



LEAGUE OF WOMEN
VOTERS
OF METRO TULSA

METRO TULSA VOTER VOLUME 3, ISSUE 11

NOVEMBER 2010

THE REASON FOR THE LEAGUE

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

CALENDAR OF
EVENTS 2

WHAT'S BEST
FOR TULSA? 3

VOTER SERVICES
"PREPARING FOR
THE HARVEST" 4

HOLIDAY PARTY
SAVE THE DATE 6

THIS YEAR'S
VOTER'S GUIDE:
A THANK-YOU 7

ELECTION RE-
SULTS 8

NOVEMBER UNIT
STUDY MATERI-
ALS 12

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- What's the Right that's most often taken for granted?
- How many new voters did volunteers register at this year's Tulsa State Fair?
- Re-cap of Oklahoma election results

What is the most important right we have as citizens of this wonderful country?

I know that I'm "preaching to the choir" because as members of the League of Women Voters you know the answer – the right to vote! By the time you receive this, the 2010 Election will be history. The League has worked tirelessly all across this country to encourage and inform voters - just as we have been doing for the last 90 years.

Non-Partisan: Always non-partisan when it comes to candidates or parties but prepared to take a stand on an issue if it is one we have studied, reached consensus, and adopted a position. Of the eleven State Questions, the League prepared pros and cons on six of them and on the five we had a position, the reasons for our conclusion. I can only hope citizens took advantage of the opportunity to make up their minds before they went into the voting booth! How long did you stand in line?

Taking Stands: We knew that the stands we took on some questions ("Voter ID" and "English Only") might not put us in the majority on election day but we believe that "The right to vote is the first principle of a free society and any unnecessary restriction on that right strikes at the very heart of freedom." For that reason we will be continuing with our court challenge to the constitutionality of both issues.

Informed Voters: Here in the Tulsa Metropolitan League, thousands of hours have gone into answering questions from the public at our office, registering potential voters, gathering information (from the candidates), formatting, assembling, posting (lwvtulsa.org and VOTE411) and distributing our Voter Guide, presenting a community forum on the state questions, and assisting with or co-sponsoring various Candidate Forums. Thank you, Voter Service Co-Chairs, Liza Frankenberger and Blanca Zavala!

Issues and Study : Though we are primarily known for our Voter Service activities, we are truly a multi-issue organization. Are you concerned about the environment? There is a wonderful group being organized under Julie Skye that would love to have you join them. The League has a long history of involvement in this area and was instrumental in the creation of the Oklahoma Department of Environmental Quality.

Interested in how Tulsa's form of government is working and whether changes need to be made? That is the focus of a local study that we adopted even before the recent proposals (from some citizens and some members of the City Council) to change it were announced. Sheila Swearingen is chairing this study and we'll be looking closely at these proposals and providing opportunities for the public to also become informed. The League was actively involved with the effort to change our form of government from City Commission to Strong Mayor/Council.

LWVMT Volunteers: Do you have an hour a week or a month that you could participate in League activities? We have always been a volunteer organization. In fact there is only one part-time paid staff person in the whole state! But with so many members now working full-time we are stretched pretty thin. We may have exhausted our wonderful new Administrative Director (yep, she was the only League employee!) and she had to resign for medical reasons. Sheila Swearingen is acting in an interim capacity until we know just what we are going to do.



We are blessed with an outstanding Board of Directors giving of their time and money and many off-board members also contributing – *thank you for all you do!*

- Co-President, Kathy Hinkle

November 2010

Calendar of Events

Tue Nov 2, 2010

Election Day

Sun Nov 7, 2010

2pm - 3pm Communication Summit (Janet Spaulding)

3:30pm - 4:30pm Executive Committee meeting

Where: 3336 East 32nd Street, Suite 1B, Tulsa, OK 74135

Wed Nov 10, 2010

12pm - 1pm LWV Local Study Committee

Where: Conference Room, 3336 E. 32nd Street, Ste. 1B,
Tulsa OK 74135

Thu Nov 11, 2010

Thu Nov 11, 2010

Office Closed for Veteran's Day

Mon Nov 15, 2010

6pm - 8pm LWVMT Board Meeting

Where: 3336 East 32nd Street, Suite 1B, Tulsa, OK 74135

Tue Nov 16, 2010

12pm - 1pm Midtown Unit meeting @ LWV Office

Where: 3336 East 32nd Street, Suite 1B, Tulsa, OK 74135

Wed Nov 17, 2010

12pm - 1pm LWV Local Study Committee

Where: Conference Room, 3336 E. 32nd Street, Ste. 1B,
Tulsa OK 74135

Sat Nov 20, 2010

2pm Tulsa Metro Voter DEADLINE

Send articles to newsletter@lwvtulsa.org

Mon Nov 22, 2010

12pm - 1pm North Unit meeting

Where: North Point Business Center, 205 E Pine St # 501,
Tulsa, OK 74106-4858

Tue Nov 23, 2010

7am - 8am Downtown Unit meeting

Where: Blue Dome Diner, 311 East 2nd Street, Tulsa, OK
74120-1804

6pm - 7pm South Unit meeting

Where: Kaiser Library, 5202 South Hudson Avenue, Tulsa,
OK 74135-7500

Thu Nov 25, 2010 and Fri Nov 26, 2010

Office Closed for Thanksgiving Holiday

Looking Ahead:

December 2010

Sun Dec 5, 2010

3pm - 5pm LWVMT Holiday Party

Where: Sophian Plaza Lobby, 1500 S.
Frisco Ave., Tulsa OK 74119

Happy Holidays

Please send December 2010 and January 2011 calendar items to newsletter@lwvtulsa.org no later than Nov 20

WHAT'S BEST FOR TULSA? A STUDY OF CITY GOVERNMENT AND ELECTIONS, 2010 - 2011

YOU MAY BE HEARING A LOT ABOUT WHAT'S WRONG WITH TULSA'S CITY GOVERNMENT THESE DAYS.

Last May, Tulsa League members voted to study Tulsa city government and elections. Over the last few months, there have been many articles in the *Tulsa World*, interviews on local radio and television and conversations on the street pointing to the need for a change of some sort in city government. There seem to be lots of opinions and ideas about what will be best for Tulsa.

The League was involved in the long process of changing Tulsa form of government in the late 1980's. There had been many attempts to change from the commissioner and mayor form of government to the current mayor and city council form. But it wasn't approved by voters until 1989 and didn't take effect until May of 1990.

Tulsa's mayor at that time, Rodger Randle, credits the League with providing clear information to citizens and voters during that long campaign to adopt a "strong mayor/city council" form of government. He told a group of League members that he's delighted to see the League taking up the issue of city government once more. And he also issued a challenge to the Tulsa League. He asked the League to include, as part of its study, an investigation of how to increase participation — and increase the diversity of that participation — in city government.

The next few months will be a time for members and the community to begin the process of understanding the proposals for changing out form of government once again. We need to participate and continue to ask the question, "What's best for Tulsa?"

STUDY MATERIALS ARE INCLUDED IN THE NOVEMBER NEWSLETTER AND AVAILABLE ON THE WEBSITE.



November Units

Participants at LWVMT November unit meetings will begin studying the history and background of Tulsa's city government and determining the direction of the study.

Study materials are included as an insert in this month's *Tulsa Metro Voter* and may also be found on the website www.lwvtulsa.org.

VOTER SERVICES GETTING READY FOR THE HARVEST



Voter Registration Training at the LWV Tulsa office September 2010

Registering voters at the Tulsa State Fair from September 30 to October 10 once again gave the League an opportunity to interact with our community. Thousands of people got to know a little more about the work the League does and what is all about.

Practicing democracy, keeping an open mind and demonstrating equal representation for all were at

least some of the words describing the League. Of

course there was a little bit of everything. Some praises and some negative comments were taken as well. Some extreme visitors to the booth tried to impose their own version of “Oklahoma Values” by insisting that the current President of the U.S. was not legitimate and that someone needed to shoot him – this was one of the scariest comments we had while providing the public with voter information.

In all I am very thankful to all of the League of Women Voters volunteers who took time out of their busy schedules to help cover the 3-hour shift designated for everybody. People were very thankful especially for the Voter Guides and the Constitution booklets.

Volunteers continued voter registration even after the October 8th deadline for voting in the November 2 election. We had the privilege of registering 310 people at the Tulsa State Fair and 285 of them will be eligible to vote in the general election,

Registering people to vote and empowering our community through voter education mean nothing if not put into action. The Voter Services Committee is proud to say that we have experienced those powerful words, and some in our community are more knowledgeable today thanks to the information provided by the League.

All of this could have not been accomplished working alone. It was only accomplished through team effort. Therefore, we would like to thank our partners, the Radio Station La Que Buena for providing the booth space, the American Dream Coalition for coordination and the League of Women Voters volunteers for a tremendous job. Well done and Gracias Amigos!

Blanca Zavala, Voter Services Co-Chair

STATE QUESTION FORUM REPORT

The Tulsa League presented an educational forum about the eleven Oklahoma State Questions on October 19 at Fellowship Congregational Church. Panelists Wayne Greene, editorial writer for the Tulsa World, Dr. Kenneth Hicks, Chair of History and Political Science at Rogers State University, and Rep. John Wright, from Oklahoma District 76 in Broken Arrow, did a fine job of discussing each of the state questions. Deborah Whittaker organized the forum and moderated the panel discussion; Kathy Hinkle moderated the question and answer period, graciously giving time to a representative of the “Vote Yes on 744” coalition to present their view. The audience was well served by the information and the civil tone of the discussion, even when the panelists had opposing points of view.

On October 25th the League partnered with the *Tulsa County News* and the Southwest Tulsa Chamber to present a debate between Seth Watkins and Glen Mulready, candidates for House District 68. Seth Watkins contacted the Tulsa County News a few days before the debate and advised them that he was not able to attend, but his written notice arrived the day of the event. The League was advised that he would not attend only a few hours before the debate. Kathy Hinkle introduced the candidate and debate sponsors, provided some insight into the history of the League and its “no one-candidate” debates policy. The audience could then ask questions of Mr. Mulready without the League’s assistance, to ensure the League did not risk our non-partisan stance by appearing to favor one candidate.

Lisa Frankenberger, Voter Services Co-Chair

TULSA LEAGUE VOTERS GUIDE

Tulsa League Voter Guides were a hot item this month. The League printed 5,000 this year and probably could have given out more than that. The Tulsa City County Library system distributed 1,000 (100 per branch). There were reports that they were snapped up by library patrons within days. Volunteers also made sure that the guides got to civic organizations, League supporters and contributors, local churches and community centers.

The Voters Guide was also available for free download from the Tulsa League’s website. And lots of voters stopped by the League office to pick up a copy, particularly during the last week before the election.

Publication of the 2010 LWVMT General Election Voter Guide was made possible by a grant from the George Kaiser Family Foundation. Contributors Ken Greenwood, Georgianna W. Oliver and Jack Reaves,

Asphalt and Fuel Supply, provided support that made this year’s Voters Guide possible.

LWVTULSA
NOVEMBER
VOTER

The LWV of Metropolitan Tulsa Education Fund supports the publication of the LWVMT Voter Guide.

Sheila Swearingen, Voter Services Volunteer

Holiday Calendar Alert

O Come All Ye Faithful.....

...to the League Holiday Party

Hark the Herald Angels Sing.....

...for light hors d'oeuvres, holiday cheer and the sounds of the season

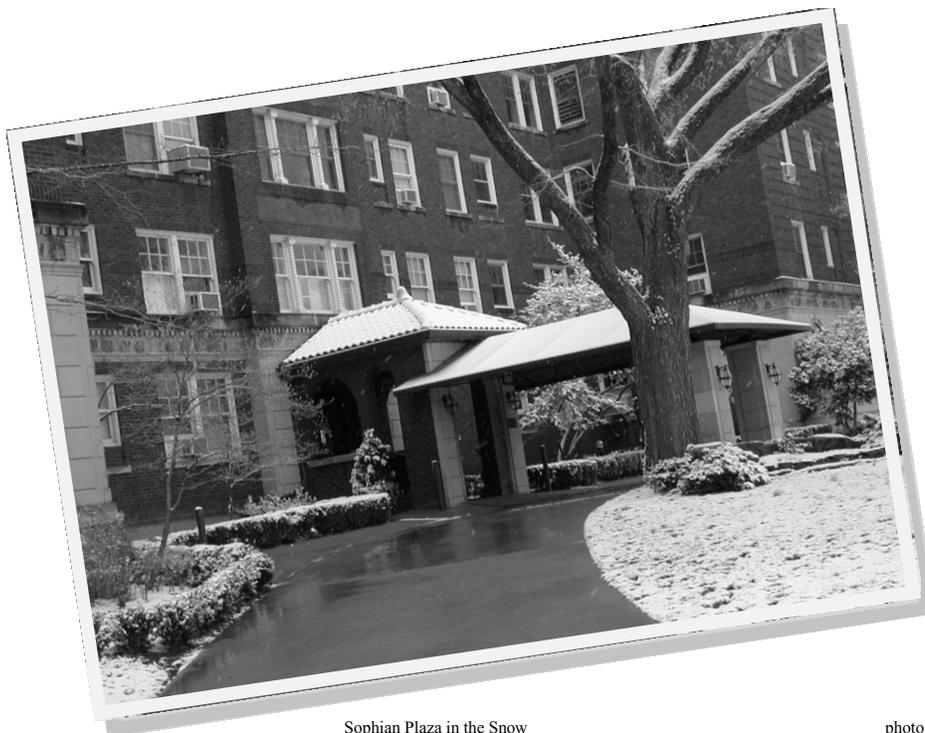
Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas.....

Sunday, December 5, 2010

3:00 to 5:00pm

Sophian Plaza – Lobby

1500 S. Frisco Ave. Tulsa, OK 74119

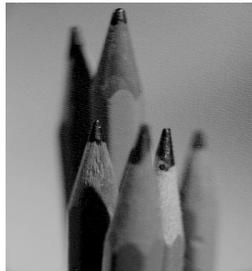


Sophian Plaza in the Snow

photo by Sheila Swearingen

**WARM UP THIS WINTER FOR A GOOD
CAUSE
LWVMT OFFICE SUPPLIES**

Deborah Whittaker has donated three lovely hand-crocheted, chenille scarves to be raffled off to help our League office purchase copy paper, stamps, and other office supplies. Raffle tickets are \$1.00 each. Contact Deborah at 639-1559 for tickets, or buy them at the Xmas party before the drawing.



~THANK YOU~

The information on your website for the Nov. 2 election is invaluable. Although I had sample newspaper ballots in hand, the format, data and commentary proved to be immensely helpful in preparing for Tuesday's election. Keep up the great work!

~Diane Tracas~

2010 SELECTED ELECTION RESULTS

Unofficial results

GOVERNOR

2,229 OF 2,229 PRECINCTS - 100%

X-Mary Fallin (R)625,433 60%

Jari Askins (D)409,206 40%

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

2,229 OF 2,229 PRECINCTS - 100%

X-Todd Lamb (R)659,175 64%

Kenneth Corn (D) 334,663 32%

Richard Prawdzienski (I)35,652 3 %

ATTORNEY GENERAL

2,229 OF 2,229 PRECINCTS - 100%

X-Scott Pruitt (R) 666,327 65%

Jim Priest (D)357,114 35%

STATE TREASURER

2,229 OF 2,229 PRECINCTS - 100%

X-Ken Miller(R).....675,515 66.57%

Stephen E. Covert(D)..... 339,272 33.43%

SUPERINTENDENT PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

2,229 OF 2,229 PRECINCTS - 100%

Susan Paddack (D) 386,958 38%

x-Janet Barresi (R)573,652 56%

Richard Cooper (I)65,228 6%

LABOR COMMISSIONER

2,229 OF 2,229 PRECINCTS - 100%

Lloyd Fields (D)*362,753 36%

x-Mark Costello (R) 649,672 64%

INSURANCE COMMISSIONER

2,229 OF 2,229 PRECINCTS - 100%

Kim Holland (D)*464,247 45%

x-John Doak (R)555,677 54%

*= incumbent

x = winner of the election

Source: Tulsa World

http://www.tulsaworld.com/news/article.aspx?sub-jectid=262&articleid=20101103_11_A5_hrimgs171709

2010 SELECTED ELECTION RESULTS

SQ 744

Would fund public education to at least the per-pupil average of neighboring states.

2,229 OF 2,229 PRECINCTS - 100%

FAILED

SQ 746

Would require Oklahomans to show a valid state- or government-issued photo ID when voting.

2,229 OF 2,229 PRECINCTS - 100%

PASSED

SQ 747

Would allow voters to set term limits on secondary statewide offices such as lieutenant governor, state auditor, attorney general and state treasurer.

2,229 OF 2,229 PRECINCTS - 100%

PASSED

SQ 748

Would restructure the commission that deals with legislative reapportionment if the Legislature cannot redraw districts after the census.

2,229 OF 2,229 PRECINCTS - 100%

PASSED

SQ 750

Would make it easier to get an initiative petition on the ballot by reducing the number of signatures required.

2,229 OF 2,229 PRECINCTS - 100%

PASSED

SQ 751

Would make English the official language of Oklahoma.

2,229 OF 2,229 PRECINCTS - 100%

PASSED

SQ 752

Would add members to the state's Judicial Nominating Commission who are not attorneys.

2,229 OF 2,229 PRECINCTS - 100%

PASSED

SQ 754

Would cancel out the potential passage of SQ 744 by preventing the Legislature from being compelled by a formula to provide funding at a certain level.

2,229 OF 2,229 PRECINCTS - 100%

FAILED

SQ 755

Would forbid state courts from considering international law or Shariah Law when deciding cases.

2,229 OF 2,229 PRECINCTS - 100%

PASSED

SQ 756

Would prevent a person or employer from being forced to participate in a health care system.

2,229 OF 2,229 PRECINCTS - 100%

PASSED

SQ 757

Would increase the amount of surplus money the state puts into its "rainy day" fund from 10 percent to 15 percent.

2,229 OF 2,229 PRECINCTS - 100%

PASSED

Information is from Tulsa World article at http://www.tulsaworld.com/news/article.aspx?subjectid=262&articleid=20101103_11_A5_hrimgs171709

We Are On The Web!

www.lwvtulsa.org

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OF METRO TULSA**

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A D V O C A T E , E D U C A T E , P A R T I C I P A T E

**LEAGUE OF WOMEN
VOTERS
OF METRO TULSA**

MISSION

The League of Women Voters, a nonpartisan political organization, encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy.

WHAT'S BEST FOR TULSA?
A Study of City Government and Elections, 2010 - 2011
League of Women Voters of Tulsa
Study Materials for November 2010

Tulsa League members voted at the May 2010 annual meeting to study current City of Tulsa Charter municipal elections. The study will include

- Candidate filing requirements for City of Tulsa elections
- Non-partisan elections vs. partisan elections
- Scheduling of municipal elections
- Terms of office for Mayor, Auditor and City Council
- Staggered terms for city councilors
- Runoff elections, and instant runoff voting
- Possible other issues that may be discovered in the course of the study.

The study should include projections of costs to taxpayers for elections and any proposed reforms.

This study supports the League's commitment to an election process that is fair, open and encourages citizen participation.

BACKGROUND

City of Tulsa Charter History

Reprinted from foreword to City of Tulsa Amended Charter

The City of Tulsa was established as a town in 1898 under territorial law while Oklahoma was designated as Indian Territory of the United States. After Oklahoma became the 46th state in 1907, the City of Tulsa adopted its first city charter on July 3, 1908, which was approved by Oklahoma Governor Charles Haskell on January 5, 1909.

The City was governed by a Board of Commissioners comprised of a Mayor and four Commissioners - Police & Fire, Streets & Public Property, Waterworks & Sewerage, and Finance & Revenue. This form of government prevailed until May 8, 1990, when it changed to a Mayor and City Council form.

Under and by the authority of Section 3 of Article XVIII of the Constitution of the state of Oklahoma and pursuant to the laws of the state (11 O.S.1981, §§ 13-111, 13-106, and 13-107; 26 O.S.Supp.1987 § 13-102), a special election (provided by City of Tulsa Ordinance No. 17090) was held on February 14, 1989, and the qualified voters of the City of Tulsa approved the 1989 amended Charter, which was later approved by Oklahoma Governor Henry Bellmon to become effective on May 8, 1990.

Note: An original signed copy was filed with the Oklahoma Secretary of State on March 8, 1989, and with the Tulsa County clerk on March 15, 1989.

League History: City of Tulsa Charter Studies

The Tulsa League has studied the city charter a number of times over the years. League files thoroughly document the last major study in 1986, When the City of Tulsa established a Charter Drafting Committee in February of 1988, at least three League leaders served on it: Noble Manion, Dorothy DeWitty and Kathy Hinkle. However, the Tulsa League has never formally adopted a position on city government or city elections.

2010 - 2011 CITY CHARTER AMENDMENT PROPOSALS

Proposals expected to be on November 2011 City of Tulsa Ballot

Tulsa voters approved a charter amendment in November of 2009 that changed the election of city councilors. The amendment extended terms for city councilors to three years and provided for staggered elections for city councilors so that three of the nine council members would be elected each year. Previously, all councilors stood for election every two years and terms were two years.

The November 2010 General Election ballot has a proposed amendment that would schedule municipal elections according to state law (which the 2009 charter amendment had failed to do).

In 2010 the Tulsa City Council studied municipal elections and has debated various proposals for amendments to the city charter sections that deal with city elections.

Currently, the only proposal that the Tulsa City Council seems likely to be offer for the 2011 municipal ballot is a charter amendment to provide for a city manager form of government. Tulsa's current form of government is called a strong mayor/city council form of government.

A citizens' group, Save Our Tulsa, is gathering signatures for another set of proposals. If the group succeeds in gathering sufficient signatures by January 6, 2011, the following proposed changes would be voted on in November 2011:

Proposed changes to Tulsa's form of government:

Council membership: Keep nine council districts but add three at-large members and the mayor to form a 13-member City Council. The mayor would be its chairman, responsible for setting the agenda and would vote only in cases of a tie. The at-large (elected citywide) city council candidates would have to live in one of the three "super districts." Those would be the North At-Large District from current council districts 1,3 and 4; East At-Large District from current council districts 5, 6 and 7; and West At-Large District from current council districts 2, 8 and 9. (The accompanying map shows the boundaries of current council districts.)*

Change council terms and election date: Return council seats to two-year terms and merge elections with state and federal elections.

Nonpartisan elections: A candidate who gets more than 50 percent of the vote in the primary wins the seat. Otherwise, the two candidates with the most votes advance to the general election.

NOVEMBER 2010 UNIT MATERIALS

LEAGUE STUDY QUESTIONS (to help committee provide research materials for January)

Please read and discuss the proposals above (city manager, non-partisan elections, two-year or three-year terms of office for councilors, staggered terms for councilors, at-large election for “super-district” councilors) and record your comments for unit and committee records.

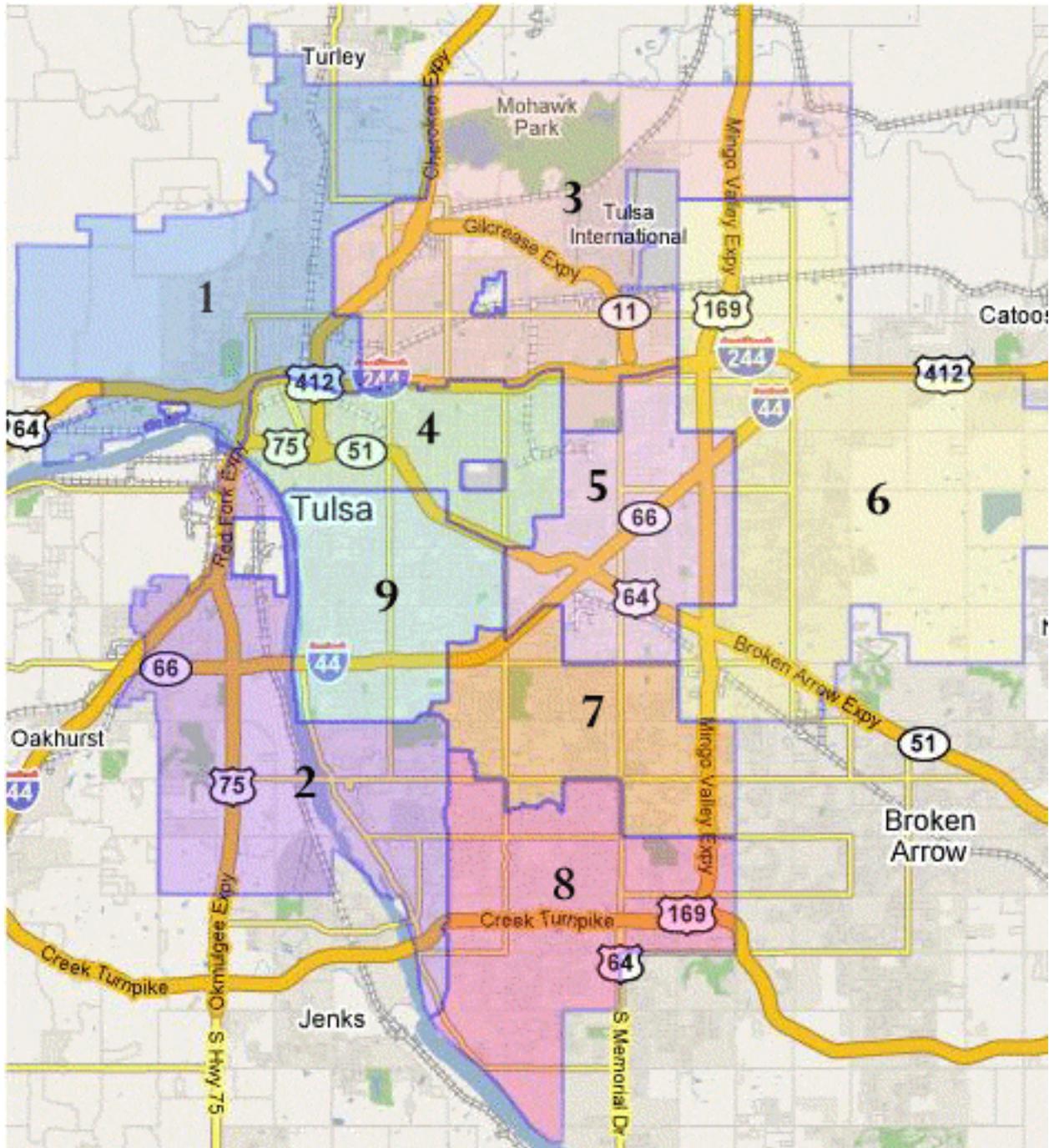
1. Other questions of interest not included in charter amendment proposals:

- What is the best way to encourage more participation and voter turnout in municipal elections?
- Are current candidate filing requirements appropriate for the City of Tulsa?
- What effect does city government have on other aspects of quality of life, such as schools, economic development, city planning and increasing diversity of representation?

Rank the following study issues in order to be studied:

- ____ Current strong mayor/city council vs. city manager form
- ____ Partisan vs. non-partisan filing and elections
- ____ Terms of office for city councilors (two vs. three years)
- ____ Staggered terms vs. all councilors elected at same time

Any other issues the League should consider in studying municipal government?



Current City Council Districts in the City of Tulsa

*Tulsa City Council District Map (downloaded from <http://www.tulsacouncil.org/district-finder/map.aspx>)