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| **2017**  **2017 STRATEGIC PLAN FOR LWVWA SUSTAINABILITY**  **EGIC PLAN FOR LWVWA SUSTAINABILITY** |

The League of Women Voters is nearly 100 years old, having been formed in 1920 after women were granted the right to vote. The League of Women Voters of Washington was formed in 1920. The upcoming Centennial provides an opportunity to develop strategies for sustainability into the future.

This plan is intended to Make Democracy Work® for All and is based on the following mission and role.

**LWVWA Mission**

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

**Role of LWVWA Board**

The role of the Board is to work in concert with the LWVUS to achieve LWVUS goals and policies, to direct League political activities at the state level, and to facilitate and support local League work.

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| **GOALS & STRATEGIES** |

**Increase League Impact**

* **Develop a robust external League communication plan**
* **Increase civic and issue education**
* **Enhance voter services**
* **Enhance advocacy outcomes affecting public policy**
* **Motivate attitudes toward the value of civic involvement**
* **Build stronger relationships with League allies and partners**

**Facilitate Local League Work**

* **Help local Leagues increase membership and new leadership**
* **Increase diversity of ethnicity, age, gender and socio-economic status at all levels of League**
* **Support on-going training and exchange of ideas**
* **Support local League fund development**

**Strengthen Organizational Capacity**

* **Consider reorganization of the LWVWA non-profit structure**
* **Hire additional staff**
* **Develop necessary funding to achieve League goals**
* **Invest in technical support needed to support state and local Leagues**
* **Develop and implement short- and long-term communication plans**
* **Establish policies and procedures needed to assure organizational effectiveness and continuity**

**Approved 1-20-17**

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| **ACTION PLAN** |

**Increase League Impact**

*The League is a unique organization dedicated to its mission of responsible and responsive democracy. Thus, League’s sustainability will be related to its effectiveness in performing its mission.*

**Enhance Voter Services**

* Facilitate active participation of community residents in government through candidate and issue forums, community education programs, and community dialogs.
* Raise profile and usability of Vote411 to facilitate candidate responses and interactions with voters.
* Increase voter registration and education outreach to under-represented communities, such as communities of color, youth, and people of diverse political background.
* Produce training and information sharing videos that will be made available to community residents across the state.

**Enhance Advocacy Activities**

* Increase League member involvement in influencing public policy .
* Establish and maintain strong and positive relationships with state legislators and allies.
* Strengthen the Lobby Team and support its members through efficient structure and communication.
* Provide written and oral advocacy and civics engagement training to both members and nonmembers.
* Take significant planning and implementation roles in issues, not just loan the LWVWA brand.

**Build stronger relationships with League allies and partners**

* Proactively pursue partnerships, collaboration and co-sponsorship opportunities with current and potential allies.
* Increase number and diversity of allies and availability of ally-provided translation/interpretation services.
* Systematically review policies, programs and action to assess impacts on under-served communities.

**Facilitate Local League Work**

*Local Leagues are the heart of LWVWA and are the place where the public typically encounters League. To be effective, local Leagues must have membership which reflects their communities as well as operate with contemporary best practices.*

**Help local Leagues increase membership and new leadership**

* Create a dynamic and innovative membership recruitment and retention program.
* Assist local Leagues in increasing visibility and marketing.
* Provide broad and online access to membership recruitment, retention and leadership development materials.
* Provide opportunities and encouragement for local Leagues to share their success stories.
* Develop a plan for forming new local Leagues.
* Develop outreach strategy for communities that could support new local Leagues.
* Create a new membership brochure and update when needed.

**Increase diversity of ethnicity, age, gender and socio-economic status at all levels of League**

* Provide workshops to train members in developing a website and using social media that will appeal to persons of diverse backgrounds.
* Maintain a list organizations and media outlets useful for getting League news to persons of diverse backgrounds.
* Provide local Leagues with templates for press releases for forums, special days, advocacy, and other League activities that will appeal to persons of diverse backgrounds. Include a “how to” for their use in developing their messages for the media.
* Provide cultural competency training to help local League members to tell the League story and their story to persons of diverse background.
* Incorporate methods of communication to persons of diverse backgrounds into the LWVWA Communication Plan.
* Continue to attract new coaches of diverse background to the program, including recently retired local League board members and local League Membership/Leadership Development (MLD) team members and other local League leaders.

**Support on-going training and exchange of ideas**

* Emphasize and support use of best practices.
* Provide web-based training materials and opportunities for dialog.
* Provide technological support to local Leagues.
* Increase connectivity among national, state, and local League members.
* Encourage local League boards and Membership/Leadership Development (MLD) program team to incorporate the MLD leadership program as an integral part of their local League from their first contacts with new members to all contacts with seasoned members.
* Clarify roles involved in the Membership/Leadership Development (MLD) program, such as coach and liaison.

**Support local League fund development**

* Provide tools and coaching to local Leagues for resource development.
* Provide development training opportunities to local Leagues.

**Strengthen Organizational Capacity**

*The LWVWA Board has traditionally operated primarily as a working board of volunteers with little staff support. For sustainability into the future, additional staff is needed and resources must be generated to cover those costs as well as the costs of updating the LWVWA infrastructure and support to local Leagues.*

**Consider reorganization of the LWVWA non-profit structure**

* Consider evidence and experiences from other Leagues.
* Confirm that LWVWA continues to meet criteria for accepting Tax Deductible Donations after a re-organization.
* Consider possible impacts of a re-organization on Local Leagues, as well as State League operations.
* Analyze results of all information obtained in or to make a “go forward” decision.

**Hire additional staff**

* Evaluate pros and cons of staffing models based on mission, values, and goals.
* Establish funding needs and approaches to support recommended staffing.
* Consider conducting a human resource audit to assess areas of need.
* Identify areas of responsibility for appropriate staff to manage (administrative, communications, development).
* Maintain a copy of staff member contact information and areas of responsibility on the website.

**Develop necessary funding to achieve League goals**

* Develop and implement funding plans for LWVWA operations, voter services and advocacy activities.
* Develop and implement training plans to assist local Leagues with fundraising.

**Invest in technical support needed to support state and local Leagues**

* Maintain an inventory of computer hardware and software needed to meet organization needs.
* Provide platforms for inter-League communication .
* Provide training related to the use of computer hardware, software, and social media.
* Assure that sufficient funds for technology needs are incorporated into biennial budgets.
* Maintain a website that is useful for meeting strategic strategies.

**Develop and implement short- and long-term communication plans**

* Review current methods of internal and external communications and develop plan to increase effectiveness and use of contemporary communication methods.
* Develop communication methods that appeal to persons of diverse backgrounds.

**Establish policies and procedures needed to assure organizational effectiveness and continuity**

* Refine systems to facilitate Board transitions.
* Update personnel policies and procedures based on new staffing plans.
* Establish a plan to systematically review and update bylaws.
* Establish orientation and annual training plans for state Board and local League members.
* Revise meeting times and places to optimize opportunities for connecting with local League leaders and assure sufficient time is available to accomplish goals.
* Develop a plan for systematic review of Board practices.

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| **SUPPLEMENT:**  **SUGGESTED TACTICS TO SUPPORT SPECIFIC STRATEGIES** |

The following tactics were suggested for certain strategies. This is not a thorough list but does provide a compilation of tactics offered in development of the goals and strategies.

**Facilitate Local League Work**

**Support on-going training and exchange of ideas**

* Emphasize and support use of best practices. Tactics may include:
  + Determine what would be most beneficial and utilized
  + Set up a listserv on the state website for Leagues to get answers to their questions
  + Post materials on website where appropriate
  + Share via This Week in League (TWIL) and other methods
* Increase connectivity among national, state, and local League members. Tactics may include:
  + Involve national state and local members in sharing Membership/Leadership Development (MLD) call and materials
  + Provide information on state and national routine communications
  + Post materials on website and communicate via other means
  + Consider a pattern of meeting locations around the state and invite local League leaders
* Encourage local League boards and Membership/Leadership Development (MLD) program team to incorporate the MLD leadership program as an integral part of their local League from their first contacts with new members to all contacts with seasoned members. Tactics may include:
  + Encourage the local League to share the Membership/Leadership Development (MLD) program guidances with the local League board and other local League leaders, and post to their websites
  + Encourage local League leaders to maintain a book of their activities to pass to the next person taking their board role, with templates.
  + Post several local League new member surveys on the state website

**Strengthen Organizational Capacity**

**Develop necessary funding to achieve League goals**

* Develop and implement funding plans for LWVWA operations, voter services and advocacy activities
* Develop and implement training plans to assist local Leagues with fundraising

See Attachment A for preliminary data for analysis.

**Develop and implement short- and long-term communication plans**

* Review current methods of internal and external communications and develop plan to increase effectiveness and use of contemporary communication methods
* Develop communication methods that appeal to persons of diverse backgrounds

See Attachment B for preliminary data for analysis.

**Establish policies and procedures needed to assure organizational effectiveness and continuity**

* Develop a plan for systematic review of Board practices. This may include:
  + Develop a plan for appropriate Board travel reimbursement
* Establish a plan to systematically review and update bylaws. This may include:
  + Consider revising bylaws to allow staggered Board member terms