thoroughly explain the Non-partisanship policy as it applies to the job being considered.

It shall be the responsibility of the Board to implement the foregoing policy and to make decisions in specific instances, which require interpretation.