



# Voter Guide

## December 8, 2018 Election

*A nonpartisan service of the League of Women Voters- Lafayette*

The LWV-Lafayette is a nonpartisan organization that provides information about political issues and candidates for public office to promote greater citizen responsibility and participation in government. As a nonpartisan organization, the League neither supports nor opposes any political party or candidate. It publishes and distributes factual information for citizens to use when preparing to cast an informed vote.

For more information, please visit our site at <http://www.lwv-lafayette.org/>

### 1) Sign Up To Vote

- To vote in the December 8, 2018 election, you must register to vote by the following deadlines:
- To register in person or by mail, you must sign up by **Wed., November 7**. You can register at the following locations:
  - Registrar of Voters
  - Louisiana Office of Motor Vehicles
  - Louisiana Department of Children & Family Services
  - WIC offices
  - Food stamp offices
  - Medicaid offices
  - Offices serving persons with disabilities
  - Armed Forces recruitment offices
- You can download a form online to print and mail form:  
<https://www.sos.la.gov/ElectionsAndVoting/RegisterToVote/Pages/default.aspx>
- To register online to vote here:  
<https://voterportal.sos.la.gov/VoterRegistration>. You must sign up by **Sat., November 17**.

### 2) Get Ready to Vote

- Need to find your polling place, check your registration, or see your ballot?  
**Louisiana Voter Portal:**  
<https://voterportal.sos.la.gov/>

### 3) VOTE!

- *Early voting:* You can vote early at the Lafayette Parish Registrar of Voters, located at 1010 Lafayette Street.
  - **Dates:** Sat. Nov. 24-Sat. Dec. 1, except Sunday
  - 8:30 AM – 6 PM
- *An absentee ballot* may be collected in person or by mail.
  - The deadline to request an absentee by mail ballot through Secretary of State online voter portal or at the Parish Registrar of Voters is **Tues. Dec. 4, by 4:30 PM**.
  - The deadline for the Parish Registrar of Voters to receive your mail ballot is **Fri. Dec. 7 at 4:30 PM**.
- *Election Day* is **Sat., December 8**. Polls will be open from 6 AM – 8 PM. All voters in line by 8 PM are eligible to vote.
- *What to bring:* Be prepared to show a photo identification card with your photo and signature when voting. If you do not have a photo ID, you may obtain a free Louisiana special identification card by presenting your voter registration information card to the Louisiana Office of Motor Vehicles (OMV) or you may vote by affidavit after correctly answering identifying information before voting.

### 4) Turn the Page to Learn What's on the Ballot

- Candidates in run-off elections
- Parish-wide Home Rule Charter Amendment Proposition
- Parish-wide Law Enforcement Sales Tax
- Lafayette Rural Fire District Proposition (Unincorporated areas only)

## Candidates for election – on all ballots in Lafayette Parish

### Secretary of State (Run-off)

Kyle Ardoin

Republican

Baton Rouge, LA

"Gwen" Collins-Greenup

Democrat

Clinton, LA

## Candidates for election – appearing only on ballots for Carencro residents

### Mayor City of Carencro (Run-off)

Glenn L. Brasseaux

Independent

Carencro, LA

Charlotte Stemmans Clavier

Republican

Carencro, LA

**Parishwide Home Rule Charter Amendment –Amend City-Parish Council Proposition**

**Shall the Lafayette City-Parish Consolidated** Government Home Rule Charter be amended to: abolish City-Parish Council, create the Lafayette City Council and Lafayette Parish Council, as governing authority for Lafayette City-Parish Consolidated Government; establish as governing authority, City Council for City of Lafayette and Parish Council for Parish of Lafayette; apply term limits of current City-Parish Council members to new City Council and Parish Council; abolish Lafayette Public Utilities Authority, establish Lafayette City Council as governing authority of Utilities Department and Lafayette Public Power Authority; establish any proposal for management of substantial part of utility system be approved by vote of electors of City of Lafayette at election called for that purpose by two-thirds vote of Lafayette City Council; grant eligibility to acting Mayor-President or Council member for election to that position; abolish Lafayette City-Parish Planning and Zoning Commission, establish City Planning and Zoning Commission and Parish Planning and Zoning Commission; change method of nomination of prospective appointees to Lafayette Municipal Civil Service Board; change method of counting required percentages of voters for initiative or referendum petition and commencement of recall process; change method of counting number of votes necessary to amend the Lafayette City-Parish Consolidated Government Home Rule Charter?

YES ( ) - A vote of Yes would makes these proposed changes to the Lafayette City-Parish Home Rule Charter.

NO ( ) - A vote of No would leave the current Lafayette City-Parish Home Rule Charter in place.

**Summary**

There are a number of proposed changes to the Lafayette Home Rule Charter. The table below summarizes the changes to the charter related to the creation of a parish council and a of City of Lafayette Council that, together, would govern Lafayette Consolidated Government.

<b>PROPOSED CHANGE TO THE HOME RULE CHARTER</b>	<b>CHANGE TO THE PARISH OF LAFAYETTE</b>	<b>CHANGE TO LAFAYETTE CONSOLIDATED GOVERNMENT (LCG)</b>	<b>CHANGE TO THE CITY OF LAFAYETTE</b>
<i>The Lafayette City-Parish Council would be abolished.</i>	All voters in Lafayette Parish would elect a 5-member Parish Council from 5 new larger districts as the governing authority and legislative branch of Lafayette Parish.	The joint meetings and votes of both the City & Parish Council members would become the governing authority and legislative branch of Lafayette Consolidated Government (LCG).	The voters of the City of Lafayette would elect a 5-member City of Lafayette Council from 5 new districts as the governing authority and legislative branch of the City of Lafayette.
<i>The Mayor-President’s role would remain the same. The other cities in Lafayette Parish would continue to be independent of LCG and to elect their own mayors.</i>	The Mayor-President would continue to be elected by all the voters of Lafayette Parish.	The Mayor-President would continue as the Chief Executive Officer of both Lafayette Parish and of the City of Lafayette & as the administrator of LCG.	The City of Lafayette would remain a legal entity within LCG & per the charter consolidated with the Parish. The City would not elect a City Mayor.

PROPOSED CHANGE TO THE HOME RULE CHARTER	CHANGE TO THE PARISH OF LAFAYETTE	CHANGE TO LAFAYETTE CONSOLIDATED GOVERNMENT (LCG)	CHANGE TO THE CITY OF LAFAYETTE
<p><i>The powers of the present City-Parish Council would be divided between the Parish and the City Councils. A majority vote of the Parish and the City Councils would govern LGG.</i></p>	<p>The Parish of Lafayette Council’s responsibility would be to meet the state constitutional obligations of the parish and to provide services to the unincorporated areas.</p> <p>The Parish of Lafayette Council would set its own agendas and meet at least 2x/month, approve its own budget, and provide an audit.</p> <p>The Parish of Lafayette Council would create ordinances for the <i>parish</i>, appoint a Parish Planning &amp; Zoning Commission, propose parish property &amp; sales taxes, &amp; borrow money; alter Parish Council district boundaries if necessary after each federal census.</p> <p>The Parish Council would bond for parish capital improvements, appoint parish wide boards and commissions, grant franchises, require licenses, and set fees.</p>	<p>The Parish and City Councils would jointly call meetings of the two Councils. One joint LCG budget must be approved by both the Parish and City Council.</p> <p>The two Councils together would: enter joint service or cooperative endeavor agreements between the Parish and the City of Lafayette; approve bonds for LCG capital projects and improvements, propose amendments to the charter, or repealing it.</p> <p>The two Councils together would hire employees; appoint one Clerk for both Councils; set all salaries; administer the Civil Service System for LCG employees; investigate affairs of LCG’s parish wide jurisdiction; provide an independent auditor and an annual audit.</p> <p>The administration, functions &amp; operations of LCG, including Civil Service administration, would continue to be served by LCG staff &amp; employees.</p>	<p>The City of Lafayette Council’s responsibility would be to meet municipal obligations for the City of Lafayette.</p> <p>The City of Lafayette Council would set its own agendas, meet at least 2x/month, approve its own budget, and provide an audit.</p> <p>The City Council would create <i>city</i> ordinances, provide municipal services; appoint a City Planning &amp; Zoning Commission, propose city property &amp; sales taxes, borrow money or bond for City capital improvements; alter City Council district boundaries if necessary after each federal census.</p> <p>The City Council would appoint City of Lafayette boards and commissions, grant franchises, require licenses, and set fees.</p>
<p><i>Only the City of Lafayette would govern the City of Lafayette’s utility system, LUS, and the Lafayette Public Power Authority.</i></p>	<p>-----</p>	<p>The Lafayette Public Utilities Authority (<u>LPUA</u>) within LCG would be abolished, along with LCG’s role in the Lafayette Public Power Authority.</p>	<p>The Lafayette Public Utilities Authority (LPUA) would be replaced by the full City Council’s governance. The City Council would have full authority for all divisions and their functions within the Lafayette Utilities System—LUS. Any proposed sale, lease, disposal of LUS, or any management contract for “any substantial part of LUS” would have to be approved by a 2/3’s vote</p>

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			(4 out of 5) of the City of Lafayette Council to put such a proposition on the ballot, which would require a majority vote of City of Lafayette registered voters for approval.
<i>One Acadiana and the League of Women Voters would no longer submit any nominees for the Civil Service Board.</i>	The Parish Council would choose two members from nominations made by UL Lafayette and LSU.	LCG employees would be able to run in election for employee appointment to the Civil Service Board.	The City Council would choose two members from nominations made by UL Lafayette and Southern University.
<i>Salaries of the Council Members</i>	The members' starting salary would begin at the current Council salary.	-----	The members' starting salary would begin at the current Council salary.
<i>Those temporarily appointed to a Council vacancy would be able to run in an election for that position.</i>	A temporary Parish Council member would be able to run for Parish Council.	A temporary Mayor-President would be able to run for Mayor-President.	A temporary City Council member would be able to run for City Council.
<i>City-Parish Council members who are term limited may not run for either the Parish or City Council.</i>	Qualified residents of the parish could run for the Parish Council, including current City-Parish Council members who are not term limited.	-----	Qualified residents of the City could run for the City Council, including current City-Parish Council members who are City residents and who are not term limited.
<i>To propose to the voters amending or repealing the Home Rule Charter, 2/3's (67%) of each the City and the Parish Councils would need to vote yes.</i>	4 out of the 5 Parish Council members would need to vote yes, instead of the current 6/9 City-Parish Council members.	-----	4 out of the 5 City Council members would need to vote yes, instead of the current 6/9 City-Parish Council members.
<i>To petition amending the Home Rule Charter, instead of 15% of the City-Parish voters' signatures required,</i>	at least 15% of the voters of the city of Lafayette and also 15% of the parish voters must sign.	at least 15% of the voters of the city of Lafayette and also 15% of the parish voters must sign. -	at least 15% of the voters of the city of Lafayette and also 15% of the parish voters must sign.
<i>To petition repealing the Home Rule Charter, instead of 20% of the City-Parish Voters' signatures required</i>	at least 20% of the voters of the city of Lafayette and also 20% of the parish voters must sign.	at least 20% of the voters of the city of Lafayette and also 20% of the parish voters must sign.	at least 20% of the voters of the city of Lafayette and also 20% of the parish voters must sign.

## Parishwide Home Rule Charter Amendment – Continued

### Supporters Say:

- The City of Lafayette through its elected City Council members would gain greater independence and self-governance. Similar to other municipalities within the parish, Lafayette would gain its own legislative council.
- The City Council and the voters of the City of Lafayette would solely control the future of the City-owned Lafayette Utilities System (LUS) and all of its divisions, as well as the Lafayette Public Power Authority, the LPPA.
- The population outside the City of Lafayette is rapidly expanding. It is anticipated that the number of voters residing outside the City will be greater than the number inside within a few years. If the current charter remains in place, City of Lafayette voters could well lose adequate representation on the City-Parish Council.
- The shared administration for operation, including the services and equipment of Lafayette Consolidated Government would be continued, not duplicated, through joint service or cooperative endeavor agreements between the Parish and the City of Lafayette Councils.
- The proposed charter as amended is viewed as a first step by some as a step towards full deconsolidation of the City of Lafayette and the Parish.

### Opponents Say:

- The responsibilities and time required of council members would increase. Each Parish council member would represent almost twice as many people per district as at present, though city council members would represent roughly equal numbers as they currently do. Also each council must meet at least twice per month, as well as meet jointly as Lafayette Consolidated Government's legislative body.
- To put a charter amendment or the repeal of charter on the ballot requires a higher number of votes by the Council members of each Council (currently 6 out of 9, but amended to 4 out 5 of both councils). Also, any amendment or repeal measure by petition of the voters requires voters from both the City of Lafayette *and also* the Parish, rather than simply collecting signatures parish-wide.
- Disagreement between the two councils could result in time and deadline delays, along with inefficiency through duplication of time and effort by two councils, rather than one.
- Creating two separate councils alone does not solve the lack of income for Parish infrastructure and other constitutional obligations.
- The City of Lafayette gains its own legislative council, but unlike the other municipalities in the parish, the City of Lafayette will not have its own mayor; rather, the Lafayette Mayor-President will continue to serve as the executive of both the City of Lafayette and also the parish.

You can find the **proposed Parish Council districts map** here:

<http://www.lafayettela.gov/Council/SiteAssets/Files/Parish-Districts-Plan-Map.PDF>

You can find the **proposed City Council districts map** here:

<http://www.lafayettela.gov/Council/SiteAssets/Files/City-Districts-Plan-Map.PDF>

**Law Enforcement District Proposition (Sales Tax)**

Shall the Law Enforcement District of the Parish of Lafayette, Louisiana (the "District"), provided the 1% sales and use tax of Law Enforcement Sub-District No. 1 of the Parish ceases to be collected on and after April 1, 2019, be authorized to levy and collect a 1/2% tax upon the sale at retail, the use, the lease or rental, the consumption, and the storage for use or consumption of tangible personal property and on sales of services, except that as provided by Act 2 of 1982, the tax shall not be included on certain food and prescription drug items (the "Tax"), in perpetuity, commencing April 1, 2019, with the proceeds of the Tax (after paying the costs of collecting and administering the Tax) (an estimated \$25,000,000 reasonably expected at this time to be collected from the levy of the Tax for an entire year) to be dedicated and used solely for providing law enforcement personnel, equipment, salaries, facilities and services?

YES ( )

NO ( )

**Summary**

The current tax used to fund the LPSO is a 1% sales tax only collected in the unincorporated areas of the Parish and will expire on April 1, 2019. The proposal is to eliminate the 1-cent sales tax in the unincorporated areas and replace it with a new ½-cent sales tax collected Parish wide. Food and medication will be excluded from the tax. The Sheriff has filed a covenant with the Lafayette Clerk of Court outlining how the money will be spent, including on salary stipends for officers and chiefs, replacement of equipment (ex: radios and fleet vehicles), paying off outstanding debt, funding future retirement liabilities, hiring additional enforcement and correctional deputies, and capital expenditures for construction and renovation.

The covenant represents the Sheriff's intentions; however, the Lafayette City-Parish Council and the Mayor-President have not currently approved nor formally entered into an enforceable intergovernmental agreement. Without such an agreement, the sheriff is not obliged to spend the money on municipal/city officers as outlined.

**Supporters Say:**

- This tax would provide new resources needed to increase the salaries of local law enforcement officers of every parish and municipal police agency and the Lafayette City Marshal's office, in addition to continuing the Sheriff's Office law enforcement in the unincorporated areas, providing the agency chooses to enter a binding intergovernmental agreement with the Sheriff.
- Under the Louisiana Constitution, besides providing civil and criminal law enforcement, the sheriff is also keeper of the Lafayette Parish Correctional Center, including providing all medical and mental health care and transportation for offenders. After Lafayette Parish voters previously voted against a tax to build and maintain a larger correctional center, the former sheriff then bonded out construction costs against its own future revenues for the Public Safety Complex on Willow Street. The purpose of this facility was to relieve the long-term overcrowding at the aging Lafayette Correctional Center for lesser offenders, provide space for transitional services for soon-to-be-released offenders, and house the Treatment Department for drug and alcohol addictions and mental health services for those incarcerated.

The liability to pay off the construction of the Public Safety Complex has caused a budget deficit for the

past several years and will likely continue to show a deficit each year until the bonds are paid off in 2022, or more revenue is provided. Revenues collected from the 1-cent sales tax in the unincorporated areas have not kept up with the growth of the parish as a whole as unincorporated areas have been annexed into municipalities. If the Sheriff's proposed parish wide ½ cent sales tax fails now, then the 1-cent sales tax will continue to be collected in the unincorporated areas. However, if the ½-cent parish wide tax fails, a reduction in law enforcement services by the Sheriff's Office could then be expected, given the loss in revenues.

Opponents Say:

- The lack of formal intergovernmental agreements between the municipalities and the sheriff leaves open the possibility that the monies raised via this tax will not be spent on salary stipends for officers' raises. The Police Association of Lafayette is opposed to this tax because of the lack of a binding intergovernmental agreement.
- Parish residents with lower incomes generally pay a higher percentage of their income proportionally with sales taxes than property taxes. A parishwide ½-cent tax would disproportionately affect those residents with lower incomes.

**Lafayette Rural Fire District Proposition – New Tax (Lafayette Unincorporated Only)**

Shall the Lafayette Rural Fire District, State of Louisiana (the “District”), levy a new 10.00 mill tax on all of the property subject to taxation in the District (an estimated \$3,963,220.60 reasonably expected at this time to be collected from the levy of the tax for an entire year), for a period of ten (10) years, beginning with the year 2019 and ending with the year 2028, for the purposes of maintaining, operating and paying expenses for fire protection services within the District including but not limited to the issuance of bonds for acquiring, constructing and improving fire protection related facilities, machinery and equipment?

YES ( )

NO ( )

**Summary**

Currently, the Lafayette Consolidated Government, through the parish general fund, pays municipal fire departments to respond to fires in unincorporated areas. Unincorporated homes and businesses are not taxed for this service. LCG has recently reduced the amount paid to municipal and volunteer fire departments in an effort to rein in spending from the dwindling parish general fund. The cost to fight fires in rural areas can be higher; there are almost no fire hydrants in rural areas, so fire departments have to buy tanker trucks.

If approved, the tax is expected to generate about \$3.9 million a year for 10 years starting in 2019. An increase of 10 mills would mean that the owner of a home worth \$200,000 would see their taxes go up by \$125 per year.

**Supporters Say:**

- The fire protection rating, which affects property insurance premiums, in the unincorporated area is the lowest in the parish. At the last evaluation, the area was given a 5 (with 10 as the worst rating).
- The cost of this millage is significantly less than the rise in premiums if the fire protection rating worsens. Insurance premiums could go up anywhere from 11-21%.
- Without this millage, funding for firefighting in the unincorporated areas will continue to decrease, putting homes and lives at risk.

**Opponents Say:**

- Municipalities continue to annex unincorporated parts of the parish, so the revenue from the millage would not be sustainable. This would lead to the newly created fire district being asked for an additional millage down the road.
- All unincorporated parts of the parish should be divided and annexed by each municipality. This would dismantle the rural fire district and residents would begin paying for fire protection through their new municipality, eliminating the need to use the parish general fund. This would require both the municipalities and the homes to be annexed to approve this plan, as forced annexation is illegal in Louisiana.