



THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS
OF TOPEKA/SHAWNEE COUNTY

VOTER

President: Jan Waide
1618 SW 28th Street
785-233-7008 (h)

Membership: Nancy Whiffen
215 N Broadmoor .
795-235-2104 (h)

Voter: Pat Burton
4870 SW Skyline Parkway
785-272-4233 (h.)

September 2006

5 Tuesday Topics - Lunch 11:30 am, TSCPL

“Ethics In Government” by Carol Williams, Executive Director,
Kansas State Governmental Ethics Commission
Our meal is fruit plate with chicken salad, pie, coffee and water.

12 Scott School Election - 8:50 am, Voter Registration

The Scott School is located at 4th and California in East Topeka Phone: 235-7480
To help, contact Bob Harder 272-8726

LWVT/SC Board Meeting —Members also welcome.

Noon, *O’Dooley’s*, 1930 Westport Dr. (north of Petsmart on Westport Dr.)

26 Scott School Election - 8:50 am, Primary Election

The Scott School is located at 4th and California in East Topeka Phone: 235-7480
To help, contact Bob Harder 272-8726

28 VOICE Meeting —Topic: Mental Health in Kansas.

Sun's Chinese Restaurant, 2121 SW Belle, from 5:30 to 8:00 pm

Preview for Oct. 3, 2006

Scott School Election —8:50am, General Election

The Scott School is located at 4th and California in East Topeka.
Phone: 235-7480. To help, contact Bob Harder 272-8726.

Tuesday Topics - Lunch 11:30 am, TSCPL Speaker: **Betsy Gillespie**, Director, Shawnee County
Dept. of Corrections. *Our meal has not yet been determined.*

*Tuesday Topics are held in room JCM 101B, across from the Millennium Cafe at the Topeka-Shawnee County Public Library, unless otherwise indicated.. Meals are available to the first twenty-five arriving, @ \$8.25/ea. Checks payable to the Millennium Café .If you need a ride to any League event, contact **Betsy Rohleder***



***PreZ SeZ* Dues Dictated by LWVUS Per Member Payment**

At the national convention of League of Women Voters in June in Minneapolis, the 800 plus delegates from every state, except W. Virginia, voted to increase the national per member payment (PMP) levied on local leagues by \$2.50 per year for 2006-2007. This increase was effective July 1, 2006. They also approved another national increase of \$.50 per member effective July 1, 2007 for the 2007-2008 year.

Currently, the yearly dues for LWVT/SC members are: \$48.00 individual membership, \$72.00 household membership and \$85.00 for sustaining membership. Out of that \$48.00 membership we have paid national PMP of \$23.80, \$18.00 to LWVK and retained locally a whopping \$6.20. LWVUS is now billing us \$26.30 PMP for individual memberships. There is no indication that the state league (LWVK) will raise their PMP this year so it will remain at \$18.00.

In order to avoid raising membership dues two years in a row, the LWVT/SC Board passed the following dues schedule effective 9-1-2006:

\$53.00 individual membership (one year)

\$75.00 household membership (one year)

\$85.00 sustaining membership (one year)

In June, the LWVT/SC Board established a student membership rate of \$25.00 per year for all post-high school students between the ages of 18 and 30 years. We are interested in recruiting at Washburn. League might be of particular interest to law students or political science majors.

We appreciate the members who contribute via sustaining memberships and would like to encourage others, who can afford it, to support League in that way.

And remember, always stand up and speak out for good government.

AUGUST 8, 2006, LWVT-SC BOARD BRIEFS

By Edith Bronson, secretary

Eight members of the LWVT-SC board met August 8, at O'Dooley's (*continued on next page*)

for lunch and business session. The July board minutes and August portfolio reports were approved. The report mailed by Treasurer Sybil Weigman was discussed.

The board: Heard that at the August 5 Farmer's market, Leaguers registered 14 voters, answered lots of questions, and plugged voter registration on channel 13 TV;
Authorized Georgia Sandlin to buy rulers and affix the League name to hand out at the August 12 Back to School Fair;
Was informed that all members received an e-mail or call about the Membership Event August 15, at Peppertree, with LWVK President Janis McMillen as speaker;
Reaffirmed ordering 25 meals for Tuesday Topics with overflow to purchase directly from the café;
Directed Nancy Shaughnessy to secure packets of five LWV note cards to give as Tuesday Topics speaker gifts; and
Set local dues at \$53 per member and \$75 for couples effective September 1, 2006.

TUESDAY TOPICS

Our Speaker was **Norton Bonaparte, Topeka's new City Manager**



above: AUGUST Speaker, Norton Bonaparte at Tuesday Topics sharing views and answering Leaguer's questions.

NOTES ON THE TOPEKA CITY COUNCIL

MEETINGS June 7 to August 8, 2006

by Joe Sargent

Most recently the primary occupation of the Council has been the City's 2007 budget. City Manager Bonaparte submitted a budget on 7-5-06 that would have increased the mill levy on City property by 2.92 mills. The Council members were quite clear that they would not support a budget calling for a mill increase above the City's 2006 property tax of 30.65 mills. The City Finance Director Langford stated that the goal could be reached by cutting \$2.79 million out of Bonaparte's recommended budget and then \$2.81 million could be raised by increasing service fees by 5% while holding the mill levy at the 2006 level. This idea was initially proposed by Council Member Duffy. Additional proposals made by the Council regarding the budget were for cuts in reimbursements for the arts and social services, presently funded by the City. Final decisions concerning the budget will be made on August 22nd.

Council Member Alcalá on August 8th asked to cut all funding for the Human Relations Commission.

There was vigorous public testimony against the proposal. Alcalá's present (continued on next page) position represents a reversal from his stated one in January, 2006. At the same meeting, the Council also heard appeals for supporting social services.

In early July, Bonaparte asked that the City's reorganization include two deputy City Managers. The present position of Director of Public Works would become the Deputy City Manager for Community Services, and there would be a newly created position of Deputy City Manager for Administrative Services. This concept did find support within the Council. Bonaparte also asked for authority to fill a number of open positions, but the Council voted on July 18th to impose a hiring freeze except for the Chief of Police, a position which has been open since January 1st. As of now, the position remains unfilled.

On July 18th, the Council passed an ordinance requiring businesses selling tobacco smoking paraphernalia to pay an annual \$500 fee which would help finance operations of the Shawnee County Drug Court. They also honored the City's Housing and Neighborhood Development Department for winning a regional award from the Federal Housing and Urban Development Department.

On July 26th, the Council decided to table indefinitely a charter ordinance to change how City Council Members are elected. It was introduced by Council Member Preisner and would have the City continue to hold primary elections to select two candidates from each district. One of these two candidates would then be elected in a citywide general election to represent their district. A tabled proposal can only be brought back for consideration by a majority vote of the Council.

The Council voted in favor of a resolution that was critical of picketing at funerals after changing the language of Mayor Bunten's proposal that would have condemned the picketing of funerals by members of the Westboro Baptist Church. The revised statement is less likely to be challenged by a lawsuit.

Alcalá and Kennedy sponsored a resolution for City departments to be opened during lunch hours, and it passed by a vote of six to two. Exceptions to this resolution will be departments limited to one staff person or depleted by vacations or illness.

City Manager Bonaparte is under pressure from the Council to be more forthcoming with information, to set long-range planning goals, and to move more quickly in filling the post of Chief of Police.

OBSERVER REPORTS

SHAWNEE COUNTY COMMISSION

May 9, 2006

The County Commission meeting began with an unexpected visit from Gov. Kathleen Sebelius. She was present to help the Commissioners recognize three Shawnee County employees for the Shawnee County Women of Excellence award. Also the Commission presented the News Election Service Scholarship to Emily Hane, a Topeka West High School student.

The first phase of the restructuring of the Shawnee County Health Agency was passed 3-0. Director Anne Freeze said that even with some wage increases due to added job duties the County would save money because of higher efficiencies.

The Commission voted 2-1 (Kane dissenting) to pass the resolution detaching land from Shawnee County Fire District No. 4 and adding it to the jurisdiction of the Mission *(continued on next page)* Township Fire Department. The area to be changed is about 3 1/2 square miles with a 1 square mile parcel to be left with Fire District 4. Thereby providing all landowners with the fire department of their choice. By *Mary Ann Breitbach*

July 13, 2006

Commission meeting was canceled by a 3-0 vote. The Commissioners' decision for appointing the new Auburn Township Trustee will be addressed at the July 10 meeting. By *Mary Ann Breitbach*

July 27, 2006

The commissioners determined that they need to rewrite their cell phone policy. They feel they are being victims of "technology creep". This topic was discussed because of a request from the Health Agency to trade out three cell phones for three Blackberries. The problem with that is cell phones cost the county \$5.00 per month and the Blackberries cost \$50.00 per month. Anne Freeze said that Bill Singer the IT Director had authorized the trade out. The commissioners disagreed. By *Jan Waide*

July 31, 2006

The Shawnee County Commission voted 3-0 to deny a request by Gary and Kathleen Schmidt for a conditional use permit for the land at 4545 SE 45th St. The Schmidts had planned to open a golf driving range and clubhouse on 13 acres of a 93 acre tract that is now zoned for farming. Supporters for the driving range felt that there wouldn't be much negative impact on the neighborhood that is expected to change over to residential use in the future. But Pat Barnes, an area resident, cited safety and crime concerns because of traffic increase and close proximity to schools. Commissioner Ted Ensley questioned how the proposed driving range might negatively change the neighborhood. By *Mary Ann Breitbach*

August 3, 2006

The 2007 Budget for Shawnee County is proposed to be \$85 million but the departments have requested \$96 million and other requests total an additional \$750 thousand. Several items on the agenda for the budget discussion were delayed until Aug. 21, 2006 commission meeting. By *Jan Waide*

August 10, 2006

The commission approved the movement of the limited action (Small Claims Court) and child support court dockets to Ag. Hall from Heritage Hall.

Of interest to LWVT/SC is the proposal to consolidate the IT (information technology) departments of the city and the county. Let's keep our fingers crossed that they can actually agree to do this. You will remember last year's attempt to consolidate the two Parks and Rec. departments which failed. By *Jan Waide*

Vist: lwtsc.org for Calendar and current information.

(October VOTER materials due by September 15 to Pat Burton, pburton98@msn.com)

Membership Application, League of Women Voters, Topeka and Shawnee County

I want to add my voice to yours by joining the League of Women Voters. I enclose:

___ \$53 for 1-year Individual Membership ___ \$75 for a 1-year Household Membership

___ \$85 for a 1-year Sustaining Membership ___ Please send more information.

___ I am unable to join the League at this time, but enclose a contribution of \$ _____

Please send to:

Sybil Wiegman, Treasurer

2805 SW Tall Grass Dr.

TOPEKA, KS 66614-6026, Phone: 785-478-1679

Name _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

Phone (hm) _____ (wk) _____

E-Mail (for Action Alerts) _____

Make checks payable to League of Women Voters of Topeka-Shawnee County



**PAT BURTON, EDITOR
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ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED**