



## League of Women Voters Candidate Forum Invitation

Dear Eden Prairie City Council Candidate,

The League of Women Voters Minnetonka/Eden Prairie/Hopkins will hold an Eden Prairie City Council Candidate Forum on Wednesday, September 7, 2016. The candidates on the ballot in the November General Election are invited to participate. It will be held at the Council Chambers of Eden Prairie City Hall, 8080 Mitchell Rd, 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 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](http://www.lwvmeph.org), where the submission form is located under Forum Questions 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 Policies located at our website, [www.lwvmeph.org](http://www.lwvmeph.org), under the EP Council Forum tab. Please confirm your participation by calling or emailing Peggy Kvam from League of Women Voters MEPH.

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

*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.*



## LWV MEPH 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 for rebroadcast and the media are invited to attend. Other persons photographing or recording the event are permitted to do so only if they do not disrupt or interfere with the proceedings. The candidates' comments at this event are public and any recordings and their use are not restricted by LWV.

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 1 minute 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 have two opportunities to submit questions to the candidates. Written questions will be accepted at the forum, which is the typical practice. Voters may also submit questions via the website up to the day before the event at [www.lwvmeph.org](http://www.lwvmeph.org). By League of Women Voter policy, the identity of the person asking the question is confidential. 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 candidate 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.

In keeping with LWV's non-partisan position, all candidates on the ballot are invited to participate in their respective candidate forum. In the event of an absence, the forum will not be canceled. All participating candidates, whether or not their opponents are present, will respond to the voters' questions. Absent candidates may submit a written opening statement for the moderator to read.

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## 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.
  - 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 rotate question order.
- 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.