

the VOTER

AUGUST 2020
Volume 52, Issue 3



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Co-Presidents' Messages

Dear League Members,

While the LWVUS virtual convention in June was far different from my first convention (I think in 1980 with President Carter as a speaker), it was an impressive accomplishment on the part of our national organization. An array of pre-convention caucuses was available on topics ranging from voter services to climate change and criminal justice, and the plenary sessions were very well-planned (at least from the perspective of an observer, rather than a delegate). The main glitch that I encountered was related to the [criminal justice caucus](#) which had been intended to accommodate 500 participants but could only handle 100 – and I was not one of the lucky 100. The caucus was arranged by LWV California and had been planned well before the events surrounding the death of George Floyd.



Kathy Brook

Criminal justice is, of course, a very substantial topic, and is not one of our program priorities, as such. However, there are elements of this topic that we might want to consider, especially the process of restoring voting rights for former felons (described in the slides at the length above as the new face of suffrage). And, as the recent protests have made clear there are significant issues of equity in this area.

Social Media: Please take a few minutes to sign up for a Twitter account, if you have not already done so, and follow @votesnm. This will help us to establish a social media presence – and it doesn't require exposure to a lot of crazy stuff. Our account, @votesnm, is following LWVUS, LWV NM, LWV CNM, VOTE411, Fair Districts New Mexico, and NOW (which has been posting brief profiles of Sisters in Suffrage), as well as KRWG Public Media. I have not done much with Instagram but will work on that soon.

August Business Begins with Discussion on a Clean Environment

The next regular meeting of the League will be held via Zoom with the City's Sustainability Officer Lisa LaRocque. **The meeting will initiate a change to our schedule — regular meetings will now take place on the 2nd Saturdays of the month. Join us on August 8, beginning at 10:00 a.m. via Zoom.** Be sure to let Co-President Eileen VanWie (vanwieek@yahoo.com) know in advance that you want a meeting invitation to be emailed sent to you.

Lisa has been the City's Sustainability Officer since 2013. Although the office promotes many sustainability best practices, its emphasis is on addressing climate change, clean energy, and resiliency. Her presentation will describe the results from modeling climate change, the greenhouse gases that most influence it, and how we can reduce emissions.



Lisa LaRocque

If you need assistance with setting up your Zoom, just let Eileen know and she can walk you through it.

Voter Registration: Watching the recording of a recent presentation by Maggie Toulouse Oliver to a group in Santa Fe, I learned that there will soon be a portal where a voter registration agent can remotely assist someone with voter registration.

Redistricting: Retake Our Democracy held a webinar on July 21, titled Redistricting in New Mexico. Presenters included LWVNM action chair Dick Mason, Fair Districts NM Executive Director Kathleen Burke, and Senators Mike Moores and Gerry Ortiz y Pino. For those who are interested,

—continued next page

Co-Presidents' Messages (cont.)

recordings are to be posted to the websites for Retake Our Democracy and Fair Districts NM. My takeaway from the session was that the process as administered by the legislators in NM has been less affected by partisanship than by incumbency and by desires for leadership positions.

—Kathy Brook, Co-President

Dear LWVSNM Members,

The League of Women Voters United States (LWV US) Convention was held June 26-27, 2020. LWV US President Chris Carson opened the meeting by sharing the 2020 suffrage theme, Women Power the Vote. The theme is to suggest the struggles suffragists experienced for over 70 years and that our work is not done.



Eileen VanWie

Liz Bander, the LWV US Board member that represents New Mexico, honored "Our Native Land" by reminding members of the people who first inhabited the United States and she provided two websites to learn more: <https://native-land.ca/> and <http://www.native-languages.org/>. The websites include a great deal of information about native land and they inspired me to read more about the land we are on in New Mexico.

We, in Las Cruces, are living on the land of the Chiricahua Apache, the Mescalero Apache, and the Manso Indians. As is commonly known, there are several Apache groups in Oklahoma, Texas, Arizona and New Mexico. The Manso lived along the Rio Grande as hunter-gatherers from the 16th to the 17th century. They were resettled in what is now Ciudad Juarez, where some of their descendants remain today. It reminded me of a post card I got from an Apache woman at an art fair. The portrait of a handsome "Navajo Boy" has the caption, "Got land? Thank a Native American."

After a business meeting similar to our LWVSNM Annual Meeting, we heard the keynote address by CBS Evening News anchor Norah O'Donnell. If you want to hear the four-minute address, go to: <https://www.lwv.org/2020Convention> and scroll down. She described elections as a sacred American tradition with a duty to ensure safe access to polling places, broaden registration policies, and combat suppression.

A variety of campaigns, projects, and actions by the LWV US were described, including the "She is Me" online campaign to celebrate 100 years of League work through

UPCOMING EVENTS

AUGUST 2020

August 8: **General Meeting**, **Saturday**, via Zoom, 10-11:30 am, contact Eileen VanWie (vanwieek@yahoo.com) if you want to get an email inviting you to the meeting.

August 15: **BOARD DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOP**, Sat., 9:30 am- noon via Zoom. Contact Eileen VanWie in advance if you would like an email with the Zoom invitation.

August 17: **Board Meeting** - **CANCELLED**

August 26: Women's Equality Day and 100th Anniversary of 19th Amendment

2020/21 LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF SOUTHERN NEW MEXICO BOARD:

Eileen VanWie & Kathy Brook – Co-Presidents
OPEN – Vice President

Bonnie Votaw – Secretary

Sadie Valverde – Treasurer

Kim Sorensen – Immediate Past President

Maryellen Kebbel & Laura Harper – Membership Directors

Erika Graf-Webster – Youth Engagement Director

Dale Yeo, Helen Zagana & Lizz Taylor – Voter Services Directors

Jo Galván Nash – Public Relations Director

Sharon Thomas (chair) & Judith LaPointe – Nominating Committee

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575.524.VOTE (8683)

www.lwvsnm.org

diverse intergenerational stories of "real" League of Women Voters members. Launched in August 2019, it focuses on reaching new audiences. For the stories go to: <https://www.lwv.org/sheisme>.

There was discussion about "expanding the vote" by Washington DC Mayor Muriel Bowser, YWCA USA CEO Alejandra Castillo, Southern Coalition for Social Justice Attorney Allison Riggs, and When We All Vote Board Chair Valerie Jarrett. Mayor Bowser talked about building partnerships and educating the public. Ms. Castillo described a strong partnership between the YWCA and the LWV and the importance of all of us playing a role to protect and expand local voting rights. Ms.

—continued p. 4

As of August 1, there were only 95 days left until Election Day 2020. That's not a lot of time to get citizens thinking about their voting privilege and to get people to the election polls, whether by mail or in-person. LWVSNM is continuing to support the Vote411 Project. With Dale Yeo's leadership, several League members are determining the important questions to ask all local candidates. Their responses will be posted at <https://www.Vote411.org> with the candidates' photos. We encourage all candidates to fill out the questions.

[Vote411](#), [Look for the League of Women Voters Online Guide](#)

Also watch for the LWVSNM Printed Guide, distributed through the LC Bulletin

LWVSNM to hold Board Development Workshop

The LWVSNM Board will have an important Board Development Workshop from 9:30 am – noon on Saturday, Aug. 15, via Zoom. The goal is to create a plan for effectively and efficiently addressing the League's responsibilities from August through the 2020 general election. With Karena Oberman facilitating the session, board members will be asked to think about their individual and collective roles. There will also be a discussion of our nonpartisan policy in comparison with the state policy and recent comments by LWVUS CEO Virginia Kase.

Non-Board members of the League can attend; be sure to contact Kathy Brook or Eileen VanWie in advance of the workshop so that an email with the Zoom meeting link can be sent to you.

The regular Board meeting on August 17 is **cancelled** in order to focus on the Workshop.



Zoom teleconferencing continues for League meetings. If you need help setting up your computer, contact Eileen (vanwieek@yahoo.com).



VOTER REGISTRATION DEADLINES:

- Tuesday, Oct. 6, 2020, either online or by mail
- Saturday, Oct. 31, 2020, in-person

More Information, contact the DAC Bureau of Elections, 575-647-7421

Contact the Bureau of Elections for information related to in-person services during the pandemic:

elections@donaanacounty.org

Look on the LWVSNM website for guidelines that were sent from LWVUS regarding state and local League debates. It's posted online under **"Resources"**

Impressions of the LWVUS 54th Convention

The 2020 Biennial Convention was unique in the annals of the LWV. It was basically, a giant Zoom Webinar with over 1,200 people. Patience was sometimes needed but I must extend kudos and great amounts of respect to National for their technical expertise and planning for the programming for this convention. Various features stood out to me and so this report may seem a bit disjointed as I will only be adding a few points, hopefully of interest, to the President's Report.



Dale Yeo

In addition to the main convention run over two days, there were many additional resources and programming. I "attended" a caucus of Climate Change. It was called "Climate Emergency Resolution: Our Time is Up." Especially memorable was the rebroadcast of a TED Talk which is important because it details possible solutions that are concrete and doable. I recommend watching it if you are unfamiliar: https://www.ted.com/talks/chad_frischmann_100_solutions_to_reverse_global_warming?language=en. The material is relatively old (2017) but the concept that there could be specific plans to attack the problems with a price tag the world could afford is invaluable.

The League promotes books but this time it is promoting one written by one of its own – "The Untold Story of Women of Color in the League of Women Voters" by Carolyn Jefferson Jenkins. Finally, there is a place for everyone in the League. The motto for our time is "Hard Won but not Done."

—Dale Yeo, Voter Services Director

SAVE THE DATE

LWVSNM Board Workshop
Saturday, Aug. 15, 2020
9:30 am-12:00 pm
Via Zoom

Co-President's Message (cont.)

Riggs litigated the LWV case against partisan gerrymandering as a violation of the Constitution and for fair redistricting before the U.S. Supreme Court. While the litigation was not successful, she said we have a lot of tools to defend democracy and need to use them. Riggs made the thoughtful comment, "Politicians choose their voters; voters do not choose their politicians." Ms. Jarrett emphasized the importance of educating voters on their voting rights and to learn about candidates and issues at local, regional, and national levels. She advised forming "voting squads" with family and friends, making sure they are registered well in advance of the election. "Use our voices to influence those who control the election infrastructure and process. Get businesses to give time off for workers to go vote and provide transportation to the polls. We need to be well informed about the issues. Ask people what issues they care about."

The LWV of New Mexico proposed that the LWV US adopt the LWVNM Transfer of Federal Public Lands position. It was adopted by concurrence, so now is a national position. Check out the position at:

www.lwvnm.org/studies/2017/publiclands/.

LWV US CEO Virginia Kase described how 2020 has changed us. LWV will advance a strategic focus by building organizational capacity, growing activism, and campaigning to "Make Democracy Work." Kase advised Leagues to review and revise their nonpartisan policies with current issues in mind. "Call out elected officials when they oppose our positions. We have a responsibility to talk about systems of oppression. Raise our voices with conviction."

Dr. Deborah Ann Turner from Omaha, Nebraska was elected at the new President of the LWV US. As she closed the convention, she enthusiastically talked about eliminating voter suppression; invigorating the public to want to vote; making VOTE 411 a common household tool; and making a commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion. The June 2022 national convention will be in Denver.

*—With warm regards,
Eileen VanWie, Co-President*

Changes to Election Procedures in New Mexico (SB 4)

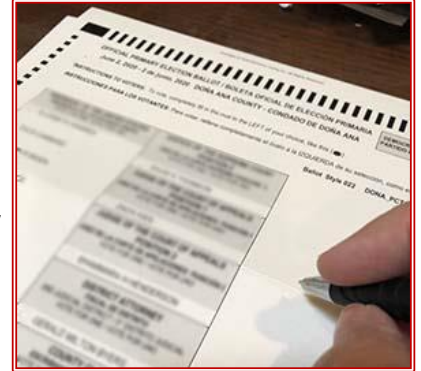
The recent special session of the New Mexico Legislature resulted in passage of Senate Bill 4 (SB 4), providing for temporary changes for the conduct of the 2020 general election and allowing for greater flexibility for some voters to change their party affiliation before a primary election. A permanent change in the procedure allows voters who are not affiliated with a major party to change party affiliation prior to a primary election. In particular, this allows those who are independents or who have declined to state a party to change their party to vote in a primary.

Among the temporary changes, each county clerk **may** automatically deliver to each “mailable” voter in the county a ballot application for the general election with a deadline of October 20 for requesting applications. The decision about automatically mailing applications is left to the county clerk. Mailed ballots will be reviewed by the clerk to verify the presence of the voter signature and the match of the last four digits of the social security number with the registration certificate. If a ballot is rejected based on this review, the voter will be notified and informed as to the procedure for correcting the problem.

The Secretary of State (SoS) is required to provide protective equipment and sanitizing supplies for each county clerk and polling locations as well as funding for the mailing of ballots.

There is also provision for the Secretary of Health to issue public health orders regarding the general election. Such orders will specify areas of the state to which they apply and will make specific recommendations to mitigate the health issues described. If such orders are issued at least 60 days in advance, the SoS shall, in consultation with the relevant county clerk, implement changes in the conduct of the 2020 general election. If the orders come later, the SoS may provide guidance to county clerks on best practices and may call a meeting of a task force created by SB 4. The task force may then authorize the SoS to institute procedures and measures to ensure health and safety in the conduct of the election.

— Kathy Brook



Aug. 26: Women’s Equality Day

Women’s Equality Day commemorates the passage of the 19th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, granting the right to vote to women. The amendment was first introduced in 1878. In 1971, the U.S. Congress designated August 26 as Women’s Equality Day.

As stated on the national League’s website, as this day approaches, we reflect on the brave suffragists who helped secure the passage of the [19th Amendment](#). The suffragists who tirelessly advocated for the 19th Amendment knew that our democracy was strengthened by increased access to the ballot box. They knew that VOTING is the most powerful act a citizen can make.

So, as we mark the anniversary of the 19th amendment becoming law, let’s honor those brave women and men by engaging and empowering all voters to [register to vote](#).

Order Your Sign Today!

LWVSNM is still taking orders for a custom-made, two-sided sign for our yards. If you want one, contact Eileen VanWie right away. The cost is \$10 and comes with a stake. Mail your check, payable to LWVSNM, to: P.O. Box 15142, Las Cruces, NM 88004. Please write “Yard Sign” in the memo line. Someone will deliver your sign to you.



Report from the LWVSNM Committee for Humane Immigration Reform

The LWVSNM Committee for Humane Immigration Reform is a group of League members who have been meeting since February 2019 to study the impact of the humanitarian crisis in our border region stemming from the administration's zero-tolerance immigration policies. Our goals are to raise awareness among League members at the local, state and national levels – and also among the general public – and to press the League to lobby for reform of the immigration system. To that end we have met monthly to educate ourselves through various means, including: 1) guest speakers; 2) meetings and ongoing communications with legislators; 3) reaching out to other League chapters; and 3) a field trip to El Paso to meet with Customs & Border officials; Rubén Garcia, Director of Annunciation House; and an immigrant family.

Our research and volunteer activities have led us to believe that immigration reform should be a top tier priority of the League at the local, state, and national levels. Toward this end we drafted an Advocacy Statement for Humane Immigration Reform which was approved by both the LWVSNM Board and the LWNM Board (This document is on the League's website). At the League's National Convention in June there was a caucus on immigration at which Meredith Machen, Director of Immigration from the LWNM, made a copy of our local advocacy statement available to attendees. Although the LWVUS did not make immigration reform a top tier priority, it did make it a second-tier priority.

The Committee also designed several public projects with the goal of keeping the plight of asylum seekers waiting in Mexico for their hearings in the minds of people in our community. We were ready to launch three outreach efforts around the time our State shut down due to COVID-19. These projects include: 1) an interactive mobile unit on immigration, to be launched in a kiosk at the Mesilla Valley Mall; 2) KRWG interviews with individuals working in immigration rights organizations; 3) profiles of volunteers who served refugee families in temporary shelters in Doña Ana County to be published in the Las Cruces Bulletin; and 4) a series of lectures in the Academy of Learning in Retirement by NMSU faculty on the root causes of poverty and violence in Central America.

With Covid-19 taking center stage, KRWG Public Media in Las Cruces has not been able to air interviews and the Las Cruces Bulletin has not published any of our volunteer profiles. We are grateful that The Voter will feature a volunteer profile each month.

In May 2020, our committee revised the Advocacy Statement in light of changes in immigration policies. At the request of the Board, we also drafted a Position Statement on Immigration and presented it to the LWVSNM Board at their June meeting. **A decision was made at the meeting to seek input on this statement from League members at two zoom meetings on August 11 and 13, 2020, at 4 pm. We hope to see you at one of these meetings. In early August you will receive by email a copy of both the revised Advocacy statement and the Position statement.**

—Christine Eber, LWVSNM Immigration Committee
ceber@nmsu.edu

Of Interest

[Suffrage in Spanish: Hispanic Women and the Fight for the 19th Amendment in New Mexico — Women's Suffrage Centennial Commission](#)



Adelina Otero-Warren (Library of Congress)

Programs & Positions

There is a new link on the League website. Go to www.lwvsnm.org and then click on "Programs & Positions." As we continue to build out this web page, we can begin by reviewing the League's current Immigration Position and a proposal for revisions. Just scroll down to the Positions section. Your input is important and as stated above, two Zoom meetings will be held for further discussion: Aug. 11 and Aug. 13 at 4pm. Let [Christine Eber](#) of the Immigration Committee know you're interested in getting a Zoom invite to attend.

In Memoriam



It is with deep sadness to share the news of the passing of two local members of the League of Women Voters of Southern New Mexico. We offer their families and friends our sincere condolences. And, we honor their service to the League.

Winifred (Win) Jacobs

"Wander Woman"

Wonder Woman

In 2017, Win published a book, "Wander Woman: A Recollection." For Las Cruces, she was not only a Wander Woman, but also a Wonder Woman, one who contributed widely and deeply in the community.

League members will recall her multiple contributions. Having moved to Las Cruces in 1994, she quickly joined the League and became an active leader, assuming the job of President from 1996-1998. Her energies were enormous, and she was instrumental in the League studying, adopting, and revising our position on Land Use and Water. While she was president, the Academy for Learning in Retirement sponsored a series called, "Water Runs Uphill to Money." Win pulled this ALR presentation together. During the late 1990s and early 2000s, she sat on the LWNM Action Committee as the Water Chair. As such, she attended numerous conferences thus forming connections with state water experts.

Win chaired at least two State League Conventions held in Las Cruces. She provided speakers expert in border and water issues, introduced the visiting delegates to the Fountain Theater, and to readings by Denise Chavez and Irene Oliver-Lewis. Everyone loved to come to La Cruces for these conventions, which were both informative and fun.

Most recently, Win chaired a revival of the Water Committee and served on our 50th Anniversary Celebration Committee. In this role, she coordinated a public forum on that topic --and served as co-editor (along with Johnnie Aldrich) of "Our First 50 Years: A History of the League of Women Voters of Greater Las Cruces."

Win, the Wonder Woman, was never one to just do one thing. During her early years in Las Cruces, she, and her husband Ed, were very involved in the operation of SCORE (Service Corps of Retired Executives). Having retired from running an Office Supply Store, they had much expertise to offer.

In 2001, Win ran in the District 6 City Council race. She did not win but had a wonderful time knocking on doors and participating in forums and other civic opportunities. By this time, she had served on several City Ad-Hoc Committees, focused on topics such as Infrastructure. Again, her expertise in water came into play.

In 2002, the mayor appointed Win to the Board of the Housing Authority of the City of Las Cruces. She soon became the Chair, serving as such through 2011. During her tenure, the Board provided oversight of the development of several tax credit properties, the acquisition of three apartments used for low-income housing, and the agency's housing programs.

Her work with the Housing Authority led Win to become a passionate advocate for meeting the housing needs of low-income families. As usual, she organized several League public forums on the subject. While serving as a Commissioner at the local Housing Authority, Win became a committee member of NAHRO (a national housing organization), a position which involved extensive travel.

And the list of accomplishments, interests, and civic involvement goes on:

- As a member of Temple Beth El, Win moderated many candidate forums there throughout the years.
- She loved participating in Desert Writers where she shared her literary efforts with fellow authors.



—continued next page

In Memoriam



(CONT.)

- Win was an active member of the Doña Ana Historical Society and for several years edited the annual “Historical Review.”
- In 2010, she was appointed to the Ad-Hoc Downtown Revitalization Advisory Committee.
- With a great love of her longtime companions, Blue and Tashe, she also served on the board of the Humane Society of Southern New Mexico.

Those of us who worked with Win during her incredibly active career as a Leaguer learned to appreciate her tenacity, her seemingly endless energy, her sense of humor, and the soft-spoken good sense of her leadership and counsel. Her final achievement, the publication of “Wander Woman” in 2017, is a candid and thoughtful memoir and a good read.

There will be a Celebration of Win’s Life on Sunday, August 9, 7:30 pm, Plaza de Las Cruces. Bring your own chair.

— Chris Little and Johnnie Aldrich

Jane Carter

The League lost an engaged, informed member when Jane Carter died on May 31, 2020. She was 86. She was an active League member in both Ohio and Las Cruces. In Ohio, she held various positions and spent much of her energy on environmental matters. In Las Cruces she was a member of the first Immigration Committee and an invaluable member of the Affordable Housing Committee.

When first moving to Las Cruces in 1985, Jane and her husband Don were active in the local Habitat for Humanity and participated in the building nearly 80 homes. For many years, Jane served as the volunteer Office Manager. She was the one Who dealt with federal and city regulations, submitted proposals to the City and coordinated many activities.

The Affordable Housing Committee was formed in 2010. The group interviewed all the local providers and developed a report about affordable housing issues. Though small, the committee has remained intact and involved since that time. Jane drove much of this effort. She was the member who best understood the role of local organizations. She was the person who had the best feel for the true affordable housing needs in our community. And she was the member who best understood City reports and charts as well as state and federal requirements. She guided us all.



It is worth mentioning that Jane did all this while dealing with Low Vision. With the use of her big computer screen and excellent mind, she remained engaged in everything that was going on around her.

—Chris Little

Board Meeting Minutes • DRAFT • June 15, 2020

Zoom Conference Online – 2:00 PM – 4:00 PM

Draft Minutes in BOLD

PRESENT: Kathy Brook, Erika Graf-Webster, Maryellen Kebbel, Jo Galvan Nash, Kim Sorensen, Lizz Taylor, Sadie Valverde, Eileen VanWie, Bonnie Votaw, Dale Yeo, CARLA CAMPBELL, CHRISTINE EBER

Meeting Administration:

1. Call to Order and Welcome – **Kathy called the meeting to order at 2:09 pm**
2. Conflict of Interest Inquiry: Does any member of the LWVSNM Board of Directors have any known conflict of interest with any item on the agenda? **All answered negatively**
3. Changes to Agenda **Decisions were made regarding how to manage the Agenda**
 - a. **Cluster Action Items and Discussion items on Agenda**
 - b. **Monthly reports in writing – eliminate verbal unless action needed**
 - c. **Call ourselves on time or off topic**
4. Minutes of May 18 **Correction on spelling of guest speaker's name; approved**
5. Treasurer's report– Sadie Valverde
 - a. **Discussion of tech support invoice and payment**
 - b. **Approved**
 - c. **Lobbying (receipts needed) and Voter Service Activities (documentation of nonpartisanship) Discussion of forms for recordkeeping; preference for short version; Kathy will keep track for a few months and see how process can evolve.**

Other:

6. **Draft Immigration Policy Carla, Christine and Kim reported the work of the Immigration Committee, summed in Draft Policy statement. Moving forward quickly is urgent. There was lengthy discussion of Position Statement protocol locally and per state and national. Actions: Committee will revise statement. The revised statement will be sent to the Board for approval via email. Unit meetings will be scheduled for early August. August VOTER will have article on Immigration Committee work and Draft policy. Local position statement needs to be approved by the membership at April annual business meeting but can be used as basis for unit meetings in August. The State position on immigration can be added to our Handbook.**
7. Position Descriptions Review: Treasurer, Public Relations, Secretary
 - a. **Treasurer Position Description adopted**
 - b. **Public Relations Position Description adopted**
 - c. **Secretary Position Description to be reviewed and adjusted. Bonnie will consult with Cynthia Murrell to clarify difference in roles of Secretary and Coordinator of Programs. Kathy will send Bonnie information about areas that need attention.**
8. **Volunteers Needed; give specifics in *The Voter*: Observer Corps Coordinator, School Board Observer, Social Media Coordinator, Development Committee Chair. Jo will return with a list of meeting times for Observers to know when meetings are convened. It will be published in VOTER as information topic for membership at large and for potential Observers to evaluate.**
9. **Clarification of communication/actions (membership, distribution list, interfacing with WeAreIT, Social Media, etc.) Discussion centered on maintaining an accurate and accessible membership list to be used by officers, VOTER and for flash messages. Maryellen will come back with ideas for managing the membership/distribution list.**

Reports:

10. Voter Service
 - a. Vote411.org
 - b. Voters' Guide questions and publication costs. **Option A approved \$2,282; this provides for the Voters' Guide to be a separate component of *THE BULLETIN* and for additional copies to be printed for LWVSNM to distribute.**
 - c. Registering the homeless
 - d. Getting out the vote in a time of physical distancing
11. Youth Engagement – Webinar: Tools to Maximize Youth Vote Digital Engagement
 - a. **The Board approved Erika moving forward with the model to increase youth voter turnout.**
12. Education Committee **Co-Presidents will respond to Dr. Dulcinea Lara.**
13. Programs **Speakers for the August 8 and September 12 general meeting are being arranged.**
14. Membership
15. Website (Member access information, events) **Eileen will consult with Jo and Dale about the Website.**
16. JEDI – Criminal Justice (collaboration NAACP, KRWG) **The Unit Meeting about JEDI were productive. There was interest in additional unit meetings about the subject. Eileen will send out a flash message asking for volunteers to form an ad hoc committee to draft a LWVSNM JEDI plan. LWVSNM, KRWG and NAACP are collaborating for two programs on justice issues. The first will be recorded on June 23 (broadcast June 25) and the second will be recorded on June 30 (broadcast on July 2). Board members are asked to submit possible questions for the June 30 program on law enforcement and the judicial system to Eileen.**
17. Public Relations – Jo took orders for business cards.
18. 2020 Suffrage Alliance **There was discussion of creating and selling yard signs as a fundraiser; this might get confusing for members not being able to purchase for a tax credit. Members will be invited to submit to Jo 1 or 2 two photos of themselves wearing suffrage costumes (and perhaps masks) at the front of their home, thus creating a “porch parade.” The photos will be archived and share on social media.**
19. Development Committee
20. Records Management **will be a topic on August 15 Visioning Lab agenda. A facilitator is being sought. Goal is strategic planning for LWVSNM.**

Next Meeting Dates:

July – No meetings

August 8 – General Meeting, Saturday, 10:00-11:30 am

August 15 – Board Visioning Lab, Saturday, 9:30 am -12:00 pm

August 26 – Women's Equality Day and 100th Anniversary of 19th Amendment

September 12 General Meeting, Saturday, 10:00-11:30 am

Adjournment at 4:22pm

- Minutes submitted by Bonnie Votaw



LAS CRUCES CITY COUNCIL • Various Meetings Via Videoconference

Observer: Kathy Brook

May 26, 2020 • WORK SESSION

Economic Flash Assessment Report: Representatives from Community Economics Lab provided an overview of the impact of the pandemic on the Las Cruces area economy and discussed the changes that might be made locally to move the economy forward. An example would be the possibility of attracting more people doing remote work to this community. Collaboration between the city and The Bridge of S.N.M. was mentioned favorably.

A second agenda item was implementation of Elevate Las Cruces, the city's comprehensive plan.

Las Cruces City Council • Regular Meeting

June 1, 2020

Most of the meeting was dedicated to discussion of a face-covering ordinance for which violation would be a petty misdemeanor. Chief Gallagher expressed his concern about interactions between the police and the public in cases of noncompliance or outright defiance. He noted that the LCPD is currently operating at 80-90% capacity (with 20 vacancies) and that enforcement in some cases would lead to confrontations and risk infection of officers.

Congratulations to William Little on his reappointment to the Board of Commissioners of Las Cruces Utilities.

Las Cruces City Council • Special Meeting

June 5, 2020

Dawn Sanchez, David Morgan, and Dr. Michael Landen from the Department of Health attended the meeting to provide an update on COVID-19. Positive cases at the Otero County prison facility were discussed along with the new testing to be done at La Clinica throughout the county and by the Gadsden School District. Between them, Memorial Medical Center and the health department are doing about 300 tests/day.

There was considerable discussion of a face-covering ordinance and of the merits of approving an ordinance rather than a resolution concerning face coverings.

Las Cruces City Council • Work Session

June 8, 2020

The topic was a cinematic infrastructure update, a work session delayed from March as a result of the pandemic. Presenters included Griselda Martinez, economic development director; Don Gray, Film Las Cruces; Lenny Martinez, chief of staff for NMSU Chancellor; and Monica Torres, president of Doña Ana Community College. Potential improvements to the Film Las Cruces facility on S. Valley were discussed along with the idea of a creative campus as part of the NMSU system. Jeff Steinborn also spoke as the President of Film Las Cruces.

Las Cruces City Council • Regular Meeting

June 15, 2020

Public participation included a petition with 848 signatures requesting access to all city parks immediately and several complaints about failure to use masks and protestors blocking traffic. Topics included loan forgiveness on a home rehabilitation project where debt resulted from a massive change request on the project as a result of rotted cast iron sewer system in the slab; Lohman Properties clean up (about 140 acres of land purchased from City of Albuquerque); budget adjustments, grant acceptances, approval of an energy performance contract; and potential creation of the Royal Crossing tax increment development district.

Las Cruces City Council Work Session

June 15, 2020

The topic of the work session was policing. In attendance were various representatives of LCPD including Deputy Chief Dominguez, Dr. Bobbie Green (NAACP), Dr. Laura Gutierrez Spencer, and Sheriff Kim Stewart. The discussion included feedback from LCPD on the elements of 8 Can't Wait. Discussion of some topics was limited because of litigation.



Las Cruces City Council Regular Meeting

July 6, 2020

There was a presentation by the city's auditor about the process for the audit. Another major topic was the proposed Royal Crossing Tax Increment Development District which would involve about \$40 million in public funds and about 10 times that amount from private sources. A portion of the tax increment resulting from the district will support public infrastructure in the district and the remainder will go to the general fund. With several dissenting votes, the council approved a motion to consider creation of the district, following a public hearing expected in August.

Las Cruces City Council Special Meeting

July 6, 2020

Following lengthy discussion, the mayor's emergency proclamation relating to wearing of masks was approved.

Las Cruces City Council Work Session

July 13, 2020

The first topic involved a presentation by a consultant (unpaid) on retooling the LC economy post-COVID. The second topic involved a presentation concerning a police auditor RFP. The city's original contract from August 2014 was extended five times and a sixth extension was under discussion with a selection advisory committee convening in January 2020. An audit is not legally required and there are no specific audit standards. The scope of services may include audit of complaint investigation process, audit of police operations, evaluation of tort claim notices and notices of civil actions, statistical and trend analysis including offender and victim demographics, and written reports including reports within 30 days of receiving a complaint. The third topic was a master plan for the East Mesa sports complex.

Las Cruces City Council Regular Meeting

July 20, 2020

After a delay of several months, the council approved an increase in solid waste rates of \$2/month. Customers will also have the option of switching to a smaller container at a lower rate. Other items approved were budget adjustments associated with the current and the past fiscal years, and acceptance of new grants, including reimbursement of expenses related to the asylum seekers. There was extended discussion of a proposed restructuring/updating of community development fees some of which have not changed in more than a decade. A vote was postponed to Aug 17 to allow for a work session discussion.

Las Cruces City Council Special Meeting

July 24, 2020

The council approved a resolution to implement Las Cruces Safe Promise as proposed by the LC Economic Recovery Board. The state is providing training for New Mexico Safe Certification, indicating that the certified entity and its employees have been trained in safe practices for COVID-19. The training will be offered as online videos and the certification will result in a seal that can be displayed by the business. Las Cruces Safe Promise would be a supplement to the state program and could be rolled out to individuals in the community who commit to following COVID-19 safe practices.

A second major topic was an update on COVID by the NM Department of Health. Contact tracing remains a priority but is more challenging given the growth in cases. The Department is currently looking at involving some of their existing employees in this effort. Multiple phone calls to a given person are often required with tracers able to make contact 80% of the time by the third call to an individual. Current trends in cases are among younger age groups, perhaps resulting from the Independence Day holiday celebrations.

There was also an update on appropriations associated with COVID including the funding directly to the city and from state agencies under the CARES Act as well as anticipated funding from the \$1.25 billion allocated to the state for municipalities with populations under 500,000. These funds are largely for reimbursement of direct COVID expenses and it not anticipated that they can be used to replace lost revenues.



OBSERVER REPORTS

City of Las Cruces Public Utilities • Regular Meeting Board of Directors

July 9, 2020 • Observer: Beth Bardwell

Members absent: 0 Total number of Board members: 7

The July 9, 2020 regular meeting of the City of Las Cruces Public Utilities (CLCPU) addressed multiple items. Highlights are summarized below.

- The utility has assisted homeowners with utility payments during the COVID crisis expending \$92,641 to date in FY20.
- The City will soon issue a Climate Action Plan and the utility is considering whether, and if so, how to contribute to the reduction of the city's greenhouse gas emissions by 2050. The utility provides natural gas to about 40,000 customers in Las Cruces. Methane, the main ingredient found in natural gas, is far more potent a greenhouse gas than carbon dioxide; more than 80 times as effective at trapping heat than carbon dioxide. In the first of several presentations on the utility's role in the forthcoming Climate Action Plan, utility staff said they would not reduce emissions but only consider capping emissions at current levels citing the importance of revenue from sales, the low cost of this energy source, and demand from local industry and business. The utility included options for offsetting and mitigating emissions. But more rigorous evaluation and discussion on reductions, offsets and mitigation is warranted especially given today's climate crisis.
- The utility approved expenditures for ongoing legal services in numerous matters including defense of the city's water rights in a challenge from Texas before the U.S. Supreme Court on New Mexico's use of river water and associated impacts from groundwater pumping under the 1938 Rio Grande Compact (~\$500K in FY21) and upcoming hearings before the NM Public Regulatory Commission on electricity rates and sources for electricity generation by El Paso Electric consistent with New Mexico's recent Energy Transition Act which requires that 50% of New Mexico's electricity is generated from renewable energy resources by 2030.

South Central Solid Waste Authority Board Meeting • Regular Meeting (via GoToMeeting)

July 16, 2020, 9:00 a.m. • Observer: Johnnie R. Aldrich

Many absentees today; a quorum present, just barely
Lynn Ellins, Board Chair, Presiding

Like several previous year-end special meetings, this one was devoted primarily to budgetary issues, the finishing 2020 and planning 2021.

A presentation by CPA Christ Garner, of Patillo, Brown & Hill, LLP, described the official audit required by both federal and state governments. The audit process, which began June 15, will not be finished until November 2020. Garner informed the Board of their responsibilities, giving them a "heads up" about specific procedures.

SCSWA Director reported record amounts of waste received at the Corralitos Landfill this past year: 226,202 tons were dumped there, more than ever before. The 8055 tons of recyclables also are a record, 1000 tons more than last year's tonnage.

"For the year, SCSWA shipped 11,289 individual truckloads of waste and recycling to waste and recycling facilities."

Director Peck also reported a major milestone for the efficiency of the Amador Avenue Transfer Station: the installation of the monster multi-million-dollar Compacter machine. Crews from both Texas and Georgia were on hand during May and June for this event; twenty-hour workdays during these weeks were not unusual for our local Transfer Station Manager, Robert Gorman.

—continued next page



OBSERVER REPORTS

SCSWA (cont.)

Expansion at Corralitos involves the “mass excavation” of the 16-acre Cell 4, which is 90% complete. Liner installation will begin in August. Another costly part of the expansion is the installation of “wells” to draw methane gas out of the ground under this huge dump site. This is being done according to EPA regulations.

Also “In Progress” is the search for additional office and fleet service space. The Authority staff is working on a 3-year lease on property across the street from the County Government City to which administrative staff will eventually move. On another two sites off of Hadley, fleet parking and service will be available, and development will begin on a recycling processing facility of our own. This kind of long-term investment will allow the Authority to reduce considerably the tons of recyclables that must be trucked to El Paso or Albuquerque.

One of several resolutions passed in the final part of this quarterly meeting is of particular interest to customers of waste collection — the Authority approved a Memorandum of Understanding between the City of Las Cruces and the Authority that would add a Customer Service Representative Position to the administration. Currently, consumers with questions about recycling, solid waste collection, or land fill use have had access to three different telephone numbers. With a trained representative on duty, the three numbers will be reduced to just one. The position holder will be an employee of the City, funded by the Authority.

During the Public Input part of the Agenda, Director Peck revealed that Suzanne Michaels, the current Public Relations Specialist, will retire at the end of July. Those of us who read the newspaper column she and Carrie McClure write weekly will miss her.

Adjournment: 10:22 a.m.

Mesilla Valley Public Housing Authority (MVPHA) • Board of Directors Regular Meeting July 21, 2020 • Observer: Beth Bardwell

Members absent: none, Total number of Board members: 3

The MVPHA Board of Directors unanimously approved the minutes from the Regular Board Meeting of June 16, 2020, the Special Board Meeting of June 23, 2020 and Resolution 2020-11 approving Write-off Uncollectible Accounts in the amount of approximately \$46,000.

Pavilion Construction has commenced construction of the Desert Hope Apartments, a 40-unit (single occupancy) apartment complex dedicated to housing the homeless and chronically homeless. A virtual groundbreaking event is scheduled to occur Thursday, July 23rd at 10:30 a.m. The apartment complex is located near Solano at 1310 Pecos Street.

The MVPHA office is currently closed because of Covid-19 but continues to provide housing services via telephone. The office is slated to reopen in early August after completion of changes to the lobby that ensure the safety of staff and members of the public.

Of note, MVPHA has scheduled a work session for July 30th at 10:00 to discuss strategies to implement HUD’s directive to reduce its public housing stock. The directive, called “repositioning public housing” has identified four strategies available to eliminate public housing as we know it. The strategies are the Rental Assistance Demonstration (RAD), the demolition of public housing, the facilitation of voluntary conversion of public housing to vouchers, and the retention of assets after a Declaration of Trust (DOT) release. For more information on these strategies, visit: <https://rb.gy/rir4lr>. The Public Housing Program provides affordable housing to more than 600 residents of the City of Las Cruces in 249 low rent public housing units for multifamily and the elderly and the disabled. MVPHA is tentatively earmarking a little less than \$250,000 in capital outlay funding to help fund repositioning.

Solidarity with Refugees at El Calvario

January/February 2020

by

Pauline Hovey

“It’s like the fabric has been ripped.” Aurelia Holliman is trying to articulate what volunteers at El Calvario United Methodist Church are feeling since the “Remain in Mexico” program diverted asylum seekers to Juarez. For the 1 ½ years she accompanied the mostly Central American refugees at this hospitality shelter, Aurelia experienced the positive impact of a small group of dedicated people.

“We had interwoven our lives into caring and solidarity with the refugees. It was beyond serving. At times we felt like we had stepped into grace.”

Although many people volunteered from a deeply religious basis, for Aurelia, this experience was much more personal. After serving in Guatemala independently several months at a time for 11 years and then living there two years, she says, “I knew what the people were running from and I also knew how much they didn’t want to.”

Aurelia arrived in Guatemala in 1996, and said she quickly learned the people’s reality and the effects of her government’s policies. Yet she found the Maya people “...incredible. Their survival despite everything they’ve undergone: the persecution, the poverty....” Before she left in 2009, Aurelia had cared for babies in an orphanage, tutored children, and started a small Maya scholarship program for village children, which has since grown exponentially.

At El Calvario, Aurelia’s “job” was to cook simple meals for the refugees when they arrived, exhausted and filthy after their stay in ICE holding cells. Sometimes she sat and talked with “guests” as they ate, before funneling them off to showers. People were traumatized and didn’t even know where they were. Aurelia’s hospitality helped them relax.

But she says she wasn’t in any way unique. “So many of us contributed all we possibly could. We knew why we were there: to help and serve our neighbors.” Aurelia wishes more Americans would understand the dangers and suffering asylum seekers face in Mexico. “Many goodhearted people just don’t know what’s going on down here. Nothing has changed; it’s just become more brutal.”

*—Pauline Hovey, Las Cruces resident and writer,
accompanied refugees at temporary shelters*

**THE BOOK CLUB LIST IS NOW POSTED ON THE LWVSNM WEBSITE UNDER
“RESOURCES” – IT WILL BE UPDATED THROUGHOUT THE YEAR.
[CLICK THIS LINK TO SEE THE LATEST BOOK LIST.](#)**