**LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS®**

 **Carrollton - Carroll County**

 P.O. Box 1014
 Carrollton, GA 30112-1014

**2019 CANDIDATE FORUM PROTOCOLS**

**A Brief Overview of the Evening**

The Forum will begin at 6:30 pm. Candidates should be in their seats at 6:20 pm. A representative of the League of Women Voters of Carrollton - Carroll County will welcome all participants, give brief statements about the League, and introduce the Moderator. The Moderator will welcome the participants. The Moderator will introduce the Assistant Moderator, the Operational Chairperson, the Timekeeper, the League Monitors, the Media, and the Candidates, stating the office they are seeking. The Moderator will give a quick overview of the Protocols. The Moderator will encourage members of the Audience and Media to submit questions for use in the Forum. Notecards for that purpose will be given out by the League Monitors. Candidates will give prepared opening remarks of equal length in time as prescribed by the Moderator. The Moderator will ask for questions from the Audience and Media to be written and given to the designated League Monitors. The Moderator will begin with questions generated by the LWVCCC Voter Services Committee and proceed through written submitted questions from the Audience and Media. The Assistant Moderator will vet the questions, arrange the questions by related topics, combine duplicates, shorten them when appropriate, and give them to the Moderator. The Moderator will direct the questions to the Candidates and tell them the time constraints. Please note that all questions submitted cannot be answered in the time allotted. After the Q&A period, each Candidate will make closing remarks and or rebuttals of equal time as prescribed by the Moderator. The Moderator will thank the participants and bring the Forum to a close. Candidates are encouraged to speak informally with Voters after the Forum.

**Candidate Protocol in Preparation for the Forum**

Candidates should read the Protocols before the Forum and may contact the Candidate Forum Chairperson if there are questions.

Candidates are advised to prepare their opening remarks prior to the Forum. These are limited to the length of time prescribed by the Moderator generally depending on the number of Candidates presenting.

Candidates are not permitted to bring or display campaign props or materials in the Forum room such as buttons, t-shirts, banners, signs, posters, handouts, literature, or other campaign materials. These items may be displayed in the hallway outside of the Forum room. Tables for such items will not be provided. Candidates or their campaign staff may bring a small folding table and display such items and or give supporters campaign materials in the hallway outside the Forum room.

It is the Candidate’s responsibility to notify their campaign staff and or supporters prior to the Forum of this Protocol and make sure that they follow the Protocol.

The Candidate may wear a nametag. Prepared notes and paper for note-taking during the Forum are allowed. Use of a phone or computer are not permitted.

Note that it is possible that this Forum may be recorded for radio or television. Your acceptance to participate in the event will serve as permission to be recorded at the event.

The LWVCCC assumes no responsibility for recordings by Media or the public.

If a Candidate has an unexpected conflict and is unable to attend, he or she should notify the LWVCCC Candidate Forum Chairperson as soon as possible by phone. In the event that there are two Candidates running for the same office and one of those Candidates is not present, for whatever reason, that portion of the Forum will be canceled. If the Forum has just that one office in contention, the entire Forum will be canceled. In the event that there are three or more Candidates running for the same office and one of those Candidates is not present, for whatever reason, the Forum will proceed with the remaining Candidates.

**Candidate Protocol Upon Arriving at the Forum Site**

Candidates will make sure that campaign staff and supporters do not bring or display campaign props or materials in the Forum room as noted above. In addition, Audience members who wear campaign t-shirts should be asked by the Candidate to leave the Forum room and only return with their t-shirt covered or inside out.

Candidates may wear a name tag, as noted above.

Candidates' seats will be identified by name displays which are placed in order of District number or office being sought; second by alphabetical order without regard to party affiliation.

Candidates should be seated 10 minutes before the Forum begins. Candidates who arrive late may be seated when they arrive; however, if a Candidate misses any portion of the Forum, the Moderator will not backtrack.

The Assistant Moderator will conduct a drawing to determine who will answer first. The order will rotate in Candidates' opening and closing statements and in their responses to questions.

Candidates will be provided with water, notepads and pens.

Candidates should silence all cell phones, or place on vibrate. Candidates should not in any way correspond on cell phones during the Forum, including texting, unless it is an emergency at which time the Candidate should notify the Moderator.

**Candidate Protocol During the Forum**

Candidates will remain seated during the Forum, or, at the discretion of the Moderator, stand to make their opening and closing remarks.

Candidates are asked to speak directly into the microphone, if one is provided, so they can be heard throughout the auditorium, and, when applicable, on radio and/or television. If no microphone is provided, Candidates are asked to speak clearly at a sufficient volume.

Candidates will have a prescribed time at the beginning of the Forum to make prepared opening remarks and at the end of the Forum to make rebuttals and/or closing remarks. Time limitations are at the discretion of the Moderator, will be equal for each Candidate, and will be monitored by the Timekeeper.

To insure that overall Forum time limits are observed, the Moderator will set limits on the time Candidates are given for answering questions. Time limitations are at the discretion of the Moderator, will be equal for each Candidate, and will be monitored by the Timekeeper.

Candidates will observe the Timekeeper's warnings. The Timekeeper will give remaining time warnings and a stop warning.

Audience and Media questions, submitted on notecards, may be directed to a particular Candidate or to all Candidates at the discretion of the Moderator.

Candidates may ask the Moderator to repeat a question, but may not ask for clarification after the question has been answered by one or more Candidate as it would give an unfair disadvantage to the Candidates who have already answered. Clarification of questions will be made at the Moderator's discretion. Candidates are advised to write the questions down and limit asking for questions to be repeated.

Candidates will respond only within the parameters of each question. Other unrelated issues or platform positions or rebuttals should be given during the opening and closing remarks.

Candidates will address each other with respect. Candidates will not interrupt each other. Candidates are advised not to make personal attacks on other Candidates.

Candidates may not refer by name, quote or paraphrase to other political figures or Candidates. A Candidate may say, ‘according to the White House Administration’ … etc, but may not call a political figure by name or specific title. This is for legal ramifications.

Candidates are advised to only address issues that are in the realm of the office for which they are running.

Candidates may not directly ask for an audience response during the forum.

Candidates are encouraged to speak informally with the Voters prior to 6:20 pm and after the Forum.

**Audience & Media Protocol During the Forums**

The Audience and Media are not permitted to bring or display campaign props or materials in the Forum room such as buttons, t-shirts, banners, signs, posters, handouts, literature, or other campaign materials. These items may be displayed in the hallway outside of the Forum room. Anyone who is wearing a campaign t-shirt will be asked to leave the Forum room and return only with their t-shirt covered or inside out.

The Audience and Media should silence all cell phones, or place on vibrate. The Audience and Media should not answer or otherwise speak on a cell phone inside the Forum room. Texting is permitted if done discreetly.

Because of the League's commitment to nonpartisanship, the Audience and Media should refrain from clapping, applauding or demonstrating in other ways support or nonsupport for a Candidate. The Audience and Media should refrain from raising their hands to be called on by the Moderator. If there is a problem, such as hearing a Candidate or need for a notecard, the Audience and Media should notify a League Monitor, as designated, who will notify the Moderator if needed.

If an Audience member or member of the Media needs to leave the Forum room, he or she should do so quietly.

The Audience and Media will be asked to write questions for the Candidates on note cards provided or they may bring prepared questions to be submitted. We ask that there be one question per piece of paper. To insure accuracy, please write legibly. Do not sign or give your name. Audience and Media questions may be directed to a particular Candidate or to all Candidates at the discretion of the Moderator. Questions will be collected by League of Women Voters Monitors, who will briefly vet them and deliver them to the Assistant Moderator. The Assistant Moderator will vet the questions, arrange the questions by related topics, combine duplicates, shorten them when appropriate, and give them to the Moderator. Please note that all questions cannot be answered in the time allotted.