

League of Women Voters of Pullman
Positions and Action For 2023-2025 Biennium
Proposed at Annual Meeting June 1, 2023

1. Whitman County Health Services: Support for a public health program for Whitman County which promotes the physical and mental health of all residents of the county. *See also # 9.*

2. Environmental Quality. (a) Land Use: Support of policies and procedures which promote coordinated planning and method of enforcement for the conservation and development of land. Support of policies to promote coordinated planning and implementation of solid waste management procedures which conserve natural resources, are ecologically sound, and aesthetically pleasing. (b) Management: Support of policies to continue city-wide curbside recycling and composting, to maintain a Recycling Center, to hire a recycling coordinator, to encourage procurement of recyclable materials, and development of markets for recyclable materials.

3. Whitman County Transportation: Support of a system of transportation for the Pullman area which will adequately serve all segments of the population. *See also #9*

4. City and Regional Planning: Support of principles of planning, subdivisions and zoning. Neighborhoods should include adequate parks, recreational space and school grounds based on national standards and community input. Support of neighborhoods, parks and recreation areas, business and retail areas connected directly for ease of access with a variety of transportation modes. Support changes of development policy and rules for both contractors and private land owners to allow earlier and more public involvement to minimize conflicts and misunderstandings in the development process. Support the principle of making land use decisions through a process that requires both a Planning Commission and City Council or County Commissioners. Support of growth within carefully defined areas for commerce and light industry. Support of annual review by the City Council of a Capital Improvement Program for the City. Additional consensus on development in 2002-2003 League of Women Voters of Pullman study.

5. Local Government Budget and Finance: Support (1) tax measures necessary to maintain an adequate level of revenue for Pullman City Government, (2) long-range financial planning for the City of Pullman, and (3) changes to city finance and procedures to carry out those long-range plans.

6. Schools: Support of measures for a school program adequately financed by the State Basic Education Act. Support of special levies for specific purposes unhampered by a levy lid. Support of the following criteria for schools: (1) Given the present economic constraints of the levy lid law, basic education funding and fluctuating enrollment, it is important to have quality instructional programming and low student teacher ratio. (2) Energy efficiency (fuel & transportation) is an important criteria in considering use or lack of use of a building. (3) In any major redistribution of students, the maintaining of neighborhood clusters of children should be considered. (4) Complete financial estimates of each option should be made available when considering changes in the use of facilities. *See also #9.*

7. City Government: Support of the principle of separation of administrative and policy-making functions.

8. Library Services.

The League of Women Voters of Pullman finds public libraries, especially Neill Public Library in Pullman and the Whitman County Rural Libraries, to be essential public services.

We support:

- 1) Equitable salaries, benefits and services for library employees and the libraries themselves in comparison with other city/county employees and similar libraries.
- (2) Maintaining current funding and efforts to locate and provide increased funding amounts and sources for Neill and the Whitman County libraries.
- (3) Every effort to maintain funding and to support innovative approaches when services are threatened by economic downturns or other events, as these are times when public library services are most needed.
- (4) Librarians, library trustees, and community groups (ie. Friends of the Library) that work in and on behalf of libraries and the communities they serve.
- (5) City and county library efforts to provide a place that is open, safe and welcoming to all, with a broad array of educational materials and services for the public. These materials and services may range from, but are not limited to, traditional books, magazines, and children's programs to services such as internet, workforce development, connection to government services and space for community meetings.
- (6) A library's ability and discretion to offer materials and services responsive to and potentially unique to the needs of the various communities it serves, both geographic and social.
- (7) Cooperative and collaborative partnerships with other libraries and related associations while maintaining local autonomy.

9. Addressing Poverty in Whitman County:

General Statement:

In a two year-long study (2016-2018) the League of Women voters found that poverty is a serious issue in Whitman County affecting approximately 17 % of residents who are not university students. The LWV of Pullman strongly supports local actions to alleviate and prevent poverty in Whitman County, especially those listed in the positions below.

a. Resource Accessibility and Data Gathering:

- 1). Support of a uniform system which collects, updates and distributes information on services available for those in poverty in Whitman County. The League promotes participation of this system by both public and private entities.
- 2). In order to provide more adequate, cost effective services that reach more of those living in poverty, the League supports the uniform gathering of data, in a form appropriate for public dissemination, on classes of individuals served and those denied service, including such data as

age, inability to work due to physical and/or mental disability, general location in the county, etc.

b. Legal issues:

1). Support of the establishment of a system to connect those in poverty who need affordable legal assistance with legal services.

2). Support the removal of interest charges on delayed court payments for fines or fees. The LWV of Pullman finds that such fees are unfair additional punishment placed on low income offenders and often result in continuous debt or jail simply because the person cannot afford them.

c. Food Security: Support for improved food security for those in or near poverty in traditional and innovative ways.

d. Housing: Support of efforts and incentives to create more transitional and permanent housing opportunities for low-income residents. We encourage building more housing that is affordable, socially integrated, architecturally innovative and geographically distributed in towns and throughout the county. We support incentives for landlords to accept subsidized tenants.

e. Transportation: Support the development of a variety of county-wide transportation systems for Whitman County. It should include both on-demand and regular, dependable transportation to employment opportunities and to services.

f. Child Care: Support access to affordable childcare in Whitman County, with special consideration for rural and small communities. This includes adequate public and private funding, providing incentives to increase capacities, greater flexibility in rules of eligibility and support of adequate-provider compensation.

g. Elder Care: Support basic services for the elderly, without consideration of their economic status, to avoid impoverishment in Whitman County.

h. Education and job training: Support improvement of education in Whitman County, including county-wide efforts to increase high school graduation rates. We also support efforts to encourage more students to take post secondary training -- vocational, academic, professional and artistic. The League supports a Community College presence in Whitman County.

i. Health Care: Support measures to provide access to and the availability of affordable health care in Whitman County. This should include, but not be limited to, medical, behavioral health, and dental care, especially for residents living in poverty or having inadequate health insurance.