

## PRESS RELEASE

### League of Women Voters to Study Local Implementation of Open Governmental Meetings Act

The League of Women Voters of Jefferson County will study how local governmental boards and commissions are implementing the West Virginia Open Governmental Meetings Act. The first step in the process is training by the West Virginia Ethics Commission staff on the provisions of the Act. Derek Knopp, staff attorney with the Ethics Commission, will explain the law. He will also talk about how the Ethics Act applies to governmental officials.

The training session, *open to the public*, will be **on Wednesday, April 10, at 7:00 p.m. at Charles Washington Hall, 106 N. George Street**, across from the Jefferson County Courthouse.

This meeting will kick off the LWVJC's survey of local implementation of the Open Meetings guidelines. During LWV candidate forums, candidates expressed the need to update the Act to include more outreach to the public. According to Effie Kallas, President of the LWV of Jefferson County, the LWV encourages informed and active participation in government. "We want to assure local decision makers are providing the public with the information they need regarding important decisions in a timely manner. At the same time, community members need to be aware of state law governing public participation. This study will help explain the process and suggest where state law might be updated."

The LWV study consists of two parts. The first part will be a written survey of local governmental boards and commissions regarding compliance with the provisions of the Open Meetings Act. The second part of the study will be a follow up interview to explore how governmental bodies are going beyond the Open Meetings Act to educate and engage the public. The interview will include discussing how the Open Meetings Act might be changed to address modern advances in social media.

The LWV of Jefferson County encourages the public to check the LWV website for updates as the study proceeds ([lwv-jcwg.org](http://lwv-jcwg.org))

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For further information please call

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