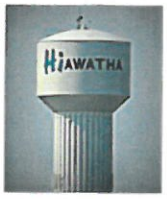

FYI

March 10, 2017

Dear Civic Leader,

Cedar Rapids Solidarity in Motion, with the assistance of the League of Women Voters, is organizing a **"Civic Literacy" Workshop** on how City and County Government (including Boards and Commissions) works, and how residents can get involved. After all, **"All Politics is Local!"** This idea emerged from the interest of our members, and everyone to whom I have mentioned it has been excited by the prospect and energized to learn!

We would very much appreciate your participation in this event, or in preparation for it. The event is scheduled for **Saturday, April 15,** from **1 – 5 pm** at the **Cedar Rapids Public Library**. That date also happens to be the 200th Birthday of George Greene, a founder and early Mayor of Cedar Rapids, after whom Greene Square (across the street from the library) is named.

The format will be a Plenary address by the League of Women Voters, giving an overview of the types of local government, and which we have here in Linn County and it's municipalities, followed by breakout sessions focusing on specific areas of local government. Each breakout will be 40 – 45 min long, we have space to offer 4 – 5 breakouts at a time, and could adjust the passing time and wrap-up plenary schedule to offer either two or three blocks of breakouts between approx. 2 pm and 4:30 pm.

Would you be interested in leading or presenting during a breakout session?
Or could you recommend someone else who would be a great breakout presenter?
We have many ideas for possible breakouts, and will make a final schedule based on who steps up to lead or present on the following topics, or others you may suggest:

- Detailed discussion of the role of **Boards / Commissions** (could be a panel about, for example, all the County Commissions together or separate breakouts for a few specific ones, etc.)
- Detailed discussion of the ins & outs of the role and processes of **County Supervisors**, of a particular or all local **City Council**(s), **Mayor's Office**(s), and/or **School Board**(s).
- Detailed discussion of all entities in **one city** (separate breakouts for C.R., Marion, Hiawatha)
- Information session on **"Where does my Tax money go?"** (What kind of tax revenues go to the county? To the city? What services etc. are paid for by the County? By the City?)
- Information session with **focus on an issue** (If I'm concerned about outdoor recreation & the environment or about civil rights & human rights, etc, what city and county bodies should I understand and look to get involved with?

In addition:

- We are inviting a representative of each Political Party active in Linn County to lead / participate in a breakout on "How are **Political Parties** organized and what do they do at the local level?"
- The group working toward making Linn County a "**Welcoming Community**" will lead a breakout on their progress, next steps, and how residents can get involved.

Our goal is to have a list of presenters compiled by March 15, with a detailed schedule and description of each breakout fleshed out by April 1.

Please reply before March 15 if you are able, to let us know what role you would like to play in developing and presenting this exciting and valuable event, and/or if you know is someone else we should be sure to invite!*

Sincerely,

Valerie Smith
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319-651-3354

About Cedar Rapids Solidarity in Motion:
"CR Solidarity" is an ad hoc group that initially formed based on our shared concern about the impact that now President Trump's election might have on the civility, human and civil rights, and environment in our city, state, and country. We want to take concrete actions locally to support potentially threatened populations and protect everyone's rights. We are an issue-based group with no political party affiliation. Our primary goal is to connect individuals with an interest in getting more involved in promoting the issues they care about with existing organizations already working on those issues, rather than creating more events – unless we see a gap in what is already being done.

See our Community Calendar at www.crsolidarity.wordpress.com/calendar

Our Facebook Group is www.facebook.com/groups/crsolidarity/
As of March 6, it had 420 members.

** In order to avoid conflicts of interest, our goal is to fill the presenter slots with knowledgeable and experienced individuals who are **not** candidates for (re-) election in 2017.*