

CONSENSUS DISCUSSION

**SHOULD WE MERGE?**



Greater Red Bank Area



Southern Monmouth County



Western Monmouth



ILO

February 10, 2022

# The question

**Should the four League entities in Monmouth County merge into a single League of Women Voters of Monmouth County?**



Greater Red Bank Area



Southern Monmouth County



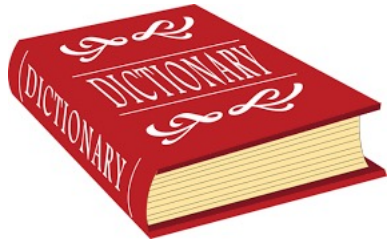
Western Monmouth



ILO

## Our decision-making process

# Consensus



**con·sen·sus** | \ kən-'sen(t)-səsa

general agreement about something : an idea or opinion that is shared by the people in a group

In League, **CONSENSUS** is

- Is a fact-based discussion of an issue to reach a shared position—the “sense” of the group
- Allows for concerns to be incorporated into the consensus position
- Richer output (than voting) without winners or losers

# How did we get here?

Nov. 2021

## 1. ILO Board decision

*to explore, based on successful and growing collaboration, potential savings, and enabling technology*

Nov.

## 2. Merger Exploration Team formed

*by ILO Board with reps from all three local Leagues*

Nov.-Jan.

## 3. Local Board consideration/ Member communication

Early Jan.

## 4. LWVNJ consultation

*Merger Exploration Team met with LWVNJ Executive Director, Board President, and three other LWVNJ Board members for guidance*

Jan.

## 5. White Paper and recommendation

*Merger Exploration Team researched and made recommendation as required by LWVUS guidelines*

# Analysis (Data)



## Analysis

# Current membership distribution

Municipality	LWVSMC	LWVGRBA	LWVWM	Total
Asbury Park	8			8
Atlantic Highlands		4		4
Avon by the Sea	1			1
Belford		1		1
Belmar	5			5
Bradley Beach	4			4
Brick (Ocean County)	2			2
Brielle	3			3
Colts Neck		1	3	4
Deal	1			1
Eatontown	3	3		6
Fair Haven		6		6
Freehold		1	7	8
Hazlet			2	2
Highlands		1		1
Holmdel		2	5	7
Howell	2		1	3
Interlaken	2			2
Keyport		1		1
Lakewood (Ocean County)	2			2
Leonardo		2		2
Lincroft		2		2
Little Silver		4		4
Locust		1		1
Long Branch	7			7
Manalapan			4	4
Manasquan	4			4
Manchester (Ocean County)	1			1
Marlboro			8	8
Matawan		1	3	4
Middletown		8		8
Monmouth Beach	2	1		3
Morganville			1	1
Neptune (including Ocean Grove)	17			17
Ocean (including Oakhurst)	28	2		30
Red Bank	1	10		11
Roseland (Essex County)		1		1
Rumson		2		2
Sea Girt	1			1
Shrewsbury		11	1	12
Spring Lake	3			3
Tinton Falls	4	4		8
Toms River (Ocean County)	1			1
Union Beach		1		1

### THE DATA

- League members in 42 of 53 Monmouth Co. municipalities (~80%)
- 11 municipalities have residents in more than one LWV
- 14 municipalities have 5 or more members

### OBSERVATIONS

- League membership is broadly dispersed across the county, with several pockets of density
- The boundaries among local Leagues are unclear and confusing
- There are Monmouth County municipalities who would benefit from having League members

## Analysis

# Current League profiles

	GRBA	SMC	WM	ILO
Membership	70	105	35	
Dues <small>(Individual/Couple)</small>	\$65/100	\$40/60	\$55/85	
Treasury	\$13,500	\$9,000	\$3,500	\$5,800

# Analysis (Merger Impact)





# Analysis

## What's changed?

### 21<sup>st</sup> CENTURY TECHNOLOGY

- Zoom
- Social Media
- Collaboration tools (Shared drives, documents, etc.)
- New communication channels (Slack, Outreach Circle, etc.)

### MEMBERSHIP MOTIVATION

- Unprecedented membership growth—fueled by people looking to defend democracy
- New members joining through LWVUS and LWVNJ
- Attracted by high-profile collaborative LWV initiatives

### TRACK RECORD

- 3 years of successful cross-county collaboration (Candidate Forums, VOTE411, EYV, Hot Topics, and more)

### DEI COMMITMENT

- A newly explicit LWV priority
- Goal to be more inclusive of historically underserved communities

## Analysis

# The impact on efficiency

### REDUNDANCY

- 90% same agenda across 4 entities

### BUREAUCRACY

- Boards, budgets, and bylaws X 4
- Bank accounts and filings X 4
- LWVNJ and LWVUS paperwork/reporting X 4
- ...

### MONEY and TALENT

- State of the art website to manage membership, internal communication
- Flexible, innovative approach to dues
- New tools (Outreach Circle and Slack)

### LEADERSHIP

- Talent pool smaller in separate entities
- Challenged to fill leadership positions X 4
- Expanded pool: Team strategy, mentorship

# The impact on effectiveness

### COVERAGE

- Expands to include entire County
- Clarifies boundaries and eliminates overlap and confusion

### BRAND IMAGE/ IMPACT

- Simplifies and strengthens our brand (1 not 4)
- Creates a stronger (200+), unified voice to media, public, members
- Communicates a more inclusive, inviting name

### DIGITAL PRESENCE

- Creates (talent and money) for a state of the art website
- Enables a compelling social media presence

### ADVOCACY

- Invites an innovative, new structure (Town Teams) for local action
- Provides broader base for active “portfolio” teams (natural resources, social justice, civic education, etc.)
- Strengthens relationship/clout with County offices and officials

# Analysis Concerns

## LOCAL ACTION

Lose our grassroots presence

## COUNTY ACTION

No ILO focused exclusively on County

## MEMBERSHIP

Lose visibility to attract/retain members at municipal level

## SOCIAL RELATIONSHIPS

Lose personal contact in larger group