

Invitation to Candidates for Candidate Forum

Subject: League of Women Voters Candidate Forum Invitation & Forum Rules

Dear MN House 48 A/B Candidate,

The League of Women Voters Minnetonka/Eden Prairie/Hopkins will hold a District 48 A/B State Representative Candidate Forum on Tuesday, September 30th, 2014. As a candidate for State Representative you are invited to participate. It will be held at the Council Chambers of Minnetonka City Hall, 14600 Minnetonka Blvd, beginning at 7:00 PM and ending at 8:30 PM. Doors will be opened at 6:30pm.

The purpose of the Candidate Forum is to give Eden Prairie and Minnetonka voters an opportunity to hear candidates discuss the issues of importance to them in this election. The event is free and open to the public. The candidates will answer written questions from the public during this moderated event. Written questions are also being accepted via our website at www.lwvmeph.org, where the submission form is located under the House 48 A/B Candidate Forum tab.

League of Women Voter Candidate Forums follow the nonpartisan, unbiased and impartial format established by the League of Women Voters Minnesota. A League member will moderate the forum.

Specific rules governing the Candidate Forum are outlined on the enclosed Procedures. Please confirm your participation before Sept. 15 by calling or emailing Peggy Kvam from League of Women Voters MEPH at 612-414-6154 or email pk@peggykvam.com.

We look forward to hearing from you and to your participation in this educational event.

Sincerely,

Peggy Kvam, Voter Services Chair
League of Women Voters MEPH

Enclosure

The League of Women Voters Minnesota, a nonpartisan, 501(c)3 political organization, encourages informed and active participation of citizens in government and influences public policy through education and advocacy.



Candidate Forum Procedures and Rules

All League of Women Voter Candidate Forums follow the nonpartisan, unbiased and impartial format established and published by the League of Women Voters Minnesota. All events are free and open to the public and the media.

Experienced moderators from LWV, will moderate the forum, explain the procedures to the audience and introduce the candidates. The forum will be video recorded and the media are invited to attend. Only credentialed media are allowed to record the event.

Time limits for all comments will be strictly enforced. In fairness to all candidates and the audience, we ask that these limits be respected. Each candidate will have 2 minutes for opening remarks to introduce themselves. The moderator will then ask a question from the audience. So that we can address as many questions as possible in the time available, each candidate will have 1 minute to answer each question. If time permits, candidates will also have 2 minutes for a closing statement.

A time-keeper will hold up signs to indicate when you have 15 seconds remaining and when you must stop. All candidates will rotate the order in which they respond to questions.

Voters attending the forum have two opportunities to submit questions to the candidates. Written questions will be accepted throughout the forum. New this year, voters may also submit questions via the website at www.lwvmeph.org. By League of Women Voter policy, the identity of the person asking the question is confidential. Any questions submitted via the website will be confidential with no identifying information forwarded. The website option for submitting questions creates an opportunity for voters to ask questions in a more private manner because it guarantees anonymity. All questions are screened by a neutral committee to ensure that questions are applicable to all candidates, are not personal in nature, and are addressed to subjects relevant to this forum.

Note paper and pens will be provided for your use. Props are not allowed. Bottled water will also be available. Campaign literature, buttons, signs, clothing or any other campaign-related items must not be brought into the room. However, a table for campaign literature will be available outside the room for candidates to place campaign materials.

If you have any question about League of Women Voters Candidate Forum procedures, rules or policies, please contact Peggy Kvam, the Voter Services Chair at pk@peggykvam.com.

The League of Women Voters Minnesota, a nonpartisan 501(c)3 political organization, encourages informed and active participation of citizens in government and influences public policy through education and advocacy.



What to expect at an LWV Candidate Forum- Information for Candidates

Why participate in LWV forums?

- League of Women Voters forums are well known for fairness and nonpartisanship and are a trusted source for voters for balanced information on candidates.
- As a candidate you can count on LWV to treat you fairly without bias or favoritism.
- Your participation in LWV forums is an expectation of voters.
- LWV forums are a great way to get your message out to the public as they are taped by local cable stations and aired multiple times before the election.
- Preparing for LWV forums can help you campaign more effectively by helping you to think through issues.
- Exposure and name recognition is the name of the game.

How do I prepare for a forum?

- Prepare opening and closing statements, usually one to two minutes in length (check your letter.) Practice them with a stopwatch before a mirror so that you can present them without reading.
 - Opening statements often include why you chose to run, what your priority issues are, what your qualifications are, and some background information about you.
 - Closing statements often include thanking citizens for their interest, why voters would choose to vote for you, and reiterating your highest priority issues.
- Questions from the audience, to a certain extent, can be predicted. Hot and emerging issues might be suggested by:
 - Listening to citizens as you door knock and talk to voters.
 - Attending meetings of the board or council you are running for.
 - Reading the minutes of past meetings.
 - Asking elected officials, staff and involved citizens.
- Research various points of view and determine your position.
- Prepare talking points to use if the issue comes up in the forum.

How will the forum be run?

- Your invitation to participate in the LWV forum will spell out the specific format including timing of opening and closing statements and questions.
- The moderator, who comes from outside your district, will randomly determine seating and question order. The first speaker will rotate for each response.
- The moderator will give an introduction to the forum and ask for opening statements.
- The live audience will write questions on cards and hand them to an usher.
- LWV members will organize and consolidate the questions and give them to the moderator.
- A time-keeper will sit in the front row and hold up a “15 second” card when time is running out and a “Stop” card when you must quickly complete your sentence.