

Mr. Howard Nadel
Chairperson of the Procedure Committee
9 Aspen Road
Scarsdale, NY 10583

January 29, 2016

Dear Mr. Nadel,

The League of Women Voters of Scarsdale (“League”) thanks BK Munguia, Dan Hochvert, and Lena Crandall, members of this year’s Scarsdale Procedure Committee, for attending our general membership meeting on December 7, 2015 to review the Citizens Nominating Committee (“CNC”) election that took place on November 10, 2015. We further thank you for your voluntary service as Chairperson of the Scarsdale Procedure Committee (“PC”).

Immediately following our general membership meeting, the League held a consensus meeting of its members to discuss the 2015 CNC election and to review its prior positions pertaining to the village election system. The League reaffirmed all the recommendations set forth in last year’s consensus statement and refers you to our letter dated February 11, 2015, (copy attached)for details that have not been reiterated below.

Please note the following additional comments specific to this year’s CNC election process.

1. PC composition, functioning, and division of labor

The League commends the PC for ensuring that specific critical functions were delegated to those willing to assume those responsibilities, such as making greater use of and updating the PC website to include many of the items suggested in our prior consensus statement, submitting press releases to local online and print media, confirming biographical details with the candidates who applied and their eligibility for election prior to printing the village-wide mailing, and arranging for signage and staffing on election day, among other tasks.

As indicated in last year’s consensus statement, the League strongly urges you to memorialize the details of those and all other PC functions in writing and to maintain such records in a central repository accessible to PC members (such as Google Drive or Dropbox) to

help ensure smooth leadership transition, retention of institutional memory and experience, and effective functioning of the PC and the CNC election in future years. We refer you again to last year's consensus statement for a sample list of items suggested for inclusion in that repository as well as items suggested for inclusion on the PC website for viewing by the general public.

2. Recruiting of potential candidates

The League commends you for reminding the members of last year's graduating CNC class that their service continues for a fourth year on the PC, for engaging in informal planning and recruiting efforts earlier than in the prior year, and for dividing outreach efforts to ensure that specific individuals were charged with contacting the leaders of various community-based organizations in the efforts to recruit candidates for CNC. By verbal report at the information session, members of the PC indicated that the most successful outreach efforts were those done one-on-one. However, despite early recruiting efforts by PC leadership in the spring and summer and subsequent efforts by all members of the PC, the final slate consisted of uncontested elections in three neighborhood-based voting districts and incomplete but contested slates in the other two districts, which each had one more candidate than open positions. No district had a full slate of two candidates for each open position.

The League recommends greater coordination of recruitment efforts to ensure that the PC contacts and solicits individuals personally, regardless of whether such individuals are known by the PC member making such contact. Asking current or former CNC members to provide testimonials of their positive experiences serving may also be useful. The League strongly suggests that the PC create and maintain a centralized, chronological list of individuals who should be or have been solicited to run for CNC and to coordinate recruiting efforts among all members of the PC to ensure that names of potential CNC candidates be passed on to future members of the PC from year to year.

The League further reaffirms its recommendation for additional public education efforts, such as those examples mentioned in last year's consensus statement, as a means of creating greater awareness of the Village Non-Partisan Election System and thereby garnering interest in serving on the CNC.

3. Election

Brochure and Mail-in Ballots

The League commends you for having each CNC candidate proofread his biographical information prior to printing of the brochure, for verifying that each CNC candidate was eligible for election, for including educational information about the non-partisan system on the cover of the brochure, for identifying the current members of the PC within the brochure, and for taking steps to ensure that ineligible households in the Mamaroneck strip were culled from the mailing

list. The League suggests that the printed brochure and the website also include the names, terms, and election districts of all continuing CNC members and that the brochure itself or its contents, including the candidates' biographical information, also be posted prominently on the PC website during the election season. The League further reaffirms its prior recommendation that the PC ask the local print and online news media to publicize the mail-in ballot and its instructions or a link to the downloadable mail-in ballot and its instructions in their publications prior to the election.

Voter Turnout

For convenience, the following table is included as a means of tracking voter turnout trends. Consistent with what was reported at the information session, voter turnout was greatest this year in the two units having contested elections, which were likewise the only two units with contested elections in the prior year (Fox Meadow and Greenacres).

	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008	2007
Edgewood	24	21 (3)		76 (28)	64 (2)	65 (4)	73 (2)		
Fox Meadow	84	106 (28)		153 (67)	162 (5)	133 (10)	187 (43)		
Greenacres	66	54 (17)		115 (54)	106 (12)	89 (13)	101 (15)		
Heathcote	34	34 (7)		106 (40)	134 (25)	129 (64)	187 (92)		
Quaker Ridge	16	24 (10)		103 (45)	67 (12)	100 (47)	116 (30)		
TOTAL (mail-in)	224 (25)	239 (65)	355 (163)	553 (234)	533 (56)	516 (138)	664 (182)	385 (17)	450 (9)

Fundraising, Expenses, and Finances

The League commends the PC for being cost-conscious, for remaining financially self-sufficient, for covering all its annual expenses (see chart below), for closing the season with a healthy bank balance of \$3,730.91 for next year, and for applying lessons learned to decide upon timing strategies for the next appeal.

For convenience, below is a chart identifying the PC's expense breakdown for the past two years:

<u>TYPE OF EXPENSE</u>	<u>YEAR: 2015</u>	<u>YEAR: 2014</u>
Postage deposit	\$1,267.04	\$1,274.28
Brochure and mail-in ballot printing	\$1,715.49	\$2,670.79
Ballot printing	\$----	\$83.75
Additional postage (fundraising solicitation)	\$39.20	\$31.96
<u>P.O. Box Rental</u>	<u>\$126.00</u>	<u>\$----</u>
TOTAL	\$3,147.73	4,060.78

Proposed Amendments to the Resolution

The League reaffirms its position that was first set forth in its 2012 “Statement Concerning Scarsdale’s Nonpartisan System for the Selection of Candidates for Village Office” and repeated in each of its subsequent CNC consensus statements:

- **The League recommends that the PC propose an amendment to the Non-Partisan Resolution providing that the CNC elect the chair and vice chair [sic]¹ of the following year’s CNC from the outgoing class of voting members.**

Currently, the Non-Partisan Resolution provides that the President (or the First Vice President of the TVCC in the President’s absence) serve as chairperson of the CNC. The League notes that the TVCC is a separate civic organization; neither its membership nor its leadership is chosen by the Scarsdale electorate. Although the chairperson is a nonvoting member of the CNC, he or she is nonetheless in a leadership position and can influence the committee on its operations and selection of candidates. For this reason, it is far more appropriate and democratic for the CNC leadership to be selected by the elected members of the CNC.

In a similar vein, this year, the League further recommends that the PC propose an amendment to the Non-Partisan Resolution providing that the CNC elect the chair and vice chair of the following year’s PC from the outgoing class of voting members of the CNC in order to ensure a more democratic structure.

Currently, the chair and vice chair of the PC are appointed by the TVCC rather than being elected from its own outgoing class. Although the chair and vice chair are nonvoting members of the PC, they are nonetheless in leadership positions and can influence the committee on its operations, recruitment of CNC candidates, and appointment of CNC candidates to the ballot when an election district does not have a full slate of two candidates per open position. The selection of chairs from among the outgoing voting members also encourages greater continuity and transference of procedural and historical knowledge concerning the functioning of the PC. The League also points out that the changes it is recommending for the Non-Partisan Resolution would mirror the process set forth in the School Board Nominating Committee Resolution for selecting the leadership of the School Board Nominating Committee and its Administrative Committee, whose functions and composition are similar in structure to that of the CNC and the PC, respectively.

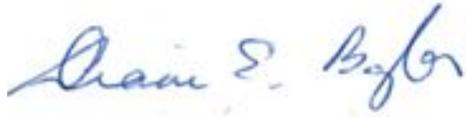
4. Conclusion

The League appreciates the PC’s dedication to a non-partisan process and desire to improve the CNC election system. The League hopes the PC will view this letter as a tool to

¹ The Resolution does not currently make any provisions for a “vice chair” position.

facilitate discussion on strategies for continuing to improve the system.

Sincerely,



Diane E. Baylor
Chair, Village Election System
League of Women Voters of Scarsdale



Deb Morel
President
League of Women Voters of Scarsdale

cc: The Procedure Committee
P.O. Box 284
Scarsdale, NY 10583

enc: LWVS Village Election System Consensus Statement dated 2/11/15