

## February 2023 Calendar of LWV Events

**Wed., Feb. 1, 1:30 p.m.—Book Club—*Born a Crime: Stories from a South African Childhood***  
by Trevor Noah. The book is this year's Salem Reads selection.  
Hosting and refreshments: Deanie Anderson  
The Book Club has room for at least two more members.  
If you are interested in joining us, contact Roz Shirack.

**Wed., Feb. 15, 7 p.m.—*Community Media*  
*in a Changing News Landscape***  
Virtual meeting for all LWV members and the public.  
The link will be emailed.  
**Speakers:**  
**Meghan Jonas of Capital Community Media**  
**Les Zaitz, editor of *Salem Reporter***  
Details are on Page 2.



**Sat., Feb. 18, 1 p.m.—Great Decisions: *War crimes: What are they?*  
*How can they be prosecuted?***  
Virtual meeting. The link will be emailed.  
Discussion leader: Anita Owen

**Mon., Feb. 20, 3 p.m.—Board meeting—via Zoom**  
All members are invited to attend board meetings. Ask a board member for the link.  
Minutes are on the LWVMPC webpage under Board Minutes.

***Making Democracy Work™***

## Community Media in a Changing News Landscape

**Meghan Jonas**, community news director at *Capital Community Media*, and **Les Zaitz**, editor of *Salem Reporter*, will discuss “The Changing News Landscape” at the League’s all-member meeting on Wednesday, February 15, at 7 p.m. on Zoom.



The media environment is in constant flux. Local newspapers are shutting down—*Medford Mail Tribune*, *Lebanon Express*—or being subsumed under national franchises such as Gannet, which owns the *Statesman Journal*, where the staff has been greatly reduced, and the *Eugene Register Guard*, where a top news executive was laid off in January.



With the closure of newspapers and reduced local input in nationalized publications, the role of community media—such as *Capital Community Media* and *Salem Reporter*—takes on increased importance.

There is some good news. The EO Media Group will open a 3-day-per-week newspaper called the *Tribune* by the beginning of February; it will have a staff of 14, half of whom are reporters. The company owns 14 newspapers in Oregon including in Astoria, Bend and Pendleton. The Grants Pass *Daily Courier* had previously announced it would expand its coverage beyond Josephine County into Medford and hired three journalists laid off from the *Medford Mail Tribune*.

The public is always welcome at League meetings, so invite interested friends and relatives. The Zoom link will be emailed to League members about a week before the February 15 meeting.

## Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

For several years the national League has encouraged local Leagues to pursue diversity, equity and inclusion in our membership. This year the Salem Public Library’s book for Salem Reads is *Born a Crime: Stories from a South African Childhood* by Trevor Noah. During the year there will be public events on the Salem Reads topic. Two in February are:

Tuesday, February 7, at 6.30 p.m. at Loucks Auditorium: ” A Look at Restorative Justice” with local law officials

Wednesday, February 15, at 6:30 p.m. in the Library’s Anderson Room: “Working on our Whiteness,” a conversation led by a facilitator from Oregon Humanities, which awards annual Public Program Grants in support of programs across Oregon that explore challenging questions and strive for just communities. (This event conflicts with our LWV meeting.)

### **FOCUS**

February

*Focus* is the newsletter of the League of Women Voters® of Marion and Polk Counties. Members subscribe through their dues, and membership is open to anyone 16 years of age and older.

# Legislative Interviews—An Interesting Volunteer Opportunity

*Deanie Anderson, Voter Service Co-chair*

League of Women Voters members are advocates for transparency in government and are communicators of legislative actions and policy directions. It is important to introduce ourselves and be a presence in government. One way is to meet with the legislators in person to find out their priorities and to share our performance expectations, especially around open communication.

LWVMPC members who would like to help accomplish this are invited to review the information below and respond to Deanie Anderson by **February 3** with your legislator choice and your partner League member, as it is helpful to have an interviewer and a recorder.

Then you will call or email that legislator requesting an appointment of 15-20 minutes (important to remember their heavy schedule) for between **February 8-17**. Use the interview questions below and, if time, any non-biased questions on other topics. If you can't set up an in-person interview, ask if the legislator will do one on the phone. (In that case the interviewer also has to take the notes.)

Send your reports to LWVOR Action Chair Alice Bartelt at [a.bartelt@lwvor.org](mailto:a.bartelt@lwvor.org) by **February 24**. The information will be helpful to the LWVOR Action Committee when it lobbies legislators.

## Legislator choices:

### Senate

Sara Gelsler Blouin (D) Senate District 8  
Deb Patterson (D) Senate District 10  
Kim Thatcher (R) Senate District 11  
Aaron Woods (D) Senate District 13

### House

Ed Diehl (R) House District 17  
Rick Lewis (R) House District 18  
Tom Andersen (D) House District 19  
Paul Evans (D) House District 20  
Kevin L Mannix (R) House District 21  
Tracy M Cramer (R) House District 22  
Anna M Scharf (R) House District 23

Do you know who your Oregon lawmakers are?

Here's how to find out: <https://share.newsbreak.com/2ufrcpcg>

## Questions from the LWVOR Action Committee:

The following questions should be asked of all Legislators that you interview:

1. What do you think will be the three most important issues that will need to be addressed during the 2023 session of the Legislature?
2. What two issues would you like to work on during the session?
3. What did the voters in your District say was the most important issue for the legislature to address?
4. How will you work with Legislators from the other political party?

If there is time, other non-partisan questions regarding local concerns may be asked.



# Observer Corps Reports

## Cherriots Salem Area Mass Transit Board—12/15/2022

Janet Adkins

### Main Points/Issues Discussed

- Proposed fare structure—not increasing fares
  - Lowering the Regional fare
  - Continuation of free Youth fare— noted encouraging increase in youth ridership
  - Move to electronic fare system in near future— same system as Lane, Rogue Valley and Cascades East
  - Fare capping benefit for low-income riders
- Statewide Transportation Improvement Fund project requests from surrounding communities
- Electric bus charging station work



### Decisions Made/Actions Taken

1. Opened public comment period on proposed Fare Structure (see above) and universal monthly Lift pass (comment period open until Jan. 26)
2. Adopted Long Range Transit Plan discussed at previous meetings
3. Amended Safety action plan to meet federal requirements by adding safety committee, a risk reduction planning, and de-escalation training requirements.
4. Authorized contract for state and federal Legislative Advocacy services - with CFM Advocates - up to \$1.15 M for five years
5. Authorized contract for Architectural Services for South Salem Transit Center - including environmental review, property acquisition assistance, design and engineering, and construction services for up to \$1.7 M using Federal Transit Authority funds and local match.
6. Approved Statewide Transportation Improvement Fund Formula project request list including West Valley Connector van operating assistance (medical services), Silverton Trolley, adding Silverton Transit coordinator and driver, expanding Woodburn transit service, and Cherriots local and regional service funds. Total of requests is \$24.5 M (with a local match required)
7. Authorized contract with DC Electric for construction of Del Webb bus facility charging station for up to \$958,000 using grants and local match. Buses and charging services were purchased previously.

## Marion County Soil & Water – 10/05/2022

Kathy Patterson

### Main Points/Issues Discussed

- \* United States Geological Survey (USGS) Agreement-Streamflow Program: Staff stated that the USGS Streamflow Monitoring Agreement has been cancelled due to a loss of funding sources. USGS is looking for funding to continue the program, but if none is found the water gauges will be decommissioned. MCS&W must make a final payment of \$28,548 for cost of the gauges used to monitor streamflow at Butte Creek and Abiqua Creek from Oct. 2021 thru Oct. 2022.
- \* Continue providing iMAP funding to map where invasive plants are occurring
- \* Education Committee - Clear Grant applications. Queen of Peace Church will receive \$2000 for bus drivers for Outdoor program
- \* Marion Soil and Water partners with the City of Salem for invasive Knotweed control.



Invasive Knotweed →

### Decisions Made/Actions Taken

- The motion passed that the Board will make payment to the United States Geological Survey (USGS) for the water monitoring stages at gauges at Butte and Abiqua Creeks in the amount of \$28,548 for the streamflow program.
- The motion passed that the Board support iMAP Invasives for \$5,000 which is a program that maps where invasive weeds are found in the District. Staff will investigate ways to partner in the treatment of weeds without using harmful chemicals.
- The motion passed that the Landowners Assistance Program (LAP) name be changed to Conservation Assistance Grant (CAG) so that those who are not landowners could apply.
- The motion passed that the Board support the Knotweed contract for \$6000. Landowners grant permission to enter and Marion Soil and Water completes the control activities and returns over time to control the invasive weed.

## Polk County Commissioners – 12/28/2022

Jean Sherbeck

### Main Topics Discussed:

All commissioners were present.

Report from Greg Hanson, Administrative Officer—  
Mr. Hanson reported that the PERS Employer Contribution rates set for 2023-2025 are below that of past years. However, due to increased staff it is expected that there will be an additional \$400,000 annual cost starting July 1, 2023.



## Polk County Commissioners – 01/03/2023

*Jean Sherbeck*

### **Main Topics Discussed:**

All commissioners were present.

District attorney Aaron Felton commented on restitution legislation that took effect January 1, 2023. The effect of the new legislation that affects unanimous jury verdicts for certain felony convictions is not yet determined for Polk County because every jury verdict needs to be polled.

## Polk County Commissioners - 01/04/2023

*Jean Sherbeck*

### **Actions Taken:**

Commissioners Pope and Mordhorst present; Commissioner Gordon absent.

Commissioner Pope moved, and Commissioner Mordhorst seconded, to appoint Commissioner Gordon to serve as Chair. Motion passed unanimously.

## Polk County Commissioners – 01/10/2023 Work Session

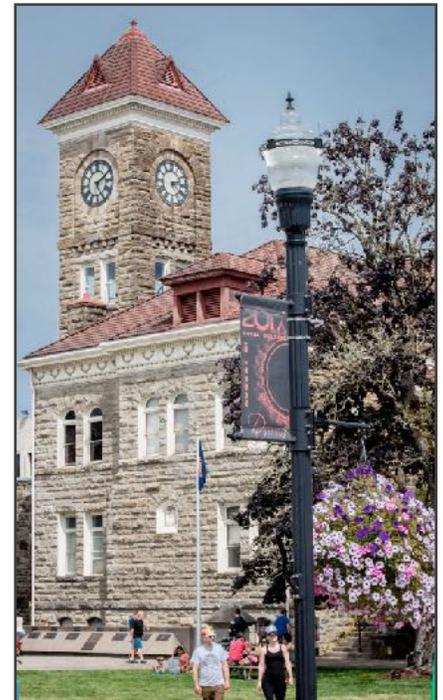
*Jean Sherbeck*

### **Main Topics Discussed:**

Polk County Public Works Director Todd Whitaker reported on several items for his department: tree felling for a new plat, signing and striping for certain roads, Safe Routes to School plans, list of other projects, ODOT coordinated projects, planned equipment purchases.

Discussion followed between Mr. Whitaker and the commissioners about proposed upcoming grants. Using Federal grants involves more requirements and is more expensive.

Mr. Whitaker discussed the problems with growing large herds of elk crossing several roads in varying places. There are hundreds of elk in three herds, which presents a hazard for drivers as well as damage to farmland. Signs warning drivers of elk crossings, in general, do not seem to work, especially since these elk do not cross in the same spots. Allowing hunting to thin the herds is difficult because of getting permission from landowners on the mostly private property in the area.



## Polk County Commissioners – 01/11/2023

Jean Sherbeck

### Actions Taken:

All commissioners present. Follow up to public hearings held previously: The vacation of a portion of Morris Road and the vacation of several portions of undeveloped rights of way in the Ballston area were passed by unanimous votes.

Consent calendar item: Intent to award a contract to finish work on the Buena Vista Park/Boat Launch project, to be paid by grant funds from the Oregon State Marine Board and the Oregon Department of Fish & Wildlife. All consent calendar items approved by the Board.



Buena Vista Boat Launch

## Polk County Commissioners – 01/17/2023 Work Session

Jean Sherbeck

### Main Topics Discussed:

All commissioners were present.

Central School District Economic Development Application—Brent McConaghy, Central High School Principal, and Lynn Thomas, teacher in the school’s Career and Technology Program, described the goals of the program and the needs for which they were requesting a grant. The Greenhouse Technology and Plant Science course needs to be expanded and funded, including funds to complete the installation of the new greenhouse and surroundings. The board voted to fund the request in the amount of \$42,000 and complimented the school for the excellent CTE programs.

Michael Burns, from the Polk County Community Development Department, reported that the County’s zoning laws are required to be updated to conform with the Oregon State laws.

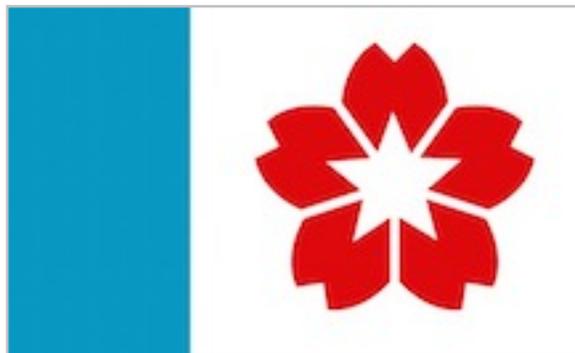
## Salem City Council – 01/09/2023

Alice Laviolette

### Main Points/Issues Discussed

Swearing in and oaths of office taken by: Councilors Nishioka, Gwen, Hoy, and Varney as well Mayor Hoy and Judge Beatty. Councilor Stapleton was elected as Council President.

(Continued on next page)



## **Salem City Council—01/09/2023** (Continued)

Public hearing and discussion regarding the transfer of over \$2 million dollars from general funds to upgrade the Salem airport and add staff in order to bring services of a commercial airline to the area. Mark Bechtel, Public Works Dept., made the presentation as the responsibility for the airport was recently transferred from Economic Development to Public Works.

There is a commercial airline that has stated an interest in providing flights to Las Vegas, Phoenix and maybe Los Angeles, but the airline requires the city to make a financial commitment for required upgrades to the terminal before they will sign a letter of agreement.

Discussion centered around need for service, ability of the community to support the service and environmental impacts of adding several commercial flights per week. Councilor Stapleton asked staff to explore the possibility of a program of using carbon credits to offset any climate impacts. Councilor Nordyke

asked that citizens who are concerned about climate impacts to continue their involvement and help Salem have a “green” airport. Councilor Phillips hopes the airport will serve the needs of our multi-national city and will balance climate change actions with economic development. Mayor Hoy stated that Sen. Wyden and Sen Merkley have shown support for the adding of commercial flights.



Terminal building at Salem's McNary Field

## **Decisions Made/Actions Taken**

By consent calendar:

- Approved payment of \$47,385 to cover attorney fees incurred when the State Land Use Board of Appeals overturned a decision by Council to deny a conditional use permit for a multi-family apartment complex in a commercial zone
- Approved acceptance of a \$129,901 FEMA grant to support Salem's emergency management program
- Approved intergovernmental agreement with Salem Mass Area Transit to fund free youth bus passes
- Approved new appointments to several city-wide boards and commissions
- Approved 3 projects for culvert replacement using funds from the National Culvert Removal, Replacement and Restoration grant program.

Council approved a transfer of \$2,366,000 from the General Fund for additional staff and construction costs at the Salem Municipal Airport to initiate commercial air service.

## **Salem City Council Work Session—01/17/2023**

*Alice LaViolette*

### **Main Points/Items Discussed:**

Council met in the Salem Library Anderson Room for a more informal setting. Staff gave brief updates on the 2023 policy items chosen by Council, as follows: (To next page)

## Salem City Council Work Session—01/17/2023 (Continued)

- Responding to our sheltering crisis—cleaning up camps, partnering for sobriety center, open navigation center
- Planning for our future—lower traffic speeds, further climate action, prepare solid waste strategy
- Engaging Community—improve communications, review city charter
- Sustaining infrastructure and services—deliver projects in community investment bond, explore ways to lower expenses

There was a lengthy discussion between city staff and councilors regarding 2021 Oregon HB 31115 and HB 3124 which will be effective July 2023. These new laws address how cities can respond to the behavior of those experiencing homelessness in public spaces. A public space is any space open to the general public, such as city property, sidewalks, verges, parks, parking structures, streets, city buildings, etc. City attorney Dan Atchison stated there may be “gaps” in the new law as to how long someone can camp in a public space; possible restrictions on residentially zoned areas, traffic areas, environmentally sensitive areas and maintaining ADA compliance on sidewalk accessibility, etc.



Salem has two city codes (SRC 95.720 and 95.730) that may need to be updated in order for city to be in compliance. Many staff members reported on the current services they provide for homeless persons such as code compliance officer, Salem Outreach Services Team, Homeless Services Team, Salem Housing Authority, Salem Homeless Alliance, etc. Police Chief Womack stated that he has witnessed “unmanaged situations naturally devolve into unsafe environments.” He asked, “How do we provide short term help while we work on long term solutions?” Councilor Nordyke stated that calls involving emotionally disturbed persons (aka E.D.P.s) by the Salem Police Department have increased 65% in 2019-2021.

Staff will be compiling information for council to review regarding best practices from other cities and will work toward defining “high traffic areas” and “environmentally sensitive areas” in Salem. There will be two community involvement meetings on this topic scheduled in the future.

## Salem City Council – 01/23/2023

Alice LaViolette

### Items Discussed:



Councilor Hoy commented on her recent visit to Wallace Marine Park and the unsafe and unhealthy conditions of the homeless encampment in that area. There are several tons of garbage that need to be removed.

Dylan McDowell, Chair of the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board, presented their annual report. Councilors discussed the importance of city parks for families to have a space for celebrations and the need for parks to have spaces that would provide teenagers a safe place to hang out. Chair McDowell suggested that it would be nice for parks to provide a permanent structure for families to put up pinatas for parties.

### Actions Taken:

Council approved:

- Leasing city owned property to On Any Sundae for outdoor eating area
- Transfer of property with State of Oregon that includes transfer of title for Greer Park to Salem
- Extending lease of parts of Chemeketa Parkade to Salem-Keizer School District
- Reallocation of Community Block Grant Funds to Meals on Wheels/Marion Polk Food Share
- Funding for an additional medic unit

Councilor Stapleton made a motion to include goals for reduced traffic fatalities/Vision Zero program in Salem's Transportation System Plan. Motion passed with Councilor Hoy voting nay, stating she felt stronger about putting effort into improving conditions for unhoused individuals.

Council approved submitting two grant requests to Community Paths Program to construct Pringle Creek Path connection under Commercial St. and plan for pedestrian bridge over Highway 22, east of Lancaster.

Council voted to support House Bill 2662 in the 2023 Legislative Session, which would fund a Commuter Rail Study to extend TriMet's west-side express commuter rail service to Salem.

## Salem-Keizer School Board – 01/10/2023

Kathleen McGaraghan West

### Main Points/Items Discussed

Director Avila publicly apologized to the referee of a West Salem vs. Sheldon High School football game on November 26, 2022, stating that he should not have touched the referee after a call made. He also should not have said he was a School Board member. Avila pledges to learn from his mistakes, and he will accept consequences.



(To next page)

## Salem-Keizer School Board—01/10/2023 (Continued from Page 10)

Supt. Perry shone the spotlight of success on the following:

- \* Safety, Risk Management and Services Team for their dedication to the safety of students and staff inside and outside of buildings.
- \* Marion/Polk Food Share for their free food boxes for needy. Students also can learn to garden at gardens run by Food Share.
- \* North Salem High School senior Elizabeth Valencia who won a "Stand for Children Beat the Odds" scholarship. She succeeds in the International Baccalaureate program, mentors students, and is active in school health and blood drives.

## BUDGET



Perry is concerned about the uncertain 2023-24 Budget. Enrollment is declining and the district will be unable to keep up service levels if the budget reduced. The current budget level is \$10.3 billion, and the Legislature is saying next year's budget will be \$9.5 billion.

### Decisions Made/Actions Taken:

Middle School Language Arts and Social Studies Curriculum adoption continues. On January 23 pilot materials were shared with community engagement. Final selection of materials will be March through April by vote from all middle school teachers and the School Board. Implementation will begin in the Fall of 2023.

Search for new Superintendent—

The application period closed on January 2, 2023.

Timeline:

January 5 -8—HCE will conduct virtual interviews

January 21—School Board will select 5-6 candidates

January 28—Board will do initial interviews

February 7—Community will interview candidates

February 11—Second round of confidential interviews

The full schedule may be found online at Salem Keizer Superintendent Search.



Iris Valley Charter School—The first reading of their proposal was done. On January 24 there will be a public hearing on their proposal. The School Board will then approve or disprove their application. The school hopes to open in September 2023.

## Salem Public Library Advisory Board – 01/11/2023

Alice LaViolette

### Main Points/Items Discussed

Library Director, Kim Carroll, gave updates from November and December on programming and events. Library staff members have been creating personalized reading lists for those who fill out an online form Book Match. Staff made 160 customized lists for patrons in 2022. The form is on the library web page under the heading “Other Library Services.” There were over 52,000 visitors to the Main Library and West Salem in November/ December and over 215,000 physical items were checked out .



Jackie Leung has been approved by City Council as a new member of the Library Advisory Board. The library has hired two new manager positions: Rachel Carlson as Adult Services Manager and Jen Robinson as Tech Services Supervisor.

The Friends of the Library is in the process of hiring a new manager. The next activity planned for the “Salem Reads” program is an art contest/display of works relating the book *Born a Crime: Stories from a South African Childhood* by Trevor Noah.

LAB members discussed the need to be involved in City Council’s decisions regarding site locations for new branch library/affordable housing developments. Vice Chair David Levy stated that LAB has funding that can be allocated for library projects. He suggested the board identify priorities for 2023. Kim Carroll said there is a library wish-list of projects such as digital cultural passes, which would be easier for patrons to use and would increase the locations where they can be used. The book lockers purchased for picking up Holds after hours were found to be defective; replacements have been ordered. There is a set of 17 lockers that staff would like to place in a location in the community but, so far, no business has agreed to hosting them.

Board members discussed the changes in library bus stop locations since the renovation. Previously there were stops in the turn-out drives on Liberty and Commercial. These stops have been moved to the opposite side of the street, requiring riders to dismount the bus and then cross four lanes of fast-moving traffic to get to the library block; then they must walk quite a distance uphill to gain access to the library.

### Decisions made/Actions Taken

The board voted unanimously to send a letter to Mayor Hoy requesting that LAB be included in any discussions regarding the location of new branch libraries.

Chair Boullosa stated that she would contact Councilor Stapleton to learn more about Vision Zero, a program to reduce pedestrian/vehicle accidents, and the need to move the bus stops back on library grounds.

## League of Women Voters of Marion and Polk Counties Membership through September 30, 2023

Membership in the League of Women Voters is open to all women and men 16 years of age and older. Membership includes subscriptions to local, state, and national League publications, many of which are sent by e-mail and all of which are supported by your local dues.

Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Renewing members**, please add below any information that is different from what's in the newest directory. If you've mislaid your directory, contact Elsa Struble at [gstruble@willamette.edu](mailto:gstruble@willamette.edu), 364-3929.

**New members**, please complete the following contact information.

Phone (H) \_\_\_\_\_ (Cell) \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Yes, I want to join the League: \_\_\_\_\_ as a *new* member. \_\_\_\_\_ as a renewing member  
I am enclosing:

\_\_\_ \$ 65 for Individual Membership

\_\_\_ \$ 30 for each additional Household Member, Student or Limited Income Member  
(Those with limited income may also contact Amy Vandegrift or Elsa Struble about scholarships)

\_\_\_ \$ 90 for a single Supporting Member

\_\_\_ **\$15 extra to receive printed newsletters through the mail**

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ Contribution to LWVMPC budget (not tax deductible)

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ **TOTAL to LWVMPC** (not tax deductible)

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ Contributions to LWV of Oregon are now tax deductible. Write a separate check payable to LWVOR and *send it to* Treasurer Elsa Struble; she will forward it to the state League and the amount will be held for us to use for our educational projects or per-member payments owed the state League. (Checks sent to the LWVOR office will not benefit our local League but directly benefit the state League, another good cause.)

**Mail check(s) & form** to Treasurer Elsa Struble, 1965 Manorview Lane NW, Salem OR 97304

For further member information, contact Amy Vandegrift at 503-364-0492, [vandebloom@gmail.com](mailto:vandebloom@gmail.com)  
or Elsa Struble at 503-364-3929, [gstruble@willamette.edu](mailto:gstruble@willamette.edu)

**Join online [HERE](#).**



**LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS®  
of Marion and Polk Counties**

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***Making Democracy Work™***



The League of Women Voters®, a nonpartisan political organization, encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy.

**February 2023**

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