

June 25, 2020

Good afternoon Trustee Dodd, Trustee Barrow, and Trustee Sullivan,

The LWV-Wilmette read the meeting packet and watched Tuesday night's Village Board meeting with great interest. We are particularly interested in the work that has been teed up for the Administrative Committee regarding the Village's Boards and Commissions and the Talent Bank that provides the pipeline for their staffing. We would like to express a few thoughts on this work before it begins and to offer our assistance with this work, if requested, as informed and engaged community members.

To begin with, we believe it is imperative that there be a fully staffed and appropriately chartered commission that oversees the issue of affordable housing and the related issue of ensuring that Wilmette is a diverse and accessible community. We do not have a firm position on whether there should be two separate commissions as currently structured - Housing and Human Relations - or whether they should be combined into a new commission. In the current climate with the pressing issues facing our community, we see a critical need for at least one citizen commission with a clear and timely mission and objectives and with clear expectations for outcomes.

Second, the Village must, as stated in its memo of June 23 entitled "Boards and Commissions Review," critically and thoughtfully examine its Talent Bank. We hope that the Administrative Committee will surface data to inform the community on the number of Talent Bank applicants and how those applications are handled. Transparency on this issue is critical in order to develop a process that truly provides a broad and diverse set of community members with relevant expertise and new opinions and ideas to staff our Village's commissions.

Finally, we look forward to the presentation on the history of affordable housing in Wilmette at the Village Board's July 14th meeting. Only by coming to terms with our history can we move forward in a planful way to meet our Village's and the State's affordable housing goals and realize the potential for Wilmette to truly be a welcoming community.

Why does the LWV care so deeply about these issues? As is stated in one of our core policy documents:

Founded by the activists who secured voting rights for women, the League has always worked to promote the values and processes of representative government. Protecting and enhancing voting rights for all Americans; assuring opportunities for citizen participation; and working for open, accountable, representative, and responsive government at every level—all reflect the deeply held convictions of the League of Women Voters.

We appreciate your consideration of these thoughts, and we look forward to the Administrative Committee's important upcoming work.

Regards,
Cindy Levine and Wendy Zun
Co-Presidents, LWV-Wilmette