

the VOTER



JUNE 2022

Volume 54, Issue 2

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Co-Presidents' Messages

Dear LWVSNM Members,

The month of May was filled with learning experiences which you might be interested in exploring. For example, please review the LWVNM Council notes below concerning improvements to election administration. In the Observer Corps reports on the city council, you will find some brief summaries concerning the allocation of Telshor funds – of particular interest as we try to update some of our local positions; and actions of the Office of Emergency Management to prepare for various developments including the potential for a migrant crisis. I also recommend that you view the recording of the excellent League/NM Humanities Council panel on [Democracy and Elections](#).



Kathy Brook

As summer begins, think about what you can do to support democratic processes and how you can support the League's efforts.

—Kathy Brook
Co-President



Dear LWVSNM Members,

With June 7th just around the corner, I hope you have a voting plan or have already voted in the Primary Election. My ballot was number 48 at City Hall today (March 24). What ideas do you have to encourage voting in the Primary? What actions can we take to get out the vote?

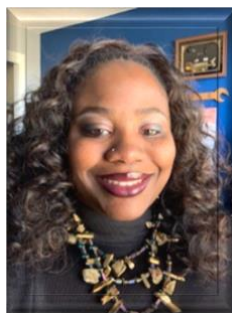
Some of us think of June as the beginning of the lazy, hazy days of summer, a time for R&R and

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State Black Education Act Team Addresses LWVSNM on June 11

Join the League's general meeting at 2:00 pm, Sat., June 11, 2022, (via Zoom) and meet the NMPED's Black Education Act Team. They will speak to League members about the Team's initiatives for the 2022-2023 school year, the scope of their work, and ways the League may be able to support the Team's statewide initiatives.

The New Mexico Black Education Act (BEA) took effect on July 1, 2021, to improve educational outcomes for African-American students in NM. Specifically, the goal of the BEA is to improve graduation rates at the high school and post-secondary levels. Led by Dr. Bannerman, the NMPED Team consists of four positions: Black Education Liaison, Hotline Manager (bias hotline), Black Education Curriculum Coordinator, and Professional Learning Coordinator.



Dr. Vickie Bannerman

Dr. Vickie Bannerman is the PED's Deputy Secretary of Identity, Equity and Transformation (IET). In this role, she informs policy, initiatives, and programs agency-wide in areas regarding diversity, equity, inclusion and transformational change. She also oversees and supports Options for Families/Charter

Schools Division, Indian Education Division, Language and Culture Division and Special Education Division. In partnership with the IET leadership team, she also oversees improvement and implementation efforts focused on monitoring and implementation of the Indian Education Act, Hispanic Education Act, Bilingual Multicultural Education Act, Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and the Black Education Act.

Co-Presidents' Messages (cont.)

reading. A book I've been learning from is *Her Honor: My Life on the Bench . . . What Works, What's Broken, and How to Change It* (2021, LaDoris Hazzard Cordell). Cordell, the first African American woman to sit on the Superior Court of Northern California, shares thought-provoking insider cases that describe our imperfect legal system. It makes me want to know more about the judicial candidates on our primary ballots now.

At the moment, the Magistrate Judge candidates on my ballot have not responded to questions on VOTE411.org. Before the General Election, I'll be checking VOTE411 again.



Eileen VanWie

It has been educational to represent the LWVSNM on the LWV New Mexico Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Committee (JEDI). The Chair, Rebecca Álvarez from the Santa Fe County League, brings forward important State and National information. Apparently the LWVNM Executive Committee is collaborating with the Navajo Nation to help make election information more available to Indigenous people living on the reservation. Rebecca is a member of the LWV US Bylaws Committee that is working on the change in the fee structure that Kathy reported being discussed at the LWVNM Council meeting. The LWVNM JEDI Committee plans to develop a mentorship program for new and continuing members who want to participate in such a program. Rebecca mentioned that the LWVSNM is the only State League to have a JEDI Strategic Action Plan. The LWVSNM Board makes decisions based on it.

Kathy's report provides a link for the recorded *NM Listens* panel members speaking via Zoom about *Democracy and Elections* on Sunday, May 22. The diverse panelists gave thoughtful ideas, such as staying positive and not taking on anger; rebuilding trust by being brutally honest about the truth; equity has never been embraced in our Country; school governance does not demonstrate a democratic structure; some students are identified from a "deficit" model rather than from an "assets" model; and, changing "students" into "scholars." One of the speakers talked about how some groups of people get left out of the conversation and was asked how to get them "to the table." His simple response was "Go to their table." That's a goal of the *New Mexico Listens* project.

With warm regards,
Eileen VanWie, Co-President

Upcoming Calendar Events

JUNE 2022

LGBTQ+ Pride Month • Alzheimer's & Brain Awareness Month

June 1, Wed.: **LWV Affordable Housing Committee**, 3:30 p.m.; Contact [Beth Bardwell](#) for more info.

June 2, Thur., **Book Club**, 3:30 p.m.; contact Erika, grafwebster@icloud.com for information

June 6, Mon.: **No Board Meeting**

June 11, Sat.: **New Member Orientation**, 10am-2pm, via Zoom; all members welcomed!

June 11, Sat.: **General Mtg**, 2pm, via Zoom

June 14, Tues.: **Flag Day**

June 19, Sun.: **Juneteenth** and **Fathers' Day**

June 20, Mon.: **Board Meeting**, 5:00 p.m., via Zoom

JULY 2022

No LWVSNM meetings or Board meetings during July unless notified otherwise

July 4, Monday: **Independence Day Holiday**

July 25: **VOTER** materials due to [Jo Nash](#) for August issue

AUGUST 2022

Aug. 1, Mon: **Short Board Meeting**, noon, via Zoom

2022/23 LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF SOUTHERN NEW MEXICO BOARD:

Eileen VanWie & Kathy Brook – Co-Presidents

Laura Castille – Vice President

Edwina Jaramillo – Secretary

Mary Flynn – Treasurer

Dale Yeo & Catherine Cochrane – Voter Services
Co-Directors

Kathe Kanim – Youth Engagement Director

Johnnie R. Aldrich – Interim Membership Director

Jo Galván Nash – Public Relations Director & VOTER
Editor

Shirley Armstrong, Chair, Ruth Jaure & Mary Flynn -
Nominating Committee

LWVSNM

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575.524.VOTE (8683) • www.lwvsnm.org



In even numbered years (between state conventions), LWVNM holds a Council meeting to review the League's work at the state level and to provide guidance to the board for the coming year. Local Leagues each have two voting delegates to the Council and any League member is welcome to observe. I attended as a member of the state board while Edwina Jaramillo and Eileen VanWie represented our local League. The 2022 meeting was held on April 30 at the League office in Albuquerque but was also accessible virtually.

Keynote Speaker: Heather Balas, VP for Election Reformers Network (formerly with New Mexico First and most recently Thornburg Foundation). The Election Reformers Network (ERN) seeks to reduce polarization and is a member of Fair Districts NM.

Heather began with polling data showing declining confidence that elections reflect the will of the people. From January 2021 to February 2022, the proportion of respondents indicating little or no confidence rose from 40% to 52%. As a reflection of this situation, *The Economist* in July 2021 had a cover story indicating that partisan election administration is a bigger worry than voter suppression.

ERN has been working on model legislation relating to election administration, noting that other democracies have done a better job than the US in ensuring that election administration is not a stepping-stone to running for other offices. For example, Canada has an ethics code under which a chief election official may not be a candidate for any election while serving as an election administrator. Election officials are appointed rather than elected with the appointment process varying among the provinces.

Options for changing the system in the US include an appointment process (perhaps modeled on the independent redistricting process or judicial nomination processes); nonpartisan elections (with no party affiliation listed on the ballot or elsewhere); development of ethics codes (oath of neutrality; prohibition on endorsing other candidates or fundraising for candidates); requiring that administrators step back from decisions involving their own race.

Issue One is another cross-partisan organization working on issues at the national level. We can pay attention to the hearings of the Select Committee on January 6, focusing on the facts presented; we can monitor developments in clarifying the Electoral Count

Act of 1887 including clarification of the role of the VP, narrowing the concept of a "failed" election, and supporting funding for election administration in the FY23 federal budget.

Particular opportunities for New Mexicans: moving forward with a Constitutional Amendment concerning an independent redistricting commission; removing the prohibition on run-off elections in statewide races in NM; passing an ethics and disclosure package advocated by the State Ethics Commission; modernizing the legislature (the length of sessions, legislative pay, more transparency; protecting the upcoming primary).

Resources relating to the topic:

- State Ethics Commission: www.sec.state.nm.us
- Election Reformers Network: www.electionreformers.org
- Issue One: www.issueone.org

Council Business: Hannah Burling, LWVNM President, reported on her most recent call with LWVUS President Deborah Turner who is meeting with small groups of state League presidents every three months. LWVUS is seeking to restructure and formalize the rights and responsibilities of different levels of League, clarifying what state and local Leagues can expect from national, what it means to be a League and a League member. President Turner is particularly interested in increasing the capacity of state Leagues to carry forward with their work. Simplification of the federated structure of the League and investment in membership growth are also among her goals.

Hannah and Janet Blair, PR Director, are working on behalf of LWVNM with the Secretary of State's Office to develop a video on the vote counting process. A Spanish version may be available and the video could be distributed to the schools.

Action: New Mexico First is reconvening the Redistricting Task Force to work on a Constitutional amendment and the Navajo Nation has indicated support of an amendment.

Membership: Current statewide membership is 558 including 18 students.

Immigration: In the LWVUS program planning survey 39 Leagues identified immigration as a priority.

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Dues can be Mailed or Paid Online

To those who have submitted their 2022-2023 dues – thank you! For those still intending to send a check or renew online, don't forget that your dues cover the months of May 2022 through April 2023.

It would be nice to get all dues paid before August; the League publishes its yearly Membership Directory and Handbook (which contains all members' names) in the early fall.

Members can renew online (with a credit card) via the League's website or mail checks to: LWVSNM, P.O. Box 15142, Las Cruces, NM 88004. If you use PayPal on the League's website a \$2.50 additional donation is appreciated to pay for the online fees.

The amount for a one-year membership remains the same as last year: \$65 per member; \$32.50 for 2nd member in the same household; \$0 for student members (16+ and older). **Everyone should fill out the membership form** (see last page) and send to LWV mailbox or to Mary Flynn.

Questions about dues: contact [Mary Flynn](#), our treasurer.

LWVNM Council News (cont.)

NM Listens: League members were encouraged to participate in the May 22 program. Registration is required through the New Mexico Humanities Council.

Spent Nuclear Fuel: Bobbi Riedel and Karen Douglas have presented to LWV Illinois and that group is considering concurrence with the LWVNM position.

Tribal Law Study: The study has been extended for another year.

VOTE411: There are a total of 659 candidates of whom about half responded to the League's questions. Of those who did not respond, many are running without opposition. It is important for us to develop recognition of VOTE411 in those parts of the state that are not covered by local Leagues.

—Kathy Brook, LWVNM Board

New Members Orientation

One of my most appreciated physical possessions is a reproduction of a page from *McCall's Magazine* of October 1920. Title: "Dangerous Women." Content: Photographs of, and brief commentary about, 10 of the leaders of the Women's Movement that began in the late 19th century in the USA. We who are members (new and old) of the LWV are their descendants.

Our **New Member Orientation** on Sat., June 11 at 10:00 a.m. will include abbreviated information about these formidable women because some of them were instrumental in the founding of our organization. Even more important is an opportunity to get acquainted with each other, so not-so-new and long-time members are welcome to join this Zoom event.

Besides a brief history of the League, attendees will be introduced to the local, state, and national levels of League organization. The programs and major events of our own LWVSNM will be described in greater detail. There will be ample opportunity for Q&A, as well.

Because this is a Zoom event, those who want to attend this gathering of "dangerous women" should notify Eileen VanWie (vanwieek@yahoo.com) by June 10th. We can also help those who have never used Zoom and need some directions.

—Johnnie Aldrich, Interim Director
Membership

IN-PERSON VOTER REGISTRATION DEADLINE:

Saturday, June 4, 2022

WHERE TO VOTE EARLY:

City Hall, DAC Govt Center, NMSU
Corbett Center, Mesilla Town Hall,
Sonoma Elementary

LET'S MEET LWVSNM MEMBER ... *Mary Martinez White*

Mary is a native New Mexican, the youngest of 10 children. She was born in Tularosa and came to Las Cruces after high school to attend New Mexico State University. She has an MBA and spent most of her career in government service in New Mexico. Some of her background includes having served two terms as Doña Ana County Treasurer, Chief Financial Officer for the Third Judicial District Court (Doña Ana County), Chief Executive Officer for the 7th Judicial District Court (Counties of Socorro, Sierra, Torrance and Catron) and she retired from the New Mexico Administrative Office of the Courts in 2016 where she served as the Statewide Magistrate DWI Drug Court Coordinator.



Mary currently serves on the Board of Directors of Community Action Agency, KTAL Radio, Community Service Corps (CSC), and she is on the Steering Committee of the Tularosa Basin Downwinders Consortium (TBDC). She is a member of the LC3 Behavioral Health Collaborative, the City of Las Cruces Resilience Leaders, and the Criminal Justice Coordinating Council. She is active in the community on such issues as behavioral health, women's right to choose, immigration, affordable housing, criminal justice, and health care.

Most recently, through her work with the TBDC she has helped get a two-year extension of

the Radiation Exposure Compensation Act (RECA) which would have otherwise sunset/expired in July 2022. RECA provides help for people who develop cancer or other diseases after exposure to atomic weapons testing or who

come in contact with uranium, but New Mexico has conspicuously been excluded in spite of the fact that the first atomic test, Trinity, took place here. Downwinders from the states of Nevada, Arizona, Utah and Colorado are covered. Mary is heartened by the widespread bipartisan support for the two-year extension which passed the US Senate unanimously and passed the House with 2/3 support. This initiative also has the support of the Western States Governor's Association, the New Mexico House and Senate, and

all members of the U.S. Congressional Delegation who represent New Mexico.

Via the CSC, Mary is also working to get funding for two vital projects which received "Game Changer" status from the Housing Sector of the LC3 Behavioral Health Collaborative — Los Amigos and Soteria Las Cruces. The Los Amigos project would provide intensive supportive housing for individuals returning from jail and prison or who are caught in the revolving cycle of re-arrest because of mental illness. The Soteria Las Cruces project would provide housing and intensive support for individuals with first episode psychosis.

In Memoriam

It is with a sad heart to announce the passing of Rob Hathaway. He was the husband of LWVSNM member Debra Hathaway. He passed away April 2, 2022. Rob was a veteran and volunteered locally with various nonprofit groups. Some of you may have met him when he helped the League one Saturday morning by lending the League a tent, tables and chairs for the farmers' market. He delivered and picked up the items after volunteers were finished. Special Military celebrations & ceremonies were held in his honor on April 8 at Veterans' Park on Roadrunner Parkway and at the American Legion Post #10.



LWV Voter Services

Voting for the Primary Election is underway! Have you taken a look at the VOTE411 website? Many of our local candidates have submitted their answers to the League's questions. Please let your family, friends, and neighbors know about this important website before they head to the election polls.

As Eileen mentioned in her President's report, there are some candidates who have not yet entered any information. The LWVSNM will keep an eye on them. We stand by a voter's right to know about all candidates and how they stand on various issues that are important to voters.

And, don't forget, anyone can use this QR code shown on the right. With your iPhone, open your phone's camera; then, point your camera at the symbol (QR Code). Your smart phone will recognize the symbol and will then take you straight to the Vote411 website. If you don't have a smartphone, then [click here to visit the website](#). You can also [go straight to the New Mexico Vote411 webpage](#) to get additional voting information.



LWV MEMBERS PARTICIPATE IN PEACEFUL PROTEST

Throughout the country, including Las Cruces, many individuals participated recently in protests over the possibility that Roe v. Wade could be overturned by the US Supreme Court. Several LWVSNM members were among those who waved signs in front of Branigan Memorial Library and City Hall. Some estimate more than 100 protesters were involved.



The sign above on the right reads, "Your Guns Have More Rights Than My Vagina."

[Photos are courtesy of LWVSNM Member Ginny Castille.]



County Voting Flyer in English and Spanish

The Doña Ana County Clerk's Office / Bureau of Elections has produced a nice flyer as a condensed one-stop shop on election and voting information. So, in addition to information on the Vote411 website, you can get to this flyer in two languages. The QR code at the bottom-right will take you the NMVote.org website. Just point your smart phone camera at the symbol. Thanks to Clerk Amanda López Askin and Deputy Clerk Lindsey Bachman for working to get voters informed.

[See the flyer in English – click here](#)

[See the flyer in Spanish – click here](#)



The Candidates

Would you like a complete list of those running for Office in Doña Ana County? [Click here to see a list of our local candidates.](#)

To create a paper document, click on the Button “Export List to” and then in the dropdown menu you select whether the list will be an Excel document, a PDF, or a Text File. Then you can print the document you created.

Books for LWVSNM Book Club – June 2022

If you would like to participate, contact Erika at grafwebster@icloud.com

BOOK CLUB MEETINGS ARE ON 1ST THURSDAY OF EACH MONTH

Status/Added	Book
Books Selected for Upcoming Meetings	
June 2 Moderator: Kathy	Corruptible: Who Gets Power and How It Changes Us by Brian Klaas Brilliant study of the nature of power, explaining just why it so often renders those who hold it evil. Does power corrupt, or are corrupt people drawn to power? Are entrepreneurs who embezzle and cops who kill the result of poorly designed systems or are they just bad people? Are tyrants made or born? A provocative look at what power is, who gets it, and what happens when they do, based on over 500 interviews with those who (for a while, at least) have had the upper hand.
July 7 Moderator: Dale	Capitol City: Gentrification and the Real Estate State by Samuel Stein Our cities are changing. Around the world, more and more money is being invested in buildings and land. Real estate is now a \$217 trillion dollar industry, worth thirty-six times the value of all the gold ever mined. It forms sixty percent of global assets. Samuel Stein shows that this explosive transformation of urban life and politics has been driven not only by the tastes of wealthy newcomers, but by the state-driven process of urban planning. Planning agencies provide a unique window into the ways the state uses and is used by capital, and the means by which urban renovations are translated into rising real estate values and rising rents.
August 4 Moderator: Erika	Dignity in a Digital Age by Congressman Ro Khanna (D, CA) Ro Khanna represents one of the wealthiest districts in America, a chunk of Silicon Valley that is home to tech behemoths like Apple and Intel, yet he was a co-chair of Bernie Sanders' 2020 campaign. His new book embodies those complexities. With manifesto-like ambition, he proposes sweeping fixes for what, in his view, ails America: too much wealth concentrated in too few hands, and too many digital jobs crowded into a handful of tech hubs. He wants to decentralize those opportunities so that places like Paintsville, Ky., or Jefferson, Iowa, can also thrive. He offers a revolutionary roadmap to facing America's digital divide, offering greater economic prosperity to all. In Khanna's vision, "just as people can move to technology, technology can move to people."



DRAFT Board Meeting Minutes

Monday, April 18, 2022

Zoom Conference Online – 5:00-6:10 PM

LWV Mission – Empowering Voters. Strengthening Democracy.

LWV Vision – We envision a democracy where every person has the desire, the right, the knowledge and the confidence to participate.

LWV Value – We believe in the power of women to create a more perfect democracy.

Board members: Johnnie Aldrich, Interim Director of Membership (ab); Kathy Brook, Co-President; Laura Castille, Vice-President; Catherine Cochrane, Co-Director of Voter Services; Mary Flynn, Treasurer; Edwina Jaramillo, Secretary; Kathe Kanim, Director of Youth Engagement (ab); Jo Galván Nash, Director of Public Relations; Eileen VanWie, Co-President (ab); Dale Yeo, Co-Director of Voter Services

Meeting Administration:

1. Call to Order and Welcome: K. Brook called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m. and welcomed new members. She also noted that we have a quorum of members.
2. ***The LWVSNM Board makes decisions based on Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion.***
3. Changes to Agenda: A motion was made by D. Yeo to approve a change to the agenda and seconded by J. Nash. The motion carried unanimously.
4. 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? None
5. Budget Update: Minutes from March 7, 2022, and March 21, 2022, Board meetings
Budget: This update is usually covered at the noon Board meeting but is being covered today to discuss the changes based on discussions from the April 9, 2022, general meeting. A revised budget was sent to the Board that added the carryover funds as of April 1, 2022 and decreased the fundraising amount by the same amount. K. Brook noted that the budget serves as a guideline that the Board can adjust and that the budget should be reviewed periodically. A suggestion was made to review it quarterly.

Minutes:

- A motion to approve the March 7th Board minutes was made by C. Cochrane and seconded by J. Nash. The motion was approved unanimously.
- A motion to approve the March 21st Board minutes was made by M. Flynn and seconded by L. Castille. The motion was approved unanimously.

Discussion and Action:

May and June Meetings (2022)

May: TBD

June: L. Castille indicated that the NM Public Education Department (NMPED) will provide a speaker for the June general meeting to discuss the Black Education Act and NMPED's planned initiatives.

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BOARD MINUTES (CONT.)

Survey, Calendar, & Selection of Positions to Update

Survey: The Board received a summary comparison of the 2019 and 2022 LWVSNM member surveys developed by J. Nash. Jo indicated only about a quarter of the membership responded to the recent survey compared to three years ago. She summarized the results for several questions. The results of Questions 12 and 15 generated much discussion including:

- how to better communicate with members,
- whether the League website needs to be overhauled,
- we need more photos of young people to debunk the idea the League is for just older people.
- members need to get more involved with social media (e.g., Instagram); do members need training?
- obtain guidance from state and national League re social media and recruitment of young adults.
- find out how the LWVSNM Instagram site is doing and identify how to better make use of it.

Master Calendar: This topic generated much discussion including:

- the Board should ascertain priorities for the year that drive the calendar,
- make the calendar more interactive and pare back on community events to include only those events that the League is involved in,
- add another column to include a timeline,
- include the current calendar on the website and make it linkable.

Selection of Positions to Update: K. Brook previously provided the Board a summary of feedback on local League Positions. She envisions the Board presenting a selection of Positions to update, identify one-to-two members willing to lead them and then start committees to work on revising them. The Board selected the following three Positions: Education, Affordable Housing, and Branigan Library. These three Positions will be discussed at the next general meeting.

June 4 Visioning Lab Goals, JEDI Strategic Action Plan

K. Brook noted that during the past year the League worked on the JEDI Plan and picked out priorities. She asked the Board what they think the goal of the 4-hour Lab should be. One suggestion was to have group discussions to “map out” activities for each Position. Another suggestion made was to invite the membership, especially committee chairs, for participation in part of the Lab

Voter Services Committee Plans, VOTE411, Registration

Voter Services Committee Plans: D. Yeo indicated that only about half the candidates responded to the League’s Candidate Questionnaire. She is looking for volunteers to call the remaining candidates to convince them to respond. A good point to make is that there are only a few questions and that their responses will be published in print for the General Election.

Registration: If interested in helping Doña Ana County and the League at the voter registration table contact League member [Stewart Oberman](#).

Suffrage Alliance Event Ideas – August 26-27, 2022

This is an in-person event that will be discussed at the next meeting.

Adjournment: Adjourned at 6:10 p.m.

—Submitted by Edwina Jaramillo, Secretary



OBSERVER REPORTS

LAS CRUCES CITY COUNCIL • Work Session

April 25, 2022

Observer: Kathy Brook

Mid-point review on Realize Las Cruces: This is a major review and code update relating to zoning, the zoning map and subdivisions. Code adoption is planned for spring 2023. Topics included drainage, flood control and erosion; parks and trails; landscaping/screening; tree preservation.

Proposed budget for FY22-23: The proposed budget involves a 1% increase from last year to about \$500 million. Among the new positions planned is a housing development coordinator (to be supported from the Telshor fund). The Telshor fund will also support the integrated mobile health/crisis intervention team and the match for the purchase of electric buses. There was an extensive discussion of the challenge of getting electric vehicles to implement the council's priorities in transitioning from gas fueled vehicles. Councilor Johana Bencomo expressed the need for a regular funding mechanism for the affordable housing trust fund and reference was made to the community's support for affordable housing through the GO bond process.

LAS CRUCES CITY COUNCIL • Regular Session

May 2, 2022

Observer: Kathy Brook

A decarbonization rider for natural gas (\$0.15/dekatherm) was approved.

Discussion of cannabis dispensary hours of operation focused on the appropriateness of treating alcohol and cannabis as similar products with most comments indicating that the two were very different. The final decision was to set no limits on hours of operation.

The 2022 action plan for federal housing funds was approved. The plan is a required document and provides for spending about \$1.6 million of CDBG and HOME funds.

Funding for various non-profits from the Telshor Fund was approved. This year the Council has adopted a strategy of allocating \$600,000 annually after previously allocating \$300,000/year. Applicants are currently limited to requesting \$30,000 though the recommendation was to fund several organizations at \$32,000. This year awards to 18 groups were proposed; all but a few have been funded previously. Newer organizations are legal aid and CARE. Councilor Johana Bencomo suggested that the Health and Human Services Advisory Committee could advocate for more funding. Use of the Telshor Fund will be a topic at a future work session. The discussion included a fairly extensive history of the Telshor fund after Mayor Pro Tem Kasandra Gandara asked for more information. The Telshor fund is referenced in the LWVSNM position on health care.

Two grant submissions relating to Roadrunner Transit were approved -- one for electric bus replacements for fixed bus routes and the other for construction of new facilities. A match of \$1.1 million is proposed from the Telshor Fund (viewed as supportive of health). The current transit facility is small and outdated and will be relocated. Most funding would come from the Federal Transportation Administration.

The plan for allocating ARPA funds to nonprofit organizations was approved. The eligibility process includes an opportunity for appeal. There was extensive discussion about audits within the process.

LAS CRUCES BOARD OF EDUCATION • Regular Meeting

Tuesday, May 3, 2022, 4:00 pm

Observer: Eileen VanWie

Members Present: President Ray Jaramillo, VP Teresa Tenorio, Secretary Pam Cort, and Members Carol Cooper and Robert Wofford; Superintendent Ralph Ramos

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LAS CRUCES BOARD OF EDUCATION (cont.)

Congratulations to the 2023 Teacher of the Year, Catherine Turietta-Huber from Tombaugh Elementary.

Public Comment:

Themes varied, including maintaining middle school honors classes, reviewing materials for social and emotional learning, valuing bilingual and dual language programs, a strong need for recruiting individuals to teaching, and one person stating the balanced calendar has mixed reviews for learning gains.

The Superintendent's report:

- Negotiations with the District, NEA-LC teachers, and CSEC-LC support staff continue. NEA President Denise Sheehan stated that the extended school calendar has to go through negotiations and is not resolved. CSEC President Irma Valdespino spoke on behalf of the need for more social workers and counselors in the schools, as well as the need for insurance payments to be improved.

- Quarterly School Board retreats are needed. Human Resources Director Sean Barham was asked to schedule meetings with retreats.

- It's national teacher appreciation week. We have the greatest teachers here in Las Cruces. Superintendent Ramos thanked the teachers.

- A grant was received to hire Educator Fellows for six elementary schools in the fall. Most applicants to the program have been Educational Assistants and one is a secretary.

- The THRIVE Partnership program with NMSU's School of Teacher Preparation, Administration, and Leadership (TPAL) will provide Alternative Licensure for 10 teachers of Special Education for LCPS this spring. The program is Teachers Helping Residents in Education in a yearlong student teaching experience. Mentors receive a \$5,000 stipend.

- Dr. Garcia and Ms. Monteveres shared that the district now has 18 refugee families and 62 students (Afghan and Congo). The families have questions about meeting their basic needs. The school staff, as well as the families in their native languages, are supported. Parents have been taking classes and have been provided with computers.

Deputy Superintendent Dr. Wendi Miller-Tomlinson reported on the Middle School curriculum. There is a drop in academic progress at the middle school level. The transition year has negative impact on some students. Beginning this fall with 6th graders, students will work toward a capstone experience, tied to the LCPS profile of a graduate. There are goals to have common skills, experiences, and outcomes at each grade level in all of the middle schools.

About 11% (about 190) of 6th grade students are in Honors courses for English Language Arts and Math. Criteria for identifying students for Honors courses will be piloted next year. Differentiation of learning for all students is important. There will be seminars for gifted students in the 6th grade next year.

LAS CRUCES CITY COUNCIL • Regular Session

May 9, 2022

Observer: Kathy Brook

Performance Management: Staff provided an update on progress in the alignment and implementation of Elevate Las Cruces, the city strategic plan, and departmental strategic plans. There have been multiple rounds of internal work sessions with departments and organizational units. There is a need for more collaboration and strategic thinking to work across multiple goals. Upcoming are measurements of indicators of progress, evaluation of results of strategic initiatives, and reports on transparency, accountability, and public feedback.

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OBSERVER REPORTS

LAS CRUCES CITY COUNCIL (cont.)

Mesa Grande Extension: An extension of Mesa Grande south from Hwy 70 to Lohman was proposed as a public-private partnership. The proposed extension would conform to the active transportation plan, the complete streets ordinance and Elevate Las Cruces. It would support east mesa growth and manage related traffic, provide access for existing and new development, and improve access to the east mesa.

Las Cruces City Council • Regular Session

May 16, 2022

Observer: Kathy Brook

Public participation included comments from four people about the death of Amelia Baca and the need for a community advisory commission to support development of a safer, kinder police force. Mary Martinez White spoke concerning the Radiation Exposure Compensation Act and the lack of coverage of NM under the act. Other speakers addressed training available for aggressive dogs.

Actions by the Council included approval of the municipal budget and the capital improvements program for FY 23.

Councilor and mayor comments included support for formation of a community advisory group on the police and/or public safety.

Las Cruces City Council • Work Session

May 23, 2022

Observer: Kathy Brook

Public Safety Impact Fee: There was a consultant presentation on possible changes to the public safety impact fee that is assessed on developers and used to expand capacity and benefit new development.

Dona Aña County Triage Center: The program director and the clinical director reported on the activities of the center during the past year and the future implementation of 988 calls to replace 911 calls involving mental/behavioral health crises. The center is open 24/7/365 and serves adults 18 and over who are experiencing a crisis. Staffing includes an RN, licensed mental health provider/clinician, and peer support specialists. Jamie Michael from the county health department was also present and contributed to the discussion. She provided information about some of the funding issues: Medicaid is the only reimbursement for crisis care at a center as opposed to an emergency room; other reimbursement comes from the county indigent program and some ARPA funds have also been used to support the center. She noted several issues requiring advocacy in Santa Fe (the distinction between voluntary and involuntary entry into the facility and reimbursement for care).

Office of Emergency Management (OEM): Steve Lopez reported on the functions of the office which serves the city and the county. Responsibilities include planning and preparing (all hazards emergency plans, drills, exercises, resource building, training); mitigating (grants and activities); response (incident management, coordination, response management, logistics); and recovery (including involvement of Volunteer Organizations Active in Disaster). Funding is shared between the city and county with a federal grant covering 50% of the personnel costs for professionals. The state of NM expects local governments to address the emergency to the maximum extent possible before it intervenes. Asst. City Manager Eric Enriquez has been designated as the city representative to work with the OEM. Plans, both locally and at FEMA, are being developed in the event of a migrant crisis. Plans are also in place to prepare an emergency shelter location for 300 people and animals at the fairgrounds.



BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSION • Regular Meeting

May 10, 2022

Observer: Elisa Sánchez

During the Board of Commissioners' public comment, Rick Renoo recommended that the Commissioners see the film, 2,000 Mules, which is about the drop boxes in the 2020 election. He wants the Commissioners to become aware of the danger of using drop boxes.

The Commission also voted on a Proclamation to codify Women's Reproductive Rights, acknowledging that women's rights are under attack and the Commission supports women to make their own decisions. The Commission voted 4-1 with Commissioner Diana Murillo voting no.

LAS CRUCES BOARD OF EDUCATION • Regular Meeting

Thursday, May 17, 2022, 6 pm

Observer: Eileen VanWie

Members Present: President Ray Jaramillo, VP Teresa Tenorio, Secretary Pam Cort, and members Carol Cooper and Robert Wofford; Superintendent Ralph Ramos

The meeting agenda had a long list of recognitions. Public comment included opinions mostly against the proposed operating budget that was on the agenda. A Budget Townhall had been held on Thursday, May 12.

The top three priorities addressed from a public survey, the Townhall, and district responses were social and emotional learning, facility improvements, and school entry security improvements. There were no open-ended questions in the survey. A deadline for an approved budget to the NM Public Education Department is June 2nd. The budget is a working document that can result in some changes.

By 11:30 pm, Board members Tenorio and Cooper wanted to table the budget until a special meeting. About midnight, the Board voted to approve the budget on a 3 (Jaramillo, Cooper, and Wofford) to 2 (Tenorio and Cort) vote. The LCPS budget exceeds \$600 million which includes both state and federal funding.

Before the meeting began, members of the National Education Association Las Cruces and the Classified School Employees Council of Las Cruces protested and chanted for respect outside of the adjacent Teaching and Learning Center. Their issues were class size, pay equity, and budget practices. They wanted the Board to table a decision on the budget.

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSION • Regular Meeting

May 24, 2022

Observer: Elisa Sánchez

Some unexpected discussion arose at the BOCC meeting. Although it did not meet approval, there is bound to be further discussion on this matter, driven by Commissioner Shannon Reynolds. He wants the Commission to approve an Ordinance to reduce the Gross Receipts Tax for Spaceport America. Because there are many details to his proposal, Commissioner Reynolds sent the LWVSNM an information sheet, which is summarized here:

—continued next page



County Commissioner Reynolds' Proposal Summary

“Doña Ana County Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) passed a Spaceport America Regional Spaceport Tax by 300 votes in 2007, thus forming the Joint Powers Agreement (JPA) for the Spaceport America Regional Spaceport Tax District Board. Sierra County passed a similar resolution for its county.”

Following the creation of a state statute for the Spaceport America Regional Spaceport Tax Board Act, the BOCC formed the JPA to manage the collected revenue.

In 2009 and 2010, Spaceport America (which manages the Spaceport) secured two bonds for the Spaceport for \$56 million and \$20 million, respectively, totaling approximately \$76 million to assist in building the needed infrastructure and buildings.

Over the last 13 years, both Sierra and Doña Ana counties have collected Gross Receipts Tax (GRT) of .0025% and provided that to the Department of Finance to distribute; 75% to be used for the Spaceport and 25% to be designated by each county to use in support of the Spaceport (or at the Spaceport). Doña Ana County decided to distribute the money to all three public school systems in the county to use in support of STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) education.

From 2009 to 2022 the cost of the bond principal and carrying charges were about \$57 Million (95% provided by Doña Ana County = approx. \$53 Million). During that same period, Doña Ana collected approximately \$72 Million in GRT total for use at the Spaceport (75% of total collected, almost \$100 Million).

The State Forensic audit determined that approximately \$6.9 Million was misappropriated by [a former administrator at the Spaceport] and the rest is still somewhat of a mystery.

The BOCC refinanced the Bonds into one last June 2021 and now the Debt Service (including principal and interest) is \$380,000 per month from Doña Ana County and \$47,000 per month from Sierra County from June 2021 to May of 2029; (\$5.1 Million per year) A total of \$41 Million additional.

Since Doña Ana County is currently receiving approximately \$1 Million a month in Spaceport GRT the amount (75%) provided for the Spaceport is approximately \$750,000. Of that our required portion to pay the remaining bonds, is only \$380,000 per month. This means we are providing almost twice the amount needed to cover the bonds. It also means we could pay the Bonds off in 4 years instead of 8 if we applied all of the monies to sunsetting the bonds. The Regional Spaceport Tax District Board will not support that.

My Resolution proposed to the BOCC was to pass an Ordinance to reduce the GRT percentage collected from .0025% to .001875% (effectively 1/4 of what we are collecting). This would either return \$4 Million per year back to the taxpayers or allow me to pass legislation to remove the dependency of the schools on the continued collection of the Spaceport GRT to support their STEM program.

I would like to submit Referendum Ordinance to create a GRT Tax that will support the County funding the “Challenger Mission” and other programs as a Community Center with the newly available GRT that is no longer dependent on the sustainability of Spaceport America. That way, as the tax base grows, so do the supported programs for the schools, which are also available, like parks, pools, zoos, etc. as county resources.

There is still a lot of discussion and convincing to do. In addition, once the schools are no longer dependent on the Spaceport GRT Tax, we could reduce the GRT tax another 25% to ensure the \$4 Million returned to the citizens does not get reallocated without another Referendum.”

—Shannon Reynolds, Commissioner

Treasurer's Report

Provided by Mary Flynn, Treasurer

MAY 2022

DATE	DESCRIPTION	DETAIL	AMOUNT
April 25, 2022	BANK BALANCE FORWARD		\$5,704.82
	NEW INCOME		
April 25, 2022		Paypal Deposit	\$99.48
April 25, 2022		Bank Deposit	\$1,442.50
April 26, 2022		EFT from City of Lass Cruces	\$250.00
May 3, 2022		Paypal Deposit	\$128.89
May 4, 2022		Paypal Deposit	\$70.08
May 9, 2022		Paypal Deposit	\$94.58
May 11, 2022		Bank Deposit	\$325.00
		TOTAL NEW INCOME	\$8,115.35
	NEW EXPENSES		
April 10, 2022		Consumer Cellular - Check #1116	\$19.43
		TOTAL NEW EXPENSES	\$19.43
	NEW TOTAL BALANCE		\$8,095.92
	COMMITTED FUNDS		
May 26, 2022		Diversity Fund	\$740.00
May 26, 2022		Youth Engagement Fund	\$625.00
May 26, 2022		Social Media Fund	\$288.67
May 26, 2022		New Mexico Listens Project	\$250.00
		TOTAL COMMITTED FUNDS	\$1,903.67
May 26, 2022	AVAILABLE BALANCE		\$6,192.25
May 26, 2022	ACCCOUNTS RECEIVABLE		\$0.00
May 26, 2022	WORKING BALANCE		\$6,192.25



MEMBERSHIP FORM

Send the Membership Form with Your Dues and/or Donation

Date _____ New member? Y / N Renewal? Y / N *Student? Y / N

Last Name _____ First Name _____

Address _____ City/State/Zip _____

Phone # _____ Email _____

2nd Household Member: New Member? Y / N Renewal? Y / N *Student? Y / N

Last Name _____ First Name _____

Address _____ City/State/Zip _____

Phone # _____ Email _____

Student Members (age 16+): List current school: _____

What League issues are you most passionate about? Circle any that apply:

Voting Rights	Elections	Education/Youth	Redistricting
Gun Safety	Immigration/Border Issues	Health Care	Climate/Environment
Legislation	Local Government	Social Justice/JEDI	Jobs/Economy

Other: _____

What skill set or interest do you want to offer to the League? _____

Send the Membership Form with Your Dues and/or Donation • THANK YOU!

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP:

Annual Dues are paid in May of each year. If paying dues, select appropriate box:

☐ \$65.00 for first member ☐ \$32.50 for second household member ☐ *Students (16+) free.

Make checks payable to LWVSNM. Send to: PO Box 15142, Las Cruces, NM 88004. Or pay at www.lwvsnm.org using PayPal or Credit Card. (An additional \$2.50 is appreciated to cover electronic fees.) Forms can be emailed to: lwvsnm@gmail.com. Thank you!

DONATION:

Please accept my donation of \$ _____. I request my donation be used for: ☐ General Use

☐ Program _____ ☐ Election/Voting-Related ☐ Other _____

FOR OFFICE ONLY

Treasurer ____ National Data ____ Membership SNM ____ Committee ____ New Member ____