



LEAGUE OF  
WOMEN VOTERS®

## Manhattan/Riley County

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## President's Message

### *Make Sure Your Voice Is Heard!*

By Glenda Phillips

Last week I sent out a list of meeting dates happening here in Manhattan (they are included in this month's calendar as well). As very observant and diligent League members, I suspect many of you were able to attend many of them. I know that I will be trying to get to as many as possible. One, though, that has yet to happen needs to be highlighted – August 18th. It popped up several times in our list as it is a regular City Commission meeting. However, on that evening the Commission will be looking at two choices for the Rental Inspection issue.

**LWVMRC has taken on Rental Inspection as a study topic for this year.** Time constraints, both as a group and reaction time to the commission, has kept us from major study this summer, but we are looking at concurrence with other LWV Rental Inspection positions throughout Kansas. I, as president, will be presenting at the Aug. 18th public input time representing the League's position. I encourage you to talk with other League members about this issue and call, write, e-mail the commissioners on what you think would make the best Rental Inspection plan for our fair city.

Two members who have kept up on all the details of Rental Inspections in Manhattan are **MaryAnn Fleming** and **Debbie Nuss**. They have attended the meetings, followed the discussion and are keeping the League informed and updated. Call them, e-mail them, find out what they are seeing. Also, check out the observer reports from the city commission. Our observers do a great job of reflecting meeting discussions. You will get a lot of information to use in your comments.

**Lastly, try to write, call or talk face-to-face with the commissioners BEFORE Aug. 18th.** As you know, we often see individual commissioner's leanings made before the commission meets. **Help direct those leanings now!** Encourage our city leaders to craft a Rental Inspection plan/ordinance that will make Manhattan become a leader in protecting our citizens who live here permanently or temporarily.

You are a caring community of people, keep up the great work!!

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## LWVMRC Blog

### *Now access news and observer reports*

In our on-going efforts to make information available in a timely manner to our members, the Manhattan/Riley County League has begun a blog where our observers post their reports as soon as they write them.

LWVMRC members can subscribe to receive the postings as e-mail messages on the blogsite: <http://www.lwvmanhattanks.blogspot.com/>

In addition, the blog provides the opportunity

for its members to comment on the content of the reports, share additional information, and keep each other up-to-date about developments. The Board hopes this becomes a new means of communication between our members.

Please take a moment to visit the site and become a member today of our blog.

## LWV Advocacy

### LWVUS Urges Action on America's Affordable Health Choices Act of 2009

The League of Women Voters welcomes the introduction of America's Affordable Health Choices Act of 2009 in the House of Representatives and we urge you to support quick action on this essential legislation. We believe that it is imperative for Congress to send real health care reform to the President for his signature as soon as possible.

America is facing a health care crisis caused by a combination of skyrocketing costs and an insurance system that leaves 47 million of us without any coverage. The current health care system is endangering both our economy and our health, and voters have made it clear that they want change. According to a study reported in *The New England Journal of Medicine*, 70 percent of Americans surveyed believe the health care system needs major changes, if not a complete overhaul.

All Americans must have health care coverage, including the choice of a quality, affordable public insurance plan. It is universal coverage that will determine the humanity of our system. We believe that health care reform legislation must guarantee access to comprehensive and essential benefits to all U.S. residents.

But coverage is not enough. We need to provide for quality and safety in the health care system. We believe that health care legislation must establish a system-wide program to coordinate information, establish best practices and provide consumers the information they need to protect themselves and their families. It is essential that comparative data on treatments, benefits packages and medical outcomes be made publicly available so that individuals can make informed health decisions and so costs can be controlled.

The federal government needs to take additional strong action to reduce the costs of health care for individuals, businesses and communities. As a nation, we are spending \$1 out of every \$6 we earn on health care. Over the last three decades, increases in the amount we spend on health care have consistently risen faster than wages and inflation. If nothing is done to control costs, we could be spending \$3 trillion for health care by 2011 and \$4.2 trillion by 2016.

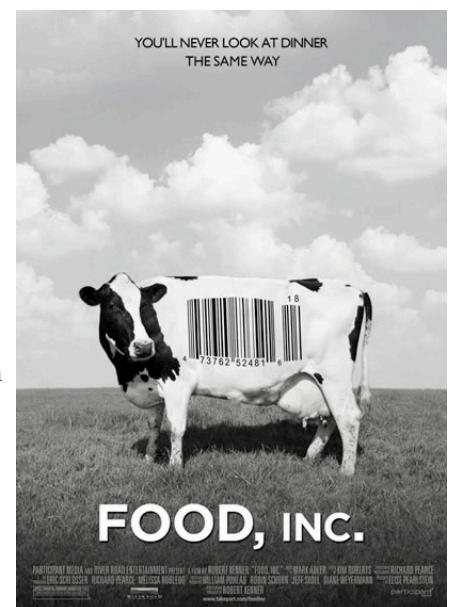
The League believes that cost containment measures must take place in the context of overall health care reform. We must reduce or eliminate the cost-shifting that currently exists in health care financing and work to streamline the system. Legislation must provide effective cost controls, equitable distribution of services and allow for efficient and economical delivery of care. Offering everyone the choice of a government administered health insurance plan like Medicare that would compete with private health insurance plans will be key.

To achieve this kind of comprehensive, system-wide reform will take a shared effort by citizens and Congress. The League of Women Voters is ready to work with you to reach this goal.

## Monthly Movie Series... Food, Inc.

LWVMRC board would like to encourage our members to take advantage of the monthly film series, generally the second Tuesday of the month, hosted by MAPJ and supported by various other community organizations, that seeks to bring films which often do not make it to Manhattan because of their content, target audience, production company, or a combination of all three. The films are offered free of charge and provide opportunities for discussion after each film.

This month's selection is the provocative film that looks into the underbelly of corporate food production in our nation and what it is doing to our health - [\*Food, Inc.\*](#) Film director Robert Kenner exposes what is often hidden from the American consumer with the consent of our government's regulatory agencies, USDA and FDA. Our nation's food supply is now controlled by a handful of corporations that often put profit ahead of consumer health, the livelihood of the American farmer, the safety of workers and our own environment. We have bigger-breasted chickens, the perfect pork chop, herbicide-resistant soybean seeds, even tomatoes that won't go bad, but we also have new strains of *E. coli*—the harmful bacteria that causes illness for an estimated 73,000 Americans annually. We are riddled with widespread obesity, particularly among children, and an epidemic level of diabetes among adults.



**Show time: August 11, 6:30 pm, Manhattan Public Library Auditorium.**

# Observer Reports:

## USD 383 School Board

**Kathy Dzewaltowski, Observer**

### July 15, 2009 - Regular meeting:

The board discussed the "request for qualifications" document for the Construction Manager At-Risk (CMR) approach that is being considered for the high school construction project, with the focus being whether the CMR will be allowed to self-perform any work. Board members were in agreement to remove self-performance language from the request for qualifications document and will include it in the "request for proposals" document for the CMR. Board members were also in agreement that a decision about self-performance needs to be made by August.

Due to the number of students who have qualified for free and reduced school meals, Ogden Elementary has been able to provide free school meals to all students for the past 10 years through a federal program that reimburses the school district for the costs. This coming school year, the food service director estimated that the number of students who will qualify for free and reduced meals will have decreased, resulting in a decrease of reimbursement dollars and an increase in costs to the district to continue the program. Administration recommended discontinuing the program. Board members were concerned about discontinuing the program so close to the start of the new school year and concerned about notifying families of the change. The board decided to discuss the item further at its next meeting.

The board discussed the 2009-10 budget. The district's general fund will decrease \$1.8 million due to decreases in state aid and special education funding. The district will be receiving stimulus funds and some additional Title I funding that will help balance the decrease. The board also discussed the capital outlay mill levy and looked at two options: one would put the mill levy at 3.27 mills and the other would set the mill levy at 4.5 mills. Board members expressed that during the bond campaign, the public said it wants to see the district's facilities maintained. Pete Paukstelis said he would like to consider a 5.5 mill levy for capital outlay, and Curt Herrman was interested in increasing the Local Option Budget. The board directed administration to develop options for the Local Option Budget, the capital outlay mill levy, and a list of

priorities.

The board approved a change to the Open Door Handbook which would require the home district of out-of-district students who are 16 or 17 years old and who enroll in USD 383's program after the official count date to pay \$200 per half credit.

### July 29, 2009

The board voted 6-1 to discontinue the program at Ogden Elementary School which provided free school meals to all students. A federal program had reimbursed the district for the costs of meals for students who qualify for free and reduced students. The number of students at Ogden who qualify for free and reduced meals has declined, resulting in a decrease in reimbursement dollars such that the program will no longer pay for itself. Curt Herrman was the dissenting vote.

Board members discussed the "request for qualifications" (RFQ) document for the Construction Manager At-Risk (CMR) approach being considered for the high school construction projects. The board discussed the pros and cons of allowing the CMR to self-perform any of the work. The board, the project architect, and the district's project manager will have oversight of the CMR, even for work that is self-performed. The board approved 6-1 the RFQ and to allow the CMR to self-perform work. Walt Pesaresi voted "no."

The board discussed the 2009-10 budget and looked at reducing building supply budgets by 10%, not filling an administrator position, and reducing the Summer School budget. The district's overall budget will decrease by \$1.8 million due to decreased state funding. The board had directed administration to develop different options for the capital outlay mill levy and the corresponding projects the different mill levies would fund. Nancy Knopp thought that given the condition of the economy, the capital outlay mill levy should stay flat. Other board members expressed an interest in increasing the capital outlay mill levy because the public had told the board during the bond campaign that it wanted to see facilities maintained. The board approved 6-1 to develop a budget using a capital outlay mill levy of 5.5 mills, which was an increase from the current 3.27 mills. Mrs. Knopp voted "no."

## Riley County Commission - Selected Notes

**Jan Kruh, Julie Merklin, Lyndal Nyberg, Joan Strickler, Observers**

### July 2, 2009

Planning Director Wedel discussed work on the Census Complete Count Committee.

Richard Jankovich, Chair of the Manhattan Regional Airport Board, told of the guarantees needed to maintain American Eagle airline service, including \$1 million for two years with a 25% regional match. The revenue guarantee request for Riley County is \$51,795 for 2010 and 2011, with funds not needed unless there is a shortfall.

Financial Officer Shepek presented 2010 budget development worksheets and background information. McCulloh suggested that some of the revenue projections seem low. Kearns discussed freezing appropriations at last year's levels and freezing the public works budget at last year's level. Kearns was cautious about using \$1.8 million from the jail expansion project if it became available as a result of alternative bonded funding. Johnson stated he has never been in favor of the bonding option.

### July 6

County Counselor Holeman discussed requiring drug testing for all county employees prior to employment. The present policy applies only to those in safety-sensitive positions.

### July 16

Finance Officer Johnette Shepek reported on the outlook for 2010, and there was extended discussion of budget control, given the current economic downturn. One option contains a 1% cost-of-living adjustment for staff salaries. Commissioner Kearns noted that 15 out of 24 departments are holding or reducing their non-personnel budgets, but Commissioner McCulloh is concerned about a buildup of deferred maintenance. The commission finally approved a 1.159 mill increase

with a 1% salary allowance for merit. The vote was 2 - 1, with McCulloh opposing.

### July 20

Commissioner Johnson reported on a recent meeting of county governments that discussed a regional planning organization. Commissioner McCulloh emphasized the importance of such an effort for the future even though there would be an operational expense – likely on a per capita basis. Still, there was concern about the cost, with the thought that more local cooperation would be helpful.

Counselor Holeman reported that the county prescription discount card is now available free of charge. There are no income requirements, and the average saving is 20% at participating pharmacies.

Finance Officer Shepek estimated the 2010 levy to be 31.234 mills – an increase of 1.165 mills needed to cover increases for bonding capital projects and County Extension.

Commissioner McCulloh reminded the group of an unmet obligation to help support the health department, suggesting a \$10,000 increase in its budget. Others had reservations, however, given the department's substantial reserve as well as the broader possibility of requests for additional assistance from other agencies.

### July 23

The commission moved ahead on design for replacing the boiler and cooling tower at the court.

Assistant Public Works Director Rod Meredith reported on KSU's likely grant applications to support installation of wind turbines for use at the county shop. Discussion dealt with a number of contingencies such as maintenance, operating costs, decommissioning, displaced acreage, effect on future re-siting of fairgrounds, etc. KSU's Sue Peterson indicated that the university has land for the project and will probably proceed.

**FYI...The LWVMRC board has decided to to change the timing of our annual Finance Drive from the early spring to the fall of each year. As such the next Finance Drive will occur in the fall of 2010. Members and non-Members are welcomed and encouraged to donate throughout the year.**

## Riley County Law Board

### Bob Kruh, Observer

Aside from routine items, the Board approved a proposal to establish a Community Advisory Board. Like such bodies in many other communities, this group is intended to assist the Director of the Riley County Police Department by 1) serving as a communications link between the Department and the public, 2) helping

improve public understanding of the Department's role, and 3) advising the Department on issues, opportunities, and policies. Soon to be established, it consists of twelve members from the area, who will operate under recently completed bylaws and whose minutes will keep the Law Board informed of their deliberations. Importantly, the CAB is only advisory, and it has no power to establish policy nor to have a role in RCPD operations.

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## Manhattan Urban Area Planning Board

### Barbara Withee, Observer

#### July 6, 2008

Members Present: Bill Meredith, Chairperson; Jerry Reynard, Vice-Chair; Linda Morse; Mike Hill; Stephanie Rolley; and Nikki Miller.  
Members Absent: Mike Kratochvil

**The final development plan for an apartment building at 1021 and 1029 Vattier was approved. Owners are John and Holly Irvine.**

**A public hearing was held to consider the rezoning of the proposed Westport Commons PUD residential to a PUD commercial.**

This property is located at the corner of Claffin Road, Westport Road and Browning Avenue, the northwest corner of the Williamsburg development. The permitted uses include: business and professional offices and a bank with drive-in facilities. The applicant/owner is Mark Bachamp, Westport Commons LLC.

Members raised concerns about the internal circulation plan, the drainage to the property to the north, the traffic at the corner of Browning and Claffin Road and the need for sidewalks along Browning Avenue.

Robb Ott, City Engineer stated that the plan is in accordance with the Manhattan Area Transportation Strategy (MATS) regarding the traffic flow. Zilkie stated that the site will drain to the north into a planned detention basin. The owner explained that their plan calls for a sidewalk along the Browning Avenue right of way. He also noted that the Claffin/Westport Street is set up for a traffic signal if the conditions warrant the need. Traffic studies done for the project found that the

Browning/Claffin intersection does not warrant a traffic signal at this time.

**A motion to approve passed 6-0 with eight conditions spelled out in the application including pedestrian sidewalks along Browning connecting to internal sidewalks.**

**A proposal was presented by Chrischelle Borhan and owners, Rahim and Martha Borhani to rezone a large house at the corner of 11th and Laramie.**

This property conforms to recommended confinement of the Aggieville boundaries and completes the southeast corner rezoning of the Campus Edge District Plan. The owners desire to open a retail business on the ground floor of the building. The house was converted to apartments a number of years ago.

**Motion to approve passed on a vote of 5-0 with Hill abstaining because he owns property next door.**

**Bayer Construction Company, applicant and owner, requested annexation of a 26 acre tract of land generally located southwest of the intersection of Fort Riley Boulevard and Miller Parkway AND consideration of rezoning this same tract from County, General Agricultural District to C-2 Neighborhood Shopping District and AO, Airport Overlay District.**

#### **Questions raised by Board members included:**

...impact on K-18 realignment plans (realignment will be in three phases with the last phase being near this property)

...access to the site (Ott stated that he will continue to request that access be in line with the new alignment of Arbor Lane)

## Manhattan Urban Area Planning Board, continued...

...impact on the scenic buffer area (Cattell stated that the Stone Haven Preliminary Plat for this area dedicated a large Conservation Easement to accommodate the scenic buffer area)

...traffic impact analysis for the development (will be addressed with the future preliminary and final plat)  
 ...extension of existing public utilities and street (Zilkie replied that the development is within the Urban Service Area boundary and can be adequately served by extension of utilities and streets)

In the public hearing questions were raised regarding congestion along Miller Parkway and Amherst Avenue and whether the streets were adequate to handle additional traffic generated by the commercial

development. Another speaker stated that the commercial development did not fit the character of the general area.

In a response to the comments from the audience Rolley stated that this is a request to annex and rezone the property and that, during the platting process, the issues regarding traffic and the City codes will be addressed. She also stated that the Comprehensive Plan promotes neighborhood commercial uses in proximity to residential areas.

**Motion to approve the annexation passed 6-0 and to approve the rezoning 5-1 with Morse opposed.**

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## Movies on the Grass 2009

### Bringing films that make a difference to Manhattan

This is a FREE outdoor film series now in its fifth year. MOG offers campus and community new films that portray current issues in a relaxed setting, with music, entertainment, and raffles from local businesses. This year some events will be on campus, and some off. The LWVMRC is a proud co-sponsor of this event.

**Please note the locations after each movie title below. Showtime begins at dusk, Sunday evenings shortly after 8 pm.** For more information, click on the hyperlink for movie in each description, if you are reading this as a pdf file.

- **August 30: [The Visitor](#)** - a NY encounter between the included and excluded. A widowed college professor travels to New York City to attend a conference and finds a young couple, who turn out to be illegal immigrants, living in his apartment.  
**Showing site: Coffman Commons, K-State campus.**
- **September 6: [Pray the Devil Back to Hell](#)** chronicles the remarkable story of the courageous Liberian women who came together to end a bloody civil war and bring peace to their shattered country.  
**Showing site: Douglass Park**
- **September 13: [Garbage Warrior](#)** portrays renegade architect Michael Reynolds and his green disciples have devoted their time to advancing the art

of "Earthship Biotecture" by building self-sufficient, off-the-grid communities where design and function converge in eco-harmony. *LWVMRC received a generous grant from the LWV Kansas to help bring this film to Manhattan.* **Showing site: Coffman Commons, K-State Campus.**

- **September 20: [The Tiger Next Door](#)** takes a look at the trade in "back yard" exotic species. Experts estimate that there are more tigers in private captivity in the USA than there are roaming wild in the world. **Showing site: Sunset Zoo.**

**ALSO on September 18 and 19 - [Playing for Change](#)** music from the streets of the world. *Playing for Change* is a multimedia movement created to inspire, connect, and bring peace to the world through music. The idea for this project arose from a common belief that music has the power to break down boundaries and overcome distances between people. This film will be shown as part of Aggiefest.

Bring your lawn chair, blanket, or tarp, and enjoy the show! **Please note rain locations:** for Coffman Commons go to Seaton Hall 63; for Douglass Park go to the Annex; and for Sunset Zoo go to the Picnic Shelter. With each film, watch for follow-up discussions and UFM classes. **For more information contact:** Donna Schenck-Hamlin, Hale Library, 532-7454.

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## League Calendar

*Keeping up with the League*

**No Lunch with the League in August.**

- August 5** - Flint Hills Discovery Center Public Meeting, 6:00 -7:30 pm, Man. Public Library
- August 5** - VISION 2025, Last Public Meeting, 7:30 pm, Fire Station Hdq – N Dennison
- August 11** - Monthly Film Series - *Food, Inc.*, 6:30 pm Manhattan Public Library
- August 22** - Flint Hills Community Radio Steering Committee Meeting, 9:00 - 11 am, 2030 Hunting Ave.
- August 25** - **LWVMRC Board meeting, 7:00 pm, location TBA**
- August 26** - Women's Equality Day – 89th Birthday - watch for events
- August 30** - Movies on the Grass: *The Visitor* (see page 6 for more information)
- September 6** - Movies on the Grass: *Pray the Devil Back to Hell*
- September 8** - **Lunch With League, Noon, Manhattan Public Library**
- September 13** - Movies on the Grass: *Garbage Warrior* - co-sponsored by LWVMRC
- September 20** - Movies on the Grass: *The Tiger Next Door*
- September 22** - **LWVMRC Board meeting, 7:00 pm, location TBA**