

CITIZENS LEAGUE REPORT

No. 8

**CL statement of Policy & Procedures
for Reporting on the qualifications of
Candidates for Public Office**

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CITIZENS LEAGUE OF GREATER MINNEAPOLIS

A Statement of the Policy and Procedures to be Followed by the Candidate Review Committee in Investigating and Reporting on the Qualifications of Candidates for Public Office

The Citizens League of Greater Minneapolis is a voluntary organization of citizens, now numbering about 1800, established for the purpose of improving local government in Minneapolis and Hennepin County. It is non-partisan and non-political.

The Citizens League does not take stands on candidates for public office. The League is, however, concerned with providing unbiased information about candidates for local offices so the citizens of Hennepin County can make intelligent choice of their elected officials.

For many years the Minneapolis League of Women Voters and the Minneapolis Morning Tribune have served the community by gathering and distributing this information prior to elections. This year the League of Women Voters is sponsoring ward meetings in all wards on May 5 to acquaint voters with candidates in lieu of reporting facts about candidates. The Citizens League, through its Candidate Review Committee, will undertake to supply voters with information on candidates. Present plans call for the Minneapolis Tribune to publish the Citizens League's report well in advance of the primary election on May 11.

The following paragraphs describe the policy and procedures to be followed by the Candidate Review Committee.

General Policy

The Citizens League's sole function in candidate review is to report biographical facts about each candidate and facts bearing on his fitness for office as determined in a personal interview and a review of his qualifications and record. The League does not have a slate, does not endorse, oppose or back candidates, does not encourage candidates to run.

The Candidate Review Committee

The Candidate Review Committee is appointed by the League President with the approval of the Board of Directors. The Co-Chairmen are Josiah E. Brill and Harry E. Leonard. The 50 to 60 members are widely representative of the political, economic and social groups in the community and the sections of the City from which various officials are to be elected.

The Board of Directors and the Candidate Review Report

The report on candidates' qualifications shall be the responsibility of the Candidate Review Committee. The report shall be presented to the Board of Directors for approval prior to its release and distribution, but the Board shall only have power to approve the report or send it back to the Committee with suggestions for change.

Gathering the Information

The Candidate Review Committee shall gather facts on the candidates in three ways: (1) by a written questionnaire; (2) by miscellaneous sources, such as newspaper stories, campaign literature and voting records; and (3) through a personal interview.

The Questionnaire

Candidates shall be asked to fill in the answers to a written questionnaire which shall be mailed to them. The questionnaire shall cover the following items:

1. Name, age, marital status, dependents.
2. Address, how long resident in ward.
3. Present occupation, title and duties.
4. Previous occupations.
5. Education.
6. Previous political experience.
7. Membership in professional organizations.
8. Extent and nature of participation in civic organizations.
9. Military service - dates - types of experience
10. Stand on issues.
11. Request for a photograph
12. Three references.
13. Planned affiliation with political caucus, if applicable

If a candidate fails to return his questionnaire the Committee's report shall so state.

The Personal Interview

After the candidate has returned his questionnaire and the Committee has gathered information from miscellaneous sources, he shall be invited to a personal interview. The interviews shall be held at convenient times for the candidates, under as similar conditions as possible and shall be completed in 30 to 45 minutes.

The Co-Chairmen shall appoint interviewing teams of five Committee members each, subject to the Committee's approval. These teams shall be as representative as possible. If possible, teams interviewing candidates for office representing a ward or district shall have two members from such ward or district.

At least three of the five team members should be present at the interviews they are to handle, and if three are not present, the candidate can ask to be reinterviewed within the next three days by a fuller team. All Committee members may attend interviews and may suggest questions they want asked, but only the members of the interviewing team shall be permitted to question the candidates.

All members of the interviewing team who are present for the interview shall submit their comments on the candidate to the Committee Co-Chairmen in writing without discussing the candidates among themselves. The Co-Chairmen will then meet with the team to work out with them their report on the candidates they have interviewed. Each team may submit as many reports as there are differences of opinion, and the Co-Chairmen and the whole Committee shall attempt to reconcile the reports, so that one report can be agreed on. Minority reports can be filed with the Board of Directors.

If a candidate fails to come for an interview, the report shall so state.

The Report

The report shall present information that throws light on the candidates in terms of their initiative, ability, interest, integrity, knowledge of the job, past performance and promise. It shall not make reference to religion, race, color or sex.

If possible the biographical information given on each candidate in the report shall be submitted to the candidate for factual correction prior to the final printing and release of the report. If the candidate's stand on a particular issue is known, such information may be included in the report and the candidate shall be given a chance to state his reasons for the position taken.

In the case of candidates for judge, the results of the Bar Association poll may be included in the report at the Committee's discretion, but if it is included for one candidate it must be included for all candidates for the same office.