

## SENECA COUNTY YOUTH DETENTION CENTER

The League of Women Voters of the Tiffin Area believes that Seneca County should provide a local youth detention center that is safe and secure with necessary services to promote treatment for juvenile offenders. League believes that placement of youth in the Youth Center should occur only when all other social service and treatment resources have been exhausted. The League further believes the Youth Center Director should formulate an annual long-range programming report and a maintenance plan.

### **Position:**

The County should provide a Youth Detention Center that meets and exceeds the State Minimum Standards for local detention facilities with on-site medical health services. Coverage by a nurse should be minimum three hours on-site each weekday and a 24-hour on call nurse.

League supports on-site mental health and substance abuse services for the youth and their families.

Staff should have appropriate qualifications for working with youth, and state standards for pre-service and in-service annual training should be maintained. The League believes the salary of direct-care state and administrative staff should be near the average or exceed wages of youth detention facilities in northwest Ohio.

The League believes that the Youth Center should have a long-range plan for programming and facility maintenance. This should be formulated annually by the Director and regularly reviewed and revised by a lay advisory board.

The League supports the establishment of a volunteer lay advisory board, made up of various sectors of the community, such as educators, mental and medical care professionals, clergy, parents, philanthropic and service organizations, and other interested individuals. The board size should be 7-9 members with no more than 12. The board should meet once a month or at least quarterly.

Responsibilities of the advisory board should include but not be limited to: assisting with fundraising efforts, oversight of the long-range programming, and the building maintenance plan.

League supports the funding for the Youth Center from a variety of sources, as appropriate, such as the Seneca County's General Fund, bed contracts, grants, and a levy.

### **Background on Position:**

The study of the Seneca County Youth Detention Center was adopted by the membership at the Annual Meeting on May 16, 2012.

The new Youth Center opened in February 2013.

Information was presented at the general meeting January 10, 2013, and consensus questions were presented at the general meeting February 14, 2013.

The Membership adopted the position statement at the May 16, 2013, Annual Meeting. The Committee shared the League's position statement with Judge Jay Meyer and Ben Yourkvitch, Youth Center Director.