

PUBLIC POLICY COMMITTEE 2006-07 SUMMARY

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The Public Policy Committee has a dual personality -- to keep abreast of a wide range of plans, proposals, actions, and decisions that affect the San Diego public (we depend on the input of committee members, who bring their own areas of interest to the committee and often end up as local experts); and to advocate for League positions in the development of public policy.

Committee members often participate in coalitions, committees, and municipal task forces. We also get heard through political testimony, published letters and articles, policy recommendations, and other direct actions. We use national, state, and local League positions to guide our priorities and responses. Examples of published op-ed pieces and statements to the city council can be found on the LWV website (www.lwvsandiego.org)

The Public Policy Committee meets the 4th Friday of the month at 9:30am at the League office. An agenda is emailed to all committee members in advance of each meeting, as well as to other League members interested in knowing about the issues we deal with. Meeting reports are distributed by email and on the LWVSD website. Meetings are open to all and are generally well-attended.

We have dealt in depth with City Redevelopment during this past year. In addition, we have monitored the city's new mayor-council form of government, particularly the balance of power between the legislative and executive arms. The Public Policy committee worked with the Center for Policy Initiatives (CPI) to co-sponsor a policy forum on privatization of public services. As LWV vice-president, I took part in a debate with Councilmember Faulconer, Carl DeMaio, and Donald Cohen about charter change proposals on the 11/06 ballot. I also debated Mayor Sanders at the Catfish Club on his ballot measure promoting private contracting of basic city services, an issue that seriously undercuts San Diego's Civil Service System.

The city's financial crisis was also a top priority. In addition, the committee developed a series of questions to be put to the Mayor and City Councilmembers during the League's annual interviews with locally elected officials.

The Public Policy Committee is now engaged in creating an independent citizens' charter coalition to expand the range and participation of San Diegans in the task of promoting reform through new changes to the City Charter. This is an important project and will contribute to determining the direction the city will take from this point on.

We strongly encourage League members to participate in the Public Policy Committee as a way of becoming more knowledgeable, active, and influential in city government affairs.