

Report of the East Valley Team Maricopa County Government Study

The East Valley Team of the League of Women Voters of Metropolitan Phoenix report on the Maricopa County government study was presented at the Program Planning General meeting on January 25, 2014.

Consensus was reached on the retention of our current position in support of charter home rule for Maricopa County with the inclusion of the steps specified in the state constitutional requirements.

We submit the following wording for the position to be voted upon at the Annual Meeting:

“The League of Women Voters of Metropolitan Phoenix supports charter home rule for Maricopa County.

The Arizona Constitution requires an elected charter committee to compose a charter. Maricopa County voters then vote on the proposed charter, as well as appointment vs. election of row officers and taxation as additional and separate questions.”

On the question “Should row officers be appointed or elected?” there was no consensus. There was general agreement with the idea row officers should be elected if they make policy and appointed if they are administrative. The determination of what constitutes “policy” is a very complicated issue. This would need further in-depth investigation.

It was considered important that row officers be accountable to the Board of Supervisors for their administration and budget. While by law they are responsible to the Board of Supervisors, the fact that the row officers are elected muddies the waters.

At this time, it is suggested that these issues remain on hold, but investigated when there is actual movement toward the writing of a charter. The East Valley Team at this time has concluded the study and research portion of the Maricopa County government study. The East Valley Team and Metropolitan Phoenix League should now put their emphasis on education about county government. There is a great need for education about county government and the election of county officials.