



VOTER

Newsletter of the League of Women Voters of Johnson County

How To Reach Us

PO. Box 13491
Overland Park, KS 66282
LWVJoCo@yahoo.com
Website: www.LWVjoco.org

President

Harriet Duff
hfduff@gmail.com

Editor

Ann Norbury
LWVnorbury@aol.com

September 2011

Volume 62
Number 2

Since 1920, the League of Women Voters has been a nonpartisan political organization that encourages the informed and active participation of citizens in government and influences public policy through education and advocacy.

Saturday, September 10 Meeting Atonement Lutheran Church - 9948 Metcalf

8:30 a.m. - Socializing
9 - 11 a.m. - Program
11 a.m. - noon - Board Meeting

"Touching Base with the JoCo 2030 Vision"

Citizens Visioning Committee members **Karen Wulfkuhle** of United Community Services, Lenexa Police Chief **Ellen Hanson**, **Rod Richardson** of Wallace, Saunders, Austin, Brown & Enochs, and **Harriet Duff**, JoCo League President, will review the Executive Summary of the draft of the Johnson County 2030 Vision Plan

We look forward to seeing you!



National Education Study



To prepare for Consensus Meetings, study pages 5 and 6.



President's Message

One great thing about League of Women Voters members is that they are involved. They do their "homework" of being informed about issues and asking questions. Conversations with League members will reveal those who follow their city council, know their state representative, and care about what happens nationally and even internationally.

I've seen our involvement all summer. One example of the many places our membership was visible and active occurred in June when Christine Hutchins and I went to the United Community Services Summit representing the League. Everywhere we turned, we saw other League members. They were there because they were seeking insight about our community. They were concerned about Johnson County. We learned how Johnson County poverty is growing at a rapid rate. Area suburban poverty growth rate is more than double the national average and double the area urban poverty growth. If you would like to join your fellow League members in exploring this topic, look up www.ucsjoco.org and read UCS's informative reports.

At our September meeting, we will have another chance to be informed and impact our community's future. The topic at our September 10 general meeting will be the **Johnson County 2030 Visioning Plan**. This plan is intended to provide guidance for our county and communities as they move forward for the next 20 years. The Plan is currently in draft form. **We will be given the opportunity to hear what is in the plan and express which priorities for the future are most important.**

Let me give you a bit of background. Last year, 30 members of the community representing different constituencies and geographic areas of Johnson County were selected by the Board of County Commissioners to collect information and develop a vision for Johnson County's future. I am privileged to be serving on the committee as the League's representative. The process has been intensive and taken much longer than originally expected --but, of course, our community has more challenges now than was expected when we started.

At our September League general meeting, I will be joined by three other members of the Visioning Committee -- Karen Wulfkuhle of United Community Services representing social services, Police Chief Ellen Hanson of the city of Lenexa representing public safety, and Rod Richardson of Wallace, Saunders, Austin, Brown & Enochs representing unincorporated areas -- to review the Executive Summary. All of us are part of the nine-member subcommittee responsible for developing the final document. At the meeting, you will have an opportunity to ask questions and prioritize recommendations for the future. These priorities will be used by the Visioning Committee to complete the process before presenting the 2030 Vision to the Board of County Commissioners.

Now, what I am asking of you is to follow League tradition and **COME PREPARED**. Again, do your homework. Because of the length of the full study, the panel will be addressing the Executive Summary of the draft 2030 Vision. My challenge to you is to read the full draft of the 2030 Vision before the meeting. Be sure to check out the Recommended Actions in each section -- that's the meat of the plan. The full plan is also a valuable resource that you can use to learn about the current status of Johnson County and challenges that it faces. **You can see the full draft of the 2030 Vision Plan by going to www.jocovision2030.com.**

I look forward to seeing each of you at this meeting as we start a new year of League programs!

Harriet Duff

Need to contact us? Send messages to: LWVJoCo@yahoo.com

Board Briefs August 6 meeting

- President Harriet Duff discussed the role of the board to set policy and give directions to League activities and proposed a Consent Agenda for reports and minutes submitted prior to the board meetings.
- Candy Birch, Treasurer, reported that we have completed all requirements for the Fair and Diverse Judiciary Grant. She has transferred all remaining funds to the general funds as permitted by the grant.
- Birch clarified the following about donations to JCLWV: Donations to the Education Fund are sent directly to the LWVUS Ed. Fund and are tax deductible. Our League can request needed Ed funds from the US Ed Fund.
- Contributions above the local membership levels, i.e. supporting and sustaining, are deposited in our general fund for our local activities and are *not* tax deductible.
- The Treasurer's Report ending 08/05/2011 lists YTD Income \$5,322.50 and YTD Expenses \$608.32.
- The board voted to discontinue the League's land phone. Only six phone calls were received in the past year which made the phone very expensive. In the future, the League's website will list our e-mail address LWVjoco@yahoo.com for direct communications.
- First Vice President Ann Sanders presented the list of scheduled programs.

September 10	Touching Base with the Johnson County 2030 Vision
October 1	Democracy on Trial: Laws, Lawsuits and the "Little Man" [Voter ID]
November 5	Public Education: Challenges and Promise
December 3	Holiday Party
January 7	Program Planning Meeting
February 4	Healthcare: Affordable Care Act
March 3	Social Security
April 7	Johnson County Charter Commission
May 5	Annual Meeting

Polly Swafford

2020 Luncheon

We have decided to by-pass the Celebrating the Right to Vote Luncheon this year for a couple of reasons: (1) the economy makes sponsoring a fundraiser more challenging and (2) the uncertainty of our political climate. We are hopeful that interest in Celebrating the Right to Vote will intensify during the 2012 Election season and attendance at our luncheon would be enticing.

The need to grow the 2020 Fund continues because our goal is to make the 100th anniversaries of the League of Women Voters and of the passage of the 19th Amendment a big celebration. Our hope is that this year you will consider a contribution in any amount. Send your check made payable to "Celebrating the Right to Vote" and mail to 10104 Hemlock Drive, Overland Park, KS 66212, or save the postage and give your contribution to either of us at the September or October general meetings.

Dolores Furtado and Janis McMillen

Be Informed about Congressional Redistricting

The 2012 Legislature will draw new districts for the state's 125 House seats, 40 Senate seats, four congressional districts and the 10 State Board of Education districts. The new maps will reflect population changes based on the 2010 Census, which showed a continued migration from rural to urban areas.

Throughout the summer and fall, the Special Committee on Redistricting is tasked with hosting a series of meetings to gather public opinion on redrawing the state's political districts. Hearings have been held in Chanute, Hutchinson, Manhattan, Pittsburg, Salina, and Wichita. Upcoming meetings are scheduled for Lawrence, KCK, Dodge City, Colby, Leavenworth, Garden City, Hays and Overland Park. To view the schedule:
<http://www.skyways.org/ksleg/KLRD/Redistrict/public-hearings.htm>

The public hearing for Johnson County residents will be held in Overland Park on Friday, September 2 at JCCC, Polsky Theatre in the Carlsen Center. The hearing will be from 2-4:30 p.m. Please note: Anyone who wishes to testify must call Corey Carnahan in the Legislative Research Department (785-296-3181) to register 24 hours before the meeting.

Ann Norbury

Charter Commission on Johnson County Government

Every 10 years, a Charter Commission is appointed to review and update, if necessary, the Home Rule Charter for Johnson County government. Since February 2011, the 25-member commission has been studying the structure and operations of the County Government.

The Charter Commission must submit a report of its findings and recommendations to the Board of County Commissioners by February 2012. Proposed amendments, if any, to the Home Rule Charter would require approval by Johnson County voters in 2012

To elicit citizen input, Johnson County Charter Commission will hold a Public Hearing on Tuesday, September 27--7 p.m. at the Sylvester Powell Community Center in Mission.

Among the several dozen proposals under consideration, two have received media attention: to expand the Board from seven to nine members and a return to partisan elections. Note: The LWVJoCo advocated for non-partisan elections for County Commissioner positions when the Home Rule Charter was last approved by Johnson County voters in 2000.

Ann Norbury

League Day at the Capitol

September 24

Members of all eight Kansas Leagues will convene in the Topeka on September 24 for the annual League Day. The meeting will be held at Capitol Plaza Hotel, 1717 SW Topeka Boulevard, from 8:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

Speakers and agenda topics will address the national LWV study on the Role of the Federal Government in Education and the Kansas League study on the Tax System in Kansas: Who Should Pay? Workshop sessions will focus on League membership and leadership.

Registration fee of \$30 will include a continental breakfast and lunch. Send your reservation to League of Women Voters of Kansas, P.O. Box 2366, Topeka, Kansas, 66603 by the September 20 deadline.

Naturalization Ceremonies

The July 29 Naturalization Ceremony had 91 applicants from 35 countries with 56 new citizens registering to vote. Naturalization Ceremonies are held at the Federal Courthouse in KCK at 5th and State usually on the last Friday of every month. The ceremony begins at 1:30 p.m. and lasts about 45 minutes. We then register the new citizens to vote, which takes about an hour. If you would like to attend and participate in this moving event, please contact Virginia Johnson at (770-757-2136 or johnson.virginia@yahoo.com). Please mark your calendar for the upcoming Naturalization Ceremonies.

- August 26 Chief Judge Kathryn H. Vrtil
- September 30 Judge Carlos Murguia
- October 28 Judge David Waxse

The Naturalization Committee would like to thank the Board, and Ann Arnott in particular, who revised the New Citizen Booklet to include the changes necessitated by the new Voter Registration Law.

Virginia Johnson

Membership

The hot summer did not stop new members from stepping forward to join. Our LWVJC family is growing! Now, its time to make sure that all of all our "cool" members are included in the LWVJC Membership Directory. We compile it every year for the September meeting. Don't get left out -- send your renewal dues no later than August 29. We are going to have a great year with election activities, consensus issues, and great monthly programs. Get involved and keep in mind how important the LWVJC is for our community.

*Nancy Gatz and Susan Horst
LWVJC Membership Co-Chairs*



**OCTOBER CONSENSUS MEETINGS ARE COMING FAST!
MARK YOUR CALENDAR TODAY!**

All Education Study consensus meetings will be in the Central Resource Library's Carmack Room. Get prepared via five summaries in the VOTER July/August (2), September (2), and October (1) issues.

<u>Questions 1-9</u> Topics: History, Common Core Standards October 4, Tuesday, 7-9 p.m. (repeat) 10/24, Monday, 7-9 p.m.	<u>Questions 10-15</u> Topics: Equity and Funding October 26, Wednesday, 7-9 p.m. (repeat) 10/27, Thursday, 7-9 p.m.
--	---

**“The History Of Federal Government In Public Education:
Where Have We Been and How Did We Get Here?”**

For over 300 years, national leaders sought to create an educated citizenry. Starting with the Land Ordinance of 1785, public education has been financially supported by the federal government

Two constitutional amendments played an important role in public education. In 1791, the 10th Amendment stated, “The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the States, are reserved to the States respectively, or to the people.” Public education, not mentioned as one of those federal powers, historically has been delegated to the local and state governments

In 1868, the 14th Amendment guaranteed rights to all citizens including “... No state shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States; nor shall any state deprive any person of life, liberty or property, without due process of law; nor deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the law.”

During our first 100 years, over 77 million federal public domain acres were ceded to states as endowments to support public schools. More recent key actions included:

- 1944 – GI Bill provided post-secondary education to WW2 GIs
- 1965 -- Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) whose Title I included federal aid to the disadvantaged
- 1989-92 – several bills including first work on national standards
- 2001-08 – ESEA-No Child Left Behind reauthorized
- 2009 – More ESEA reauthorization; states that accept Common Core Standards can compete in Race to the Top

Today's major issues include the purpose and role of the federal government in public education and funding. Other issues include school choice, accountability, teacher quality, goals and standards.

Please share your comments with us at LWVJoCo@yahoo.com. Watch for the 5th and final summary in the October VOTER.

Education Study Committee, Ellen Miller



“The Role of the Federal Government in Public Education: Legislation and Funding for the Education of Children with Special Needs”

Special attention to the educational needs of children with disabilities began in 1965 as a part of President Lyndon Johnson’s War on Poverty with an amendment to the newly passed Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA).

Ten years later, a separate law (Education for All Handicapped Children or EAHCA) required free appropriate public education for all handicapped students.

Over the next 35 years the EAHCA law was periodically reauthorized with important changes (equal rights for the disabled, protection from discrimination, right to school records) and became the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA).

IDEA and ESEA continue to be revised every ten years. Additions to IDEA in the 1990s were:

- the inclusion of special education students in state and national assessments,
- placement in the least restrictive environment, and
- making the regular classroom teacher part of the individual education plan.

In the latest revisions, ESEA became No Child Left Behind (2001) and IDEA became the Individuals with Disabilities Improvement Act (IDEIA 2004). In these revisions, school districts were required to provide more instruction and interventions to help prevent enrollment in special education and students with disabilities became subject to the same rules as the rest of the students.

Federal Funding to States Bring Mandates

When states accept federal funding, they also accept federal mandates. The zero-reject policy, under which no child is turned away from educational services, has been the most important mandate. The mandate of “free and appropriate education” now covers 6.6 million children age 0 to 21 who are classified with one or more of 13 disabilities.

Their education must be accomplished through state appropriation. Local distribution of monies is based on needs determined by an individual education plan (IEP) and placement in the least restrictive environment (LRE).

Current Funding Challenges

Federal Underfunding: The federal government has never fully funded its promised 40 percent of special education costs. In 2001, federal funds covered 8 to 10 percent of state costs; in 2012, federal funds will cover 17 percent.

Increasing Enrollment: Special education enrollment has grown from 3.8 million in 1973 to 6.6 million in 2011.

Maintenance of Effort Requirements: States are required to maintain the current level of services (Maintenance of Effort). Many states have applied for permission to waive this requirement because of the current economic downturn. Waivers were given to three states last year and three more are pending. Kansas received a waiver.

Inclusion and Training Needs: Most special needs children are included in regular classrooms (95 percent). Inclusion is a strong alternative for fund-strapped districts and makes quality in-service training for teachers more critical.

Please share your comments with us at LWVJoCo@yahoo.com. And watch for the 5th and final summary in the October VOTER.

Education Study Committee, Jill Quigley

NOTE: LWVUS Education Study Committee members have researched and written background papers to help Leagues educate members and communities about the Role of the Federal Government in Public Education issues.

You will find the complete text at www.lwv.org. Go to “For Members” and from the pull down menu, select “Projects and Programs.” Under “Taskforces & Studies,” click on “The Education Study: The Role of the Federal Government in Public Education.” Then select “Background Paper>>Get Informed.”



Member Spotlight: Dolores Furtado

Dolores Furtado is passionate about education. Her achievements as student, teacher, legislator and community leader tell that story.

After she received her B.S. degree from Cornell University, Dolores spent a year at Harvard Medical School working with 17 infectious disease fellows-at the Boston City Hospital doing clinical research. She realized she wanted “to put her knowledge at risk” and chose to pursue graduate studies at the University of Michigan. As a Teaching Assistant she taught microbiology to med students. While there, she earned her M.S. and Ph.D. degrees. Her post doctoral fellowships included a year at Guy’s Hospital Medical School in London, England and two years at Yale University School of Medicine.

In 1970 Dolores joined the University of Kansas Medical School faculty as an Assistant Professor in the Department of Microbiology. Originally from Rhode Island, she recalls that she didn’t know much about Kansas or that the Chiefs football team had just won the Super Bowl.

Dolores was able to teach Bacteriology with a focus on differential diagnosis through learning the clinical manifestations of each organism and the unique capabilities of each organism. The goal was to prove the etiology of bacterial infections. In 1982 she was promoted to Professor, the only woman in the Department of Microbiology to do so during her 31 years in that department. During her career she served as teacher, research scientist and faculty governance leader until retiring in 2001. Today, Dolores is Professor Emerita.

In 1991, Dolores first attended a Johnson County League of Women Voters meeting. She recalls, “It was fascinating, and I joined the group.

“The next year, Myrna Stringer asked me to do the government portfolio. I was particularly fascinated by county government because Rhode Island has no county governments. That’s what really motivated me in JCLWV. My first county studies were about nursing homes and juvenile detention.”

In 1999, Dolores advised our League to study and take a position on the proposals by the Charter Commission, that is expansion of the Johnson County Commission to seven members with the chairperson to be elected at large for a four year term who would vote on all actions without veto powers, the elimination of the election of Register of Deeds, Treasurer and County Clerk because these were administrative positions and the non-partisan election of the County Commissioners. The League supported and campaigned for these changes leading up to the November 2000 election. The voters passed all changes.

In 2000, Janis McMillan and Dolores indicated that they would be willing to serve as co-Presidents for two years. This required a change in the By-Laws. They served for two years.



Dolores proposed the first annual Celebrating the Right to Vote luncheon. She says, “We called it the 2020 luncheon in preparation of the 100th anniversary of the right to vote for women.”

In the spring of 2002, Dolores was encouraged to seek election to the County Commission, a connection she attributes to the League’s non-partisan position. “The League experience personally motivated me to run for office.” She was elected and served on the Johnson County Board of County Commissioners 2003 -2007, and in 2008 both political parties asked her to run for the Kansas House.

Dolores also has made time to serve on numerous community boards: TriCounty Smart Start, Governor’s Council on Fitness, CASA, Kansas Health Solutions, Johnson County Nursing Center, Johnson County Leadership on Early Childhood Learning, Partners in Public Health, Johnson County Public Safety Advisory Council, and Aging Information and Action, Inc. In 2007 she received the Distinguished Public Service Award from United Community Services of Johnson County. For her efforts to restrict indoor smoking in public places, she has been recognized by CleanAir KC and by the American Cancer Society.

Dolores chaired the LWV-K two year study on the Electoral Process in Kansas. She and Janis utilized a survey developed by LWVUS and sent it to all 105 election officials in Kansas. They shared the results of 103 responses with Secretary of State Ron Thornburg. As a result of this study, we learned that some counties illegally used split shifts. Legislation has been recently passed that allows poll workers to work shifts on Election Day.

“I am convinced,” Dolores asserts, “that we need more civic engagement at the grass roots level. We need to link personal needs to civic/community needs. How do we connect with people? That’s the challenge for the LWV— to promote civic engagement through programs and studies. Our League in collaboration with the Johnson County Library organized two courses on local government in 2007 and 2009. This was a great start.

Polly Swafford

August 26— Women's Equality Day

On **February 14, 1920**, with passage of the 19th amendment imminent, suffragists met to transform the movement into the League of Women Voters to help educate women to be responsible voters. On **August 26, 1920**, just days after Tennessee became the thirty-sixth (and last- needed) state to ratify the amendment, the Secretary of State signed the proclamation enacting the 19th amendment giving women the right to vote.

Because of this important history, the League of Women Voters, more than any other organization, “owns” **August 26th, Women's Equality Day**, and should be celebrating it every year.

Brief History

Elizabeth Cady Stanton and others first seriously proposed women's right to vote at Seneca Falls, N.Y., on July 19, 1848. Prior to this time, Susan B. Anthony was active in the women's temperance movement, but when she met Stanton in 1851, they joined forces and worked together over the next half of the century – and what a force they were. Although they both died before the goal was reached, they lived long enough to see significant progress and were primarily responsible for the ultimate success. Carrie Chapman Catt, founder and early leader of the League of Women Voters, younger than Anthony and Stanton, entered the struggle later and became a leader in the suffragist movement that helped lead it to victory with passage of the 19th amendment in 1920.

League's Mission - Educate Current and Future Generations on the History

The sacrifices our leaders made to win the right to vote for women is amazing and one that few people recognize today. In most cases, they devoted their lives to the movement. Becoming public advocates at the time for this or any movement, meant that they were living lives and playing roles in a totally unconventional, unacceptable, inappropriate manner – to many they were pariahs. It is impossible to even conceive of how difficult their lives were, what hardships they endured – public humiliation, terms in jail, ridicule – and they did it so that the women of yesterday, today and tomorrow can exercise their right to vote.



Text and photos from LWVK website

Let's Talk Issues

Let's Talk Issues is a public service program focusing on local issues. Programs are presented six times a year, three in the fall and three in the spring.

Let's Talk Issues programs are taped in the JCCC TV Studio. The September 7 program will focus on "Changes in Topeka." Additional programs are slated for October 5 and November 2.

Previous programs may be accessed through the college website: www.jccc.edu. Click on Library and Technology, then scroll down to Software and Online Resources, click JCCC Videos, then select **Let's Talk Issues**.

Ann Etter

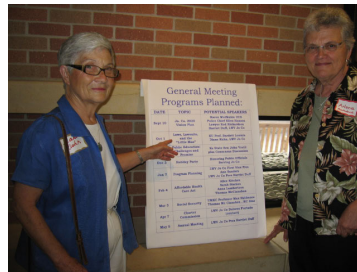
August Preview Party

The LWVJC's Preview Party held at Matt Ross Community Center on August 18 was a definite success. The purpose was to welcome prospective members and explain the League's mission and plans for the coming year. Approximately 70 members and their guests attended, enjoyed the refreshments and getting to know one another. President Harriet Duff invited the guests to introduce themselves and to state who had invited them. Duff also called on League members to explain their roles with the League and request additional volunteers as needed for their committees. Each guest received a copy of the July/August VOTER.

Polly Swafford



Norge Jerome and Mary Ann Meeks



Diane Kuhn and Arlene Rodebush



Sharon Pierson, Pat Circle, Paula Schwach



Betty Wyckoff, Marian Wade, Kim McHenry, Gwynne Lee

OBSERVER CORPS REPORTS

Johnson County Library Board July 20 meeting

- The library received a 2011 Top Innovators Award from the Urban Libraries Council at the American Library Association Annual conference in June. The winning innovation was "Streamlining Materials Handling." JCL was one of 11 winners and one of just two libraries to win a Top Innovators Award twice.
- Self-check use was above 70 percent in all neighborhood libraries during June, an increase of 20-25 percent over June 2010. Staff cuts (due to county budget cuts) mean that fewer circulation clerks are available to help patrons, so self-check becomes essential.
- The Friends Annual Sizzlin' Summer Book Sale earned \$64,500. More than 250 volunteers sold 93 percent of the items offered.
- The Board voted to close Antioch (3 days) and Lackman (2 days) Libraries for RFID (radio frequency identification) conversion. Closing libraries for the conversion will significantly reduce the time needed to get the circulation/security system up and running in all the libraries.

Connie Richards

Johnson County Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) July 21 meeting

Since 2008, local food safety inspections have been regulated under the Kansas Department of Agriculture (KDA); previously it was under the Kansas Dept. of Health and Environment. KDA is in the process of changing regulations for our local county inspectors. These regulations also allow the state to contract with counties to serve as agents of the state in enforcing state food safety requirements. Johnson and Sedgwick counties are the only two remaining local governments to hold contracts with the state, down from eight in 2008. Contract counties can no longer assess a separate fee, in addition to the state fee, for any inspection services performed. During FY 2011, Johnson County received \$354,116 from the state for the inspections they conducted. This covered about 48 percent of the actual inspection costs, with the County paying the remainder. Beginning in FY 2012, KDA is planning to centralize and consolidate food service inspections for those residing within another entity (e.g., a delicatessen within a grocery store) and for mini-marts. KDA staff will assume responsibility for these inspections. If the license fee revenues from the state fall significantly below the projected dollar figure, it will cause Johnson County to reassign at least one-half person's salary and activity to another county department.

Johnson County Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) July 28 meeting

The BOCC is contemplating proposals to recommend to the Kansas Association of Counties for their 2012 legislative platform. One is a "Solid Waste Tonnage Fee" set by the state at \$1 per ton of waste put into the landfill. With a decline in local waste collected, revenue has dropped and recycling grants have been eliminated. Johnson County contributes a disproportionately large share of revenue; Deffenbaugh Industries thus contributes about 40 percent of the total waste and has provided most of the recycling grants, which support the county's Household Hazardous Waste Program. If tonnage fees are raised, the County is considering requesting a fee structure to address the disparities among counties who do, or don't, offer Household Hazardous Waste programs for residents, such that some of Deffenbaugh's tonnage fee would be reduced proportionately.

Johnson County Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) August 4 meeting

Each year, County employees bring food to support the County's "Feed the Need" program. Departments compete to see which one can collect the most food. This year, collectively, employees donated a total of 185 tons of food. Infrastructure/Public Works provided the most, at 31.25 tons.

Johnson County Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) August 11 meeting

The BOCC finalized the County's FY 2012 Budget at \$810.7 million, with no increase in the mill levy. However, the final mill levy will be set at the end of October, when the 2012 property evaluations are completed. Expenses were reduced by \$11.7 million, including elimination of 145 vacant positions but still providing a 1.5 percent merit salary increase for employees. The County Chair's salary was reduced to \$75,000, the salary level established in 2002 after approval of the Home Rule Charter. (Note that all commissioners, in addition to their salary, receive a car and phone allowance).

Janis McMillen

Olathe School Board August 4 meeting

- The Board heard a report on the change in the calculation of graduation rates. In an effort to standardize the method being used among the states, the U.S. Department of Education has mandated a four-year adjusted cohort calculation method, beginning in the 2010-2011 school year. The four-year rate for Olathe in 2011 was 89 percent, down from almost 95 percent last year (as calculated by the "old" formula). It is still above the state goal of 80 percent.
- The district numbers for AYP (Annual Yearly Progress) are good. One hundred percent of the schools in Olathe made AYP for all students with no schools on the state "needs improvement" list. All schools are fully accredited.
- The Board approved the budget for 2011-2012. The levy will be 69.813 mills, down 3.104 mills from last year.

Connie Richards

Shawnee Mission School Board August 8 meeting

- Budget for 2011-2012 was adopted unanimously by the Board after months of hard work and the closing of schools, raising students fees, and selling school property.
- Board Policy Revision: JF Policy: Student admission to/withdrawal from school was approved with one change January 1 to January 5 for paperwork to be in District Office. JICG Policy: Approval of revision on tobacco use by students. Tobacco prohibited in all Shawnee Mission School District property and student could be suspended.
- Architect presented plans for new additions at Hocker Grove Middle School and Indian Hills Middle School.

Virginia Johnson

Lenexa City Council July 5 meeting

- All items on the Consent Agenda were approved including bid awards for improvements on both the Ad Astra Pool and the Flat Rock Creek Pool, authorization for the installation of a traffic signal at 79th street and Lackman, and a resolution authorizing a public hearing on 8/16/2011 to consider the 2012 annual budget and capitol improvement program.
- An ordinance was approved authorizing the City to file a condemnation petition with the district court to acquire the easements and right-of-ways necessary for the 87th Street (Pflumm to Renner Boulevard) project, construction to begin in the spring of 2012. Twenty one properties will be affected.
- Councilman Lemons announced that "Better Together", a group of several area churches, will have a concert on Veteran's Day, 11/11/11, at Holy Trinity Catholic Church.
- A citizen spoke briefly to the council about the possibility of having a city sponsored fireworks display on the 4th of July again as in years past. At this time, the only planned display will be on 10/14/11 in Old Town Lenexa during the annual Chili Challenge.

Sheri Potter

Lenexa City Council August 2 meeting

- The Council has provided the opportunity for residents and businesses to comment on the 2012 recommended budget and the 2012-2016 recommended Capital Improvement Program. August 16, 2011 will be the official budget meeting when the new budget will be adopted. The members of the City Council have had two 90 minute workshops, a retreat, and much discussion on the 319 page proposed budget.
- One Lenexa citizen stated that he has been a resident for 26 years and spoke on the issue of increasing the property tax. This resident is of the opinion that the tax may not have been sufficient in the past for what living in Lenexa brings its residents. He feels an increase in the property tax is appropriate if the money is then spent wisely.
- An ordinance was approved authorizing the acquisition of lands and interests for the construction of the Lackman Tributary Stormwater Improvement Project, in the area of the 79th Street and Lackman intersection. Twenty three property owners will be affected.
- Staff reports included a summary of the Quarterly Financial Report, dated 6/30/11. Major revenues are down by 4 percent. Property taxes are down 11 percent from last year due to a high delinquency rate. Franchise taxes down 12 percent. Sales taxes reported to be down by 2 percent in both the city and county, but recent numbers for July show an increase of 1 percent. Commercial building permits remain down as do single family dwelling permits, but these are beginning to increase. Rental activity revenue from the conference center is down due to some closure for renovations.
- Updates on Capital Improvement Projects included the following - the 87th Street and Renner Boulevard intersection to be re-opened by 10/1/11. Construction on Quivira, from 99th street to 105th street, to start in the spring of 2012. Black Hoof Park Improvements, Phase II, almost complete and includes lights on the shelters.

Sheri Potter

Johnson County WaterOne Board August 9 meeting (www.waterone.org)

- Follow-up to huge water leak. Failure of a new, 54-inch transmission line on 7/1/11 caused a boil order across the entire WaterOne system area. Customers ranging from hospitals and nursing homes to retail and residents were affected. That failure has raised questions about the main's integrity. A \$24,980 addition to Black & Veatch's agreement for engineering services will result in specialized analyses on items such as maximum hour water demands and actual pumping rates on the 7/1/11 failure. Five simulations are anticipated.
- New communications methods. Also following up on the 7/1/11 water leak, WaterOne has started distributing bill inserts to customers. Studies are underway for telephone communications with hospitals, health care providers and city/county offices in the event of an emergency. For a large organization, such as a hospital, perhaps two or three persons would be designated as recipients.

Ellen Miller

Recent U.S. Senate Votes

[Confirmation of Robert S. Mueller III to be Director of the FBI](#) - Vote **Confirmed** (100-0) The Senate agreed to extend the term of Federal Bureau of Investigation director Robert S. Mueller III through September 4, 2013. The FBI director is limited to one 10-year term and Mueller's term began in August 2001. The president signed legislation earlier in the week to allow Mueller to serve an additional two years.

Sen. Pat Roberts voted **YES** **Sen. Jerry Moran** voted **YES**

[Budget Control Act of 2011](#) - Vote **Agreed to** (74-26) The Senate gave final approval to this bill to raise the debt limit by at least \$2.1 trillion and cut spending by as much as \$2.4 trillion over the next ten years. President Obama signed the bill into law a short time later.

Sen. Pat Roberts voted **YES** **Sen. Jerry Moran** voted **NO**

Recent U.S. House Votes

[North American-Made Energy Security Act](#) - Vote **Passed** (279-147, 1 Present, 5 Not Voting) This House bill would require the White House to decide by November 1 whether to allow construction of a 1,700 mile oil pipeline running from Canada to U.S. refineries in the Midwest and Gulf Coast. The application to build the pipeline was made nearly three years ago. The White House said the State Department is committed to completing its review by the end of the year and called the bill "unnecessary."

Rep. Kevin Yoder voted **YES**

[Budget Control Act of 2011](#) - Vote **Passed** (269-161, 3 Not Voting) The House passed this bill that raises the debt limit, caps discretionary spending for ten years, establishes a bipartisan committee to identify additional spending cuts, and requires a vote on a balanced budget amendment to the constitution. The Senate gave final approval to the bill the next day, clearing it for the president.

Rep. Kevin Yoder voted **NO**

**LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS
OF JOHNSON COUNTY
9531 MEADOW LANE
LEAWOOD KS 66206**

Upcoming Events

Friday August 26	Naturalization Ceremony: Register new voters; 1:30 p.m.; Federal Courthouse, 5th and State, Kansas City, KS
Saturday September 10	General Meeting: "Touching Base with the Johnson County 2030 Vision Plan;" 8:30 a.m. social time, 9 a.m. program, 11 a.m. board meeting; Atonement Lutheran Church, 9948 Metcalf, Overland Park, KS
Friday September 2	Public Hearing on Redistricting: 2-4:30 p.m.; Polsky Theatre, Carlsen Center, Johnson County Community College, 12345 College Blvd, Overland Park, KS
Saturday September 24	League Day at the Capitol: 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.; Capitol Plaza Hotel, 1717 SW Topeka Blvd, Topeka, KS
Tuesday September 27	Public Hearing on Johnson County Commission Charter: 7 p.m.; Sylvester Powell Community Center, 6200 Martway, Mission, KS.
Friday September 30	Naturalization Ceremony: Register new voters; 1:30 p.m.; Federal Courthouse, 5th and State, Kansas City, KS
Saturday October 1	General Meeting: "Democracy on Trial: Laws, Lawsuits and the "Little Man" [Voter ID]; 8:30 a.m. social time, 9 a.m. program, 11 a.m. board meeting; Atonement Lutheran Church, 9948 Metcalf, Overland Park, KS
Monday October 4	Consensus Meeting: "Role of the Federal Government in Public Education" History, Common Core Standards; Discussion Questions 1-9; 7-9 p.m.; Central Resource Library, 9875 W. 87th Street, OP, KS.
Tuesday October 24	Consensus Meeting: "Role of the Federal Government in Public Education" History, Common Core Standards; Discussion Questions 1-9; 7-9 p.m.; Central Resource Library, 9875 W. 87th Street, OP, KS.
Wednesday October 26	Consensus Meeting: "Role of the Federal Government in Public Education" Equity and Funding; Discussion Questions 10-15; 7-9 p.m. ; Central Resource Library, 9875 W. 87th Street, Overland Park, KS.
Thursday October 27	Consensus Meeting: "Role of the Federal Government in Public Education" Equity and Funding; Discussion Questions 10-15; 7-9 p.m. ; Central Resource Library, 9875 W. 87th Street, Overland Park, KS.

The deadline for the October VOTER is September 15.