



# League of Women Voters of Cortland County VOTER

*Jan-Feb, 2015 Contact: Sheila Cohen, [scohen3@twcnny.rr.com](mailto:scohen3@twcnny.rr.com)*

*Editor: Mary Beilby, [mary.beilby@gmail.com](mailto:mary.beilby@gmail.com)*

### **Our Mission**

*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.*

### **Officers/Board:**

**President**-Alison King

**Vice President-Membership & Fund Raising:** Charlotte Farris [farrisdc@yahoo.com](mailto:farrisdc@yahoo.com)  
756-7284

**Treasurer:** Lenore Schwager,  
[lenore\\_schwager@yahoo.com](mailto:lenore_schwager@yahoo.com)

**Voter Services:** Dorothea Fowler and Jo Schaffer

**Advocacy/Newsletter/Website:** Mary Beilby;  
[mary.beilby@gmail.com](mailto:mary.beilby@gmail.com)

**Secretary/public contact:** Sheila Cohen, 756-8191

### **At-large Directors:**

Anne Doyle 753-0830

Linda Frank (Youth Services)

Jane Richards

Norma Rhodes

### **LWV of Cortland Co**

**Website:**[www.lwvcortland.org](http://www.lwvcortland.org)

**Facebook:** [League of Women Voters of Cortland County](https://www.facebook.com/LeagueofWomenVotersofCortlandCounty)

**E-mail:** [lwvcortland@gmail.com](mailto:lwvcortland@gmail.com)

**LWVNYS website** [www.lwvny.org](http://www.lwvny.org)

**LWV US website** [www.lwv.org](http://www.lwv.org)

The State Board Report and State Voter are published six times a year on the state website and provide vital information on all activities and actions of the NYS League.

### **President's Message:**

Public interest in our county landfill, its large share of the county's discretionary budget, and a dearth of clear, factual information prompted the League of Women Voters of Cortland County (LWVCC) to study solid waste management. We conducted an educational forum in February 2014, when a USGS expert discussed hydrogeology of landfill, the DEC covered landfill design and regulation, and the LWV presented history and budget trends. The forum led to citizen calls for accurate financial reports and better management of our current landfill to extend its lifespan.

Since then, our Environmental Committee has been carefully studying a proposed Cortland-Onondaga Partnership to exchange Onondaga County's incinerator ash for Cortland's trash. During the State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA) process, the League raised concerns regarding violations of NYS open meetings law and SEQRA requirements that impeded informed, public discussion. New York's Committee on Open Government has agreed to issue an opinion.

On Jan. 5, 2015, the LWVCC Board voted to support Solid Waste Solutions proposed by a local citizens Environmental Advisory Board. Several League members contributed to these proactive solutions, which promote the 4Rs (Reduce, Recycle, Reuse, and Rebuy) and financing of solid waste services through integrated, sustainable methods.

After further study of LWV positions at the US, state, and local levels, the LWVCC board voted on Feb. 3, 2015 to oppose the Ash for Trash project. Incineration is an outdated technology that produces dangerous pollution and is an inefficient means of producing energy. Incinerator ash presents serious health risks but, like fracking waste, ash falls through loopholes in environmental regulation and is not regulated as hazardous waste. Additional information is available at:

<http://ashcortland.com/environmental-advisory-board-documents/>

Alison King

- MEMBERS MAY SEE THE FULL POSITIONS AND SIGN
- PRINT OUT PETITION AND
- ASK OTHERS TO SIGN AS WELL

**MEMBERSHIP MEETING TO DECIDE ON  
PROGRAM RECOMMENDATIONS**

**TUES., FEB 10, 5 PM  
BEARD BLDG 9 MAIN ST. CORTLAND**

**Preparing for State Convention 2015**

Directions to all leagues on developing a Program,

- new issues selected for concentrated study,
- which positions need to be updated, and
- which existing positions are maintained for possible action, for 2015-2017.

“Program” really means positions, so this is the time to determine which positions we want to keep, delete, update/revise or even consider new studies for new positions. We hope you will review our present program and recommend any changes through the process noted in these guidelines.

Results of the two studies considered this year by all local Leagues, on term limits and ballot access, will be announced at the Convention after all results have been collated and the board has accepted the results. Similarly, the results of the update on the position on Constitutional Convention delegate selection will be announced at Convention also. These positions or changes are not included in the current LWVNYS Impact on Issues. <http://www.lwvny.org/advocacy/impact/index.html>

**Grassroots and League “Program”**

In a grassroots organization, it is vital that all members have the opportunity to participate. The League “Program” is determined by members and consists of federal, state and local issues. National issues are adopted at LWVUS Convention, state issues at LWVNYS Convention and local issues at local Leagues' annual meetings. Please share the information in this report with your members and encourage member participation in the making of the LWVNYS 2015-2017 Program. This process provides every member an opportunity to influence new areas of study and the issues that will direct League action during the 2015-2017 League years.

**CALENDAR FOR DEVELOPING LWVNYS  
2015-2017 PROGRAM**

**December – February**

**THIS IS THE WORK TO BE DONE AT THE  
FEB 10TH MEETING!**

- Local Leagues review LWVNYS Summary of Public Policy Positions (and the underlying complete position in LWVNYS *Impact on Issues*) <http://www.lwvny.org/advocacy/impact/index.html>
- Discuss possible revisions and additions at a general membership meeting.
- Revisions and additions would be done through dropping positions, updating positions, or new studies.
- Local League boards, using the outcome of the general membership meeting, forward their recommendations on the attached form to the state League by February 20, 2015.
- **This is the only method for suggesting new studies to be adopted at Convention 2015 and the February 20 deadline for submission must be met. Changes in Program cannot be suggested for the first time at Convention.**

**March**

State Board reviews recommendations from local Leagues and develops a Proposed Program for consideration by delegates to State Convention.

**April**

Proposed Program is sent to local Leagues in Pre Convention Kit. It includes recommended and non-recommended program items, submitted by the February 20, 2015 deadline. Local Leagues review the Proposed Program. They may decide, early on, to establish a League network to rally support for certain items on the recommended or non-recommended lists.

**June**

Convention delegates adopt a 2015-2017 Program either as proposed by the state League board or as amended by the inclusion of non-recommended items.

## GUIDELINES FOR LOCAL LEAGUE PARTICIPATION IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF LWVNYS 2015-2017 PROGRAM

1. Hold a general membership meeting to provide an opportunity for grassroots input. The meeting should be chaired by a local League board member with experience related to the state issues. The chair will find the following references valuable in her/his efforts to guide the discussion: LWVNYS, *Impact on Issue (on state League website under Advocacy areas at <http://www.lwvny.org/advocacy/impact/index.html>)*, LWVUS, *Impact on Issues (<http://lww.org/files/Impact-on-Issues-2012-2014.pdf>)*, LWVNYS, *In League In New York State: A Guide To Managing Local Leagues* Section 8, Pages 153-180 (<http://www.lwvny.org/LLresources/InLeague.html>), LWVNYS Summary of Public Policy Positions 2011-2013 (attached). LWVNYS *Impact on Issues* has been updated as of the end of the 2014 legislative session in June, 2014. Information on many areas of our positions can also be found on the specific issue pages on the advocacy page of our website. **If you have any questions, please call or e-mail the state office.**
2. Use the following guidelines to successfully develop recommendations for the 2015-2017 program:
  - a. Review LWVNYS Summary of Public Policy Positions 2011-2013 and the underlying complete positions to recommend which positions should be retained, dropped, or updated. The following definitions should be used to guide these decisions.
    - i. Retain - Members are committed to the position and will actively be involved in supporting LWVNYS efforts to pursue position's goals.
    - ii. Drop - Position is no longer useful in its present form or is not supported by members. Action on this position will end. Any future action will require adoption of a new study.
    - iii. Update - A study of limited scope to reevaluate a position in light of new information, changed circumstances, and/or conflict with another position. The aim is to consider position changes.
    - iv. **The Summary of Public Policy Positions is merely a convenient way to access our full posi-**

tions. Amendments to the wording for editorial purposes, clarification or emphasis may be made but may not change the scope of meaning of the underlying position as currently applied by the Board. It is recommended that such amendments be given as Direction to the Board.

- b. Please consider the following:
  - i. Have our goals been reached or is further action needed?
  - ii. Is there need for monitoring?
  - iii. Is member interest and understanding sufficient to continue the inclusion of this position.
- d. **Before proposing a new study, review LWVUS *Impact on Issues* to be certain we have no national position on which to base action. Note that many of our positions in LWVNYS Summary of Public Policy Positions, are based on national positions.**
- d. **When considering an issue for study, answer the following questions:**
  - i. Would a study of this issue result in a position that could be used to influence legislative action or state government action
  - ii. Is there sufficient member interest in this issue, locally and statewide.
  - iii. Can the League make a unique contribution by adopting this issue as a program item?
  - iv. Is there leadership at the local and state League level to conduct a statewide study that would result in a valid consensus?
  - v. If a valid consensus is achieved and a position on the issue developed, do we have the local and state human and financial resources to work toward achieving the goal(s) of the position.

**The guidelines cited above are not meant to discourage the recommendation of new studies but rather to encourage careful consideration. The League is a grassroots organization with tremendous credibility, due in large part to its reputation for conducting valid studies resulting in positions that represent our grassroots. As times change, the League must change but change should not result in a loss of quality. It is also imperative that we remember that studies increase visibility and that when visibility is in the positive vein it should increase membership. So, if your local League, after answering the above-cited questions, decides to recommend a study, your state board will review it thoroughly and consider its impact on all fronts.**

**Monthly Meetings – Public is Welcome:** The Board of Directors of the Cortland League meets from 1-3 pm on the first Monday of each month at 9 Main Street SUNY Cortland, also known as the Beard Building.

**DUES REMINDER:** Dues are now due and are **essential** to the LWV. A large share of your dues goes to the national and state Leagues that provide direction and useful resources to our local league as well as taking action on state and national issues. Our only sources of funding are our annual membership dues and contributions made by friends of the League. Please urge friends and acquaintances who support the mission of the League to join. We now have a category for friends at a minimum of \$15/year. **Friends and others may make tax deductible donations to the Cortland LWV for educational programs. Checks should be written to “LWVNYS Education Foundation” with the notation: LWV of Cortland County and given to Treasurer, Lenore Schwager.**

**League of Women Voters Membership Application-Cortland County Chapter**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ e-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Membership dues: \_\_\_\_\_ \$50 per year \_\_\_\_\_ Friends’ dues: \$15 minimum/year

Additional Donation \_\_\_\_\_

**Please send with check payable to Cortland County Chapter, League of Women Voters  
To: Lenore Schwager, Treasurer 42 Pearl St. Cortland, NY 13045**

**TRY IT! IT'S NOT DIFFICULT!**

Most people react very positively when you tell them about our League of Women Voters of Cortland County activities and ask them to consider becoming a member for \$50 or a "Friend" of our League for only \$15.

Tell them how our League distributes registration materials at various locations throughout the county, registers voters at several events and provides educational information about voting and elections. We hold programs on local, state and national issues of importance to voters and monitor local government actions. We conduct candidate forums every year. Our [VOTE411.org](http://VOTE411.org) database provides information about the candidates and initiatives on the November ballot.

Last year, for the first time, we sent two high school students to the LWVNY leadership conference in Albany.

If they wish, members and friends receive email newsletters from the state and national offices plus our newsletter. Announcements of our meetings, programs and candidate forums are sent by email as well as legislative alerts. Friends’ contributions help us purchase and print educational materials, hold educational programs and send students to a state league program in Albany that introduces them to state government