



Making Democracy Work

For Immediate Release
LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS
JACKSON AREA

July 11, 2020

Mayor Derek Dobies

Council Member Arlene Robinson Ward 1

Council Member Freddie Dancy Ward 2

Council Member Jeromy Alexander Ward 3

Council Member Laura Dwyer Schlecte Ward 4

Council Member Karen Bunnell Ward 5

Council Member Will Forgrave Ward 6

Dear Mr. Mayor and Council Members,

The League of Women Voters (LWV) has been a nonpartisan organization for the entirety of its one hundred years. The goals of the LWV have always included increasing voter participation, voter education and supporting voter representation by our elected leaders.

The League of Women Voters Jackson Area (LWVJA) has reviewed and discussed the Jackson City Charter Review Committee proposed Amendments, #1 Filling of Vacancies in Offices and #2 Adjusting Terms of Office to Even Year Elections. In accordance with our above stated goals, the LWVJA is recommending that you place Amendments #1 and #2 on the Ballot for Jackson City Residents to decide on these proposed changes to the Jackson City Charter.

Amendment #1 allows for a defined schedule to fill vacancies, which would ensure elected representation for City Residents, as opposed to potential long terms of appointed representation to fill vacancies.

Amendment #2 allows for transitioning all elected officials to even year elections, which historically have

much higher voter participation. While the transition from odd to even year elections will require that the terms of offices be altered for a brief defined period, the LWVJA feels it is worth the efforts involved to increase Jackson City voter participation in all future elections.

While there may be financial decreases realized by changing to even year elections, there will be other important benefits as well. The long held perceptions that odd year elections and ballot proposals are not as important as even year elections will be negated. Additionally, ballot proposals combined with elected official positions allow for more thorough campaign discussions between candidates and Jackson City voters.

The LWVJA membership feels that nonpartisan issues as proposed in Amendments #1 and #2 should most definitely be on the ballot for voter consideration as soon as possible, preferably November 2020

Thank you for your consideration of these Jackson City Charter Amendments.

Sincerely,

Shirley Zeller LWVJA Co-President

Mary Lee Clark LWVJA Co-President

Deborah Killewald LWVJA Voter Services

