

**LWW**

**LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS<sup>®</sup>**  
OF THE ONEONTA AREA

**LWW**

**LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS<sup>®</sup>**  
OF THE COOPERSTOWN AREA



# LWV Moderator Training

LWVNY CONVENTION

ALBANY, NEW YORK

SATURDAY, JUNE 3, 2023

# Goal for today

- Support League members to be successful moderators

# Sub goals for today

- Learn purpose and structure of a Candidate events
- Learn expectations of moderator
- Learn how to use and adapt a script/template and timeline
- Learn how to manage non-routine and awkward occurrences

# Voter Service - Heart of the League

- Foremost non-partisan volunteer organization in political arena
- Brings League visibility
- Effective support of the political process
- Candidate events play major role

# Hands up!

- How anxious are you now to be a moderator? Scale of 1 (none) to 10 (high)
- Aside from anxiety, how prepared do you feel to moderate right now? Scale of 1 (peeing in my pants) to 10 (send me in; I'm ready!)
- Shout out – what worries you most right now about moderating?

# Candidate events

- Inform the electorate about:
- the issues
- the candidates
- the political process

# How to be interesting

- Voters ask questions
- Voters hear directly from Candidates
- Voters feel engaged in the political process
- Skillful moderator



# How to be Fair and Unbiased

- Candidates present themselves in an unbiased public forum
- Focused timekeeper
- Thorough preparation before and during the event

# Characteristics of a Successful Moderator

- Political and personal neutrality
- Exhibits tact, sense of fair play
- Alert and able to make quick decisions
- Gracious, while being firm
- Reasonable sense of humor

# Desired Outcome

- Maintain control of room
- Arbiter of fairness
- Set tone and provide atmosphere of calm conversation that supports disagreement
- An effective, interesting and unbiased event

# Characteristics of a Successful Moderator

- You are in charge

# Characteristics of a Successful Moderator

- You must control  
the room

# Template or Script

- The template we share with you today has been used dozens of times. It works.
- BUT.....
- Review and adapt the template

# Basic Structure

- Many rules for organizers see Toolkit
  - <https://lwwny.org/local-leagues/#tool>
- Welcoming remarks
- History of LWV (men as members)
- Statement of non-partisan policy and moderator's neutrality
- Vote411.org
- Compliment to the audience

# More Basic Structure

- Moderator makes introductions
- Moderator reviews guidelines/ground rules (no recording, no campaign swag, no booing or clapping)
- Moderator announces procedure for asking questions



# Basic Structure continued

- Candidates make opening remarks
- Audience participates in a question-and-answer period
- Moderator gives summary of topics covered
- Candidates make closing remarks
- Moderator concludes with voting information

# Timeline

- Know beginning, ending times
- Count minutes for intro
- Number of candidates to speak
- How long for opening remarks (# of candidates X minutes)
- From end time, count minutes for moderator's conclusion
- How long for concluding remarks (# of candidates X minutes)
- Leaves time allotted for Q and A

# Different types of Candidate Event Structures

- Audience asks questions
- Audience submits questions in writing
- Panel of journalists ask questions
- Combinations of the above

# Different Structures continued

- Candidates take turns answering with time limit
- Candidates have opportunity for rebuttal (with red cards)
- Candidates answer questions with cumulative time limit

# Different Structures continued

- In person events
- Zoom events
- Live streaming events with recordings available
- Combinations of the above

# Before the Start

- Have info about the candidates, the expected audience, hot issues, community factions



Practice with the Script

# At the event – arrive early

Meet with the candidates:

- Introductions (include the timekeeper)
- Name pronunciation and titles
- Review ground rules, time limits, and timing procedures
- Draw lots for order of opening remarks (reverse for closing)



# Ground Rules for Questions

- Pertinent to the issues
- Not designed to attack a particular speaker
- Not repetitive of issues already covered
- May have to be repeated, based on format

# Murphy's/Murray's Law

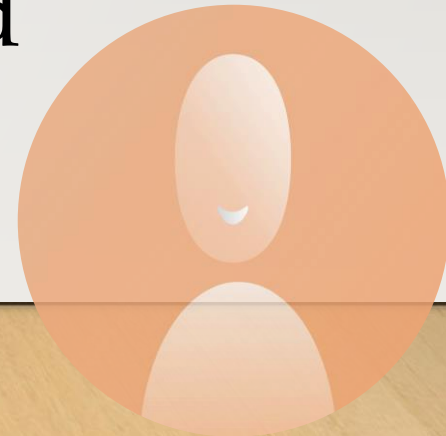
- You can be prepared!

# Non-routine occurrences

- Key person arriving late – Beware the Empty Chair
- Need more chairs for audience
- Others?
- Use your intelligent adaptation
- Avoid these with reminders in advance to all

# Awkward Situations

- Candidate or questioner goes over time limit
- Unruly Candidate or questioner
- Challenge to your authority
- Challenge to how the event is conducted



# More Awkwardness

- Personal attack on candidate
- Statement instead of a question from audience
- Cranky audience member
- Cranky/misbehaving audience
- Uninvited candidate shows up, insists on participating

# You have control of the room

- Call for a recess to deal with a candidate or audience member
- Call for security to remove a disorderly person
- Adjourn the meeting if it gets out of control (don't wait too long)

# Combating Butterflies

- Take deep breaths
- Focus on the forum, not yourself
- Don't apologize for your nervousness
- The audience wants you to do well. They won't notice minor things. They are so glad they are not in your shoes!
- Start and end strong.

# How Not to PANIC!

- Think the whole evening through including how you will dress
- Imagine what will go wrong and what you will do or say
- Think and practice your posture, demeanor, and tone of voice as you practice the script



# Next Steps

- Volunteer to be a timekeeper or help screen questions
- Watch a recorded event and take notes about what worked and didn't
- Attend a Candidates event and observe the Moderator. Debrief at the end of the evening

# More Next Steps

- Co-Moderate and present the beginning remarks and closing statement
- Moderate an event with another moderator in the front row for support
- Be confident and Moderate your own event

# Hands up!

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**Thank you for  
your kind  
attention**



**GO**

**MODERATE**