

CITY SERVICES

The League of Women Voters of the Tiffin Area believes that the City of Tiffin should provide adequate, equitable, and flexible funding for services which will ensure the safety, health, and welfare of its citizens.

SERVICES:

League supports a broad scope of services and ranking of services based on the League's priorities.

1. In order to meet the present and future needs of the citizens of Tiffin, the League believes that the following services should be provided by the city:

Bulk Pickup	Planning and Zoning
Court/Security Services	Police Services
Downtown Parking	School Crossing Guards
Fire/Rescue Services	Sewer Services
Housing Maintenance Code	Sidewalk Maintenance on Public Property
Jail Services	Snow Removal on City Streets
Leaf Pickup	Tree Service on Public Property
Water Services	Water Pollution Control Services

2. Believing that decisions must be made upon priorities, the League supports the subsequent ranking of city services:

High Priority Services		
Court/Security Services	Police Services	Street Maintenance
Fire/Rescue Services	Sewer Services	Water Services
Jail Services	Snow Removal on City Streets	Water Pollution Control

Medium Priority Services	
Housing Maintenance Code	School Crossing Guards

Low Priority Services		
Bulk Pickup	Leaf Pickup	Sidewalk Maintenance
Downtown Parking	Planning and Zoning	Tree Services

3. The League supports maintaining services at authorized strength.

FUNDING:

League supports several methods of financing such as: increased city income tax, increased fees for services, private funding, transfer of funds within the budget to meet League priorities, and if necessary, reduction of services.

Background on Position

A two-year study was adopted in May 1978, as a recommended local program item to evaluate the delivery of city services and facilities in Tiffin. The scope of the study was to include a survey of existing city services, facilities, administration and policy development, financing of services, services beyond the

corporation limits, and essential vs. non-essential services.. The study evolved from the city finance study. It became difficult to take action until a study was made of the use of local tax dollars.

An introductory general meeting on City Services was held in September 1978, and tours of city facilities were made the following month. The study was continued in 1979 and combined with the city financing portfolio. Informational units were held in April 1980, and a community survey was conducted in March 1981. Consensus was taken in April 1981. In September 1981 the League made a statement to City Council supporting an increase in ambulance service fees to fund the service. City Council continued to be monitored, especially in its discussion and decision regarding the funding of city services.

In March 1982 a general meeting was held in order to clarify member opinion concerning parks and recreation services. Consensus was reached and the parks and recreation statement was added to the City Services position. In December 1982 a statement was made to City Council regarding the proposed General Fund budget for 1983, stating that high priority services should be maintained at present level, even if this would require an increase in the city income tax. In 1984 the position was updated in the areas of essential vs. non-essential services, ranking of priority, funding sources, and maintenance level of services.

Action was taken in preparation for the November 1984 election to support a ballot issue to raise the income tax one-half percent, an issue consistent with the position. Action consisted of conducting an opinion poll of 200 voters by mail, creating and showing on cable TV a videotape of city services, distributing to members a brochure printed by the Committee for Issue 1, and writing letters to the editor in support of the issue. The issue ultimately was defeated at the polls.

In 1987 the position was amended by removing the phrase, “use of revenue sharing funds for street maintenance,” since revenue sharing funds were no longer a resource.

In the fall of 1987 the board considered action in response to a reduction in the police and fire forces. Our position statement supporting “maintaining essential services at their present level” was deemed too vague to oppose the proposed cuts in services.

In April 1989 two meetings were held to update the position. Changes were made in the position to specify levels of services in the police and fire departments.

A public meeting was held in April 1990 featuring a panel of city leaders discussing a proposed income tax renewal (it passed).

In 1995 the City Engineer, Curtis Eagle, proposed a housing maintenance code to deal with properties around the city that were not being properly maintained. This code was detailed and covered both indoor and outdoor issues. League supported the code, but it was very controversial within the community.

In 1996 the city proposed contracting with the Health Department to handle housing maintenance issues through their regulations. League supported this proposal since passage of a full maintenance code seemed unlikely. Council passed the proposal, and it was implemented in Spring 1996.

At the League’s Annual Meeting in May 1998, members approved further study and two meetings were held during the year to update members on the status of city services and finances. Consensus was held and the revised position was adopted in April 1999.

The League held a general meeting in November 2001 on Recycling. A panel of experts presented the pros and cons in adopting a citywide program.

Action was taken in preparation of the November 2003 elections of a ballot issue reallocating the city income tax funds. The issue was to move capital improvement funds to the general funds. Action consisted of a guest column in the newspaper on October 26, 2003. The issue failed.

Action was taken in support of Adoption of a Maintenance Code for the City of Tiffin (oral statement to City Council by Phyllis Putman) early 2005.

Action was taken in October 2004 supporting the Capital Improvement Ballot Issue. This issue was a reallocation of the capital improvement monies.

During the 2009-2010 year, a comprehensive study of City Services was completed and an update position was adopted at the 2010 Annual Meeting. The position was revised at the 2011 Annual Meeting.

The League supported the ¼% income tax increase for roads and bridges, and it was passed in the May 2018 election.