Tuesday Topics February 6, 2024

President Mary Lou Davis opened the meeting with a welcome and Happy New Year message. Allan Foster provided a membership update, followed by Vicki Arnett, who reported on the league’s climate study. Arnett said there would be meeting on February 13 about Shawnee County’s climate efforts, as well as a meeting on February 20 of the Sustainability Advisory Board.

President Davis spoke about the Presidential Preference Primary on March 19, reminding everyone that February 20 is the last day to register or to change party affiliation. She noted that advanced mail-in voting begins on February 28 and in-person advance voting ends on March 18. Mail-in ballots must be received no later than election day, March 19. Davis also reminded everyone that the Topeka-Shawnee County League of Women Voters will sponsor A Day at the Statehouse on February 14. Appointments with Shawnee County legislators (Representatives and Senators) were being scheduled.

President Davis introduced Richard Pund and Vicki Arnett who presented information about the work of the LWVUS’s study committee on state elections. Pund is a member of the Johnson County League and co-chair of the study committee. They noted the study committee began with a survey of other states' election methods. The presenters gave a brief history of the study committee, followed by the positions and policies suggested by the LWVUS committee. The LWVUS supports direct-popular voting and the abolishment of the Electoral College; uniform voting qualifications and procedures for presidential elections and candidate selection; and affirmation of citizens' right to vote. The LWVUS also encouraged the simplification of the voting process and the adoption of election methods that do not require separate primary elections or run offs, thereby allowing all for broader voter turnout.

Pund provided an overview of various voting methods, such as proportional voting and rank order voting. The LWVUS does not recommend any particular voting method. Arnett reviewed the concurrence issues related to the committee’s election study. All Kansas chapter leagues are asked to concur with the committee’s work. The following concurrence questions were posed to the audience: What are some problems with the Electoral College? Election methods? Election administration barriers? Following audience answers to the questions, Arnett asked for a vote to concur. The vote was unanimous to concur.

President Davis closed the meeting with a strong request for people to sign up to be poll workers. The meeting was adjourned.