

Climate Change – Supporting Mayor’s Climate Change Network – Appleton Common Council – Sept. 20, 2017

Thank you again for having me here. As I described a couple of weeks ago, all LWV advocacy is based on researched positions at the national, state and local positions. I have previously sent all of you a document outlining some of the LWV positions on climate change. I am not going to debate the existence of climate change – for my purposes as president of the LWV it is an issue that is not open for debate. The Chris Carson of the US League of Women Voters has stated that “climate change is the greatest environmental challenge of our generation.” After reviewing the video of the meeting last week, I was very impressed with all that Appleton has done in the area of sustainability and increasing their Green Tier scores. I was frankly surprised at everything that has been done. But I also agree with the members of the committee that it does not appear that it was communicated to the citizens of Appleton. There were several comments regarding not wanting to pat themselves on their own back. I don’t see it that way – I see it as being open with the citizens of Appleton about an area that we all should be proud of.

In addition to study and advocacy, another primary area of LWV work is to assist citizens in engaging more in participatory government – something that my experience in working with local government tells me is also important to the city of Appleton and that they have attempted to foster. From reviewing the proposal put forth by the Council members it appears that the development of a climate change committee of both interested citizens as well as government employees would not only work towards achieving one of the environmental goals as set forth by the LWV, it would also help to achieve another goal of increasing community involvement. The climate change committee seems like a logical next step in continuing the excellent work that has been done by the city to be a leader in the area of sustainability and being environmentally proactive.

Since I have become involved in both LWV and begun attending more local meetings I have had my eyes opened – in a good way. My husband and I travel quite a bit and everywhere we go I end up comparing positively to Appleton – I notice their downtown, are they walkable, aesthetically pleasing, etc. How do they treat pedestrians and bicyclists? Are they welcoming? Do they appear to care for the environment? Everywhere we go I end up turning to my husband and telling him how much I love living in Appleton. Thank you for your time and hard work and please consider the next step in your long standing work at taking care of our environment.