

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF AMHERST

BYLAWS

As adopted May 1948 and amended in 1951, 1956, 1957, 1958, 1961, 1962, 1964, 1966, 1967, 1971, 1972, 1974, 1975, 1978, 1985, 1987, 1990, 1991, 1998, 2006, 2007, 2009, 2011, 2016.

ARTICLE I

Name

Sec. 1. **Name.** The name of this organization shall be the League of Women Voters of Amherst. This local league is an integral part of the League of Women Voters of the United States and of the League of Women Voters of Massachusetts.

ARTICLE II

Purpose and Policy

Sec. 1. **Purpose.** The purpose of the League of Women Voters of Amherst shall be to promote political responsibility through informed and active participation in government and to act on selected governmental issues.

Sec. 2. **Political Policy.** The League of Women Voters of Amherst shall not support or oppose any political party or any candidate. It may take action on local governmental measures and policies in the public interest in conformity with the Principles of the League of Women Voters of the United States.

ARTICLE III

Membership

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

Sec. 2. **Types of Membership.** The membership of the League of Women Voters of Amherst shall be composed of voting members and associate members.

- a. Voting members. Persons at least 16 years of age who join the League shall be voting members of local Leagues, state Leagues, and of the LWVUS;
- (1) individuals who live within an area of a local League may join that League or any other local League;
 - (2) those who reside outside the area of any local League may join a local League or shall be state members-at-large;
 - (3) 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 League of Women Voters of Amherst shall be a president, 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 the annual meeting, and shall take office at that time. The president, the first vice president, and the secretary shall be elected in odd-numbered years. The second vice president and the treasurer shall be elected in even-numbered years.

Sec. 2. **President.** The president shall preside at all meetings of the organization and of the board of directors. The president may, and in the absence or disability of the treasurer shall, sign or endorse checks, drafts, and notes; shall be, ex-officio, a member of all committees except of the nominating committee; shall have such usual powers of supervision and management as may pertain to the office of the president and perform such other duties as may be designated by the board.

Sec. 3. **Vice Presidents.** The two vice presidents, in order of their rank, shall, in the event of absence, resignation, disability, or death of the president, possess all the powers and perform all the duties of that office, until such time as the board of directors shall elect one of its members to fill the vacancy. The vice presidents shall perform such other duties as the president and board may designate.

Sec. 4. **Secretary.** The secretary shall keep minutes of the annual meeting and of all meetings of the board of directors, and shall notify all officers and directors of their election; shall sign, with the president, all contracts and other instruments when so authorized by the board, and shall perform such other functions as may be incident to the office.

Sec. 5. **Treasurer.** The treasurer or the treasurer's duly appointed assistant shall collect and receive all moneys due. The treasurer shall be the custodian of these moneys, shall deposit them in a bank or banks designated by the board of directors, and shall disburse the same only upon order of the board. The treasurer shall present periodic financial statements to the board at its regular meetings and an annual report at the annual meeting. The books of the treasurer shall be audited annually by a public accountant within 90 days of the end of the fiscal year. The auditor's report shall be submitted to the next meeting of the board of directors for approval, printed in the next newsletter to all members, and reported to the next annual meeting.

ARTICLE V

Board of Directors

Sec. 1. **Number, Manner of Selection, and Terms of Office.** The board of directors shall consist of the officers of the League, seven elected directors and not more than seven appointed directors. In odd-numbered years, three elected directors, and in even-numbered years four elected directors, shall be elected by the general membership at the annual meeting and shall take office at that time and shall serve for a term of two years, or until their successors shall have been elected and qualified. The officers and elected directors shall appoint such additional directors, not exceeding seven, as they deem necessary to carry on the work of the League. The terms of office of the appointed directors shall expire at the conclusion of the next annual meeting.

Sec. 2. **Qualifications.** No person shall be elected or appointed or shall continue to serve as an officer or director of this organization unless he or she is a voting member of the League of Women Voters of Amherst.

Sec. 3. **Vacancies.** Any vacancy occurring in the board of directors by reason of the resignation, death or disqualification of an officer or elected member may be filled, until the next annual meeting, by a majority vote of the remaining members of the board of directors. Three consecutive absences from a board meeting of any member without a valid reason may be deemed a resignation.

Sec. 4. **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 instructions of the general membership. 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. The board shall create and designate such special committees as it may deem necessary.

Sec. 5. **Meetings.** There shall be at least nine 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 written request of five members of the board. Any local League member is welcome to attend any regular board meeting as an auditor. If a member wishes to speak to an issue at the board meeting, approval must be obtained from the president.

Sec. 6. **Quorum.** A majority of the members of the board of directors shall constitute a quorum,

Sec.7. **Executive Committee.** The board shall appoint from its own body two members who with the president and the two vice presidents shall constitute an executive committee to act in emergencies and make decisions between meetings of the board. Any action of the executive committee shall be reported to the board at its next regular meeting.

ARTICLE VI

Financial Administration

Sec.1. **Fiscal Year.** The fiscal year of the League of Women Voters of Amherst shall commence on the first day of July and shall end on June 30 of the following year .

Sec. 2. **Dues.** Annual dues shall be payable on July 1. A notice shall be sent to members by early September requesting outstanding dues by October 1. Any member who fails to pay the dues by January 31st shall be dropped from the membership rolls.

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.

Sec. 4. **Budget Committee.** A budget committee shall be appointed by the board of directors at least two months prior to the annual meeting to prepare a budget for the ensuing year. The proposed budget shall be sent to all members three weeks before the annual meeting. The treasurer shall be, ex-officio, a member of the budget committee but shall not be eligible to serve as chair of the budget committee.

Sec. 5. **Distribution of Funds on Dissolution.** In the event of a dissolution for any cause of the League of Women Voters of Amherst, all moneys and securities which may at the time be owned by or under the absolute control of the League of Women Voters of Amherst shall be paid to the League of Women Voters of Massachusetts. 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 League of Women Voters of Amherst shall be disposed of by any officer or employee of the organization having possession of same to such person, organization, or corporation for such public, charitable, or educational uses and purposes as may be designated by the board of directors of the League of Women Voters of Amherst.

ARTICLE VII

Meetings

Sec. 1. **Membership Meetings.** There shall be at least three meetings of the membership each year. Time and place shall be determined by the board of directors.

Sec. 2. **Annual Meeting.** An annual meeting shall be held between May 15 and June 15, the exact date to be determined by the board of directors. The annual meeting shall:

- a) adopt a local program for the ensuing year,
- b) elect and install officers and directors, and members of the nominating committee,
- c) adopt an adequate budget, and
- d) transact such other business as may properly come before it.

Sec. 3. **Quorum.** A quorum for the annual meeting or any other membership meeting for the transaction of business shall consist of five percent of the official membership.

ARTICLE VIII

Nominations and Elections

Sec. 1. **Nominating Committee.** The nominating committee shall consist of five members, two of whom shall be members of the board of directors. The chair

and two members, who shall not be members of the board, shall be elected at the annual meeting. Nominations for these offices shall be made by the current nominating committee. The other members 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. Suggestions for nominations for officers and directors may be sent to this committee by any voting member.

Sec. 2. Report of the 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 three weeks before annual meeting. The report of the nominating committee shall be presented to 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, except that when there is but one nominee for each office, it shall be in order to move that the secretary cast the ballot for every candidate. A majority vote of those members present and voting shall constitute an election.

Sec. 4. Appointments to the Board of Directors. At the request of the president or nominee for president, the nominating committee may prepare a list of members who would be willing to accept appointments to the board of directors if asked to do so by the newly constituted board.

ARTICLE IX

Program

Sec. 1. Authorization. The governmental principles adopted by the national convention, and supported by the League as a whole, constitute the authorization for the adoption of the program.

Sec. 2. Program. The program of the League of Women Voters of Amherst shall consist of:

- a) action to implement the Principles of the League of Women Voters of the United States, and
- b) those governmental issues chosen for concerted study and action.

Sec. 3. **Program Selection.** Local program shall be adopted using the following procedures,

- a) The board of directors shall consider the recommendations sent in by the voting members not less than five weeks prior to the annual meeting and shall formulate a proposed program.
- b) The proposed program shall be sent to all members three weeks before the annual meeting along with non-recommended items received prior to the five week deadline that the Board shall have determined members still plan to propose.
- c) A majority vote of voting members present and voting at the annual meeting shall be required for adoption of the proposed program and any of the non- recommended items.
- d) Changes in the adopted program, in the case of altered conditions may be made provided that:
 - (1) Information concerning the proposed changes has been sent to all members at least two weeks prior to a general membership meeting at which the change is to be discussed; and
 - (2) final action by the membership is taken at a succeeding meeting.

Sec. 4. **Member Action.** Members may act in the name of the League of Women Voters only when authorized to do so by the board of directors.

ARTICLE X

National Convention, State Convention, and Council

Sec. 1. **National Convention.** The board of directors, at a meeting before the date on which the names of delegates must be sent to the national office, shall select delegates to that convention in the number allotted the League of Women Voters of Amherst under the provisions of the bylaws of the League of Women Voters of the United States. One of these delegates shall be the president or a duly authorized representative.

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 elect delegates to that convention in the number allotted the League of Women Voters of Amherst under the provisions of the bylaws of the League of Women Voters of

Massachusetts. One of these delegates shall be the president or a duly authorized representative.

Sec. 3. **State Council.** The board of directors, at a meeting before the date on which the names of the delegates must be sent to the state office, shall select delegates to that council in the number allotted the League of Women Voters of Amherst under the provisions of the bylaws of the League of Women Voters of Massachusetts. One of these delegates shall be the president or a duly authorized representative.

ARTICLE XI

Parliamentary Authority

Sec. 1. **Parliamentary Authority.** The rules contained in Robert's Rules of Order Newly 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.** These bylaws may be amended by a two-thirds vote of the voting members present and voting at the annual meeting, provided the amendments were submitted to the membership in writing at least three weeks in advance of the meeting.