

the VOTER

FEBRUARY 2023
Volume 54, Issue 9



INSIDE

Calendar & Events	2	Electrification Info.	5
Program Planning	3	Income Tax Credit	6
Nominations Sought	3	Board Minutes	7-8
Women's History Month	4	Observer Reports	9-11
LCPS Equity Council	4	Treasurer Report	12

Co-Presidents' Messages

Dear LWVSNM Members,



Kathy Brook

The 60-day session of the New Mexico Legislature has begun and there are numerous bills of interest to League members. The state League is particularly focused on those relating to voting and elections, taxes and revenue, and legislative modernization and ethics. Secondary priorities include education, criminal justice, environment, and health care. You can find information about the bills that the LWVNM Action Committee is tracking at <https://www.lwvnm.org/Action/>. As your schedule permits, please consider contacting your legislators about bills that concern you. Contact information is available for Doña Ana County legislators in Who's Who which is linked on the [LWVSNM home page](#).

Thanks to all who participated in the program planning meeting on January 14. If you have suggestions for topics that you think we should study and/or advocate about at the local or state level, please contact me or Eileen.

—Kathy, Co-President

Message from Co-President Eileen VanWie, next page

Feb. Hybrid Meeting: Threats to Democracy

The February 11, 2023 hybrid meeting of the League will feature Dr. Jamie Bronstein of NMSU's Department of History. Dr. Bronstein will discuss threats to democracy now and throughout history. The Saturday in-person and Zoom meeting begins at 2:00 p.m. at the DACC Workforce Center, 2345 Nevada Ave. (A greeter at the door will direct you to the room.)

Professor Bronstein has been teaching at NMSU since graduating from Stanford University in 1996. She is the author of numerous articles and of six books: *Land Reform and Working-Class Experience in Britain and the United States, 1800-1862* (Stanford, 1999); *Caught in the Machinery: Workplace Accidents and Injured Workers in 19th-century Britain* (Stanford, 2008); *Transatlantic radical: John Francis Bray* (Merlin, 2009); with Andrew Harris, *Empire, State and Society: Modern Britain, 1830-present* (Wiley-Blackwell, 2013) and *Two Nations, Indivisible: A History of American Inequality* (Prager, 2016), and *The Happiness of the British Working Class* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2023).



Jamie Bronstein

Dr. Bronstein has a B.A., from Tufts University, 1990, an M.A., from Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy, 1991, and a Ph.D. from Stanford University in 1996.

Dr. Bronstein is currently researching *The Insanity of Colonialism: The Territorial Insane Asylum of New Mexico*. Her research and teaching interests are Transatlantic/ Comparative History; British History, 1450-present; US History; Labor History; African-American History. Dr. Bronstein's complete CV can be found at <https://history.nmsu.edu/people/faculty-staff-pages/Bronstein-UpdatedCV-Nov2020.docx>

Dr. Bronstein currently serves as co-chair of the NMSU Faculty Senate, among other leadership roles.

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

Kathy Brook & Eileen VanWie – 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

Co-Presidents' Messages (cont.)

Dear League Members,

As Kathy mentioned, the New Mexico Legislature is in “full swing,” with so many bills filed that it seems impossible to keep track of them. As Co-Chairs of the LWVNM Education Committee, Santa Fe County League member Meredith Machen and I, are trying to monitor education related bills. For example, we support and advocate for SB 4 Healthy Universal School Meals bill. We know that food insecurity negatively affects learning for children. This bill identifies federal funding for serving high-quality meals at no charge to all students in schools. We also support HB 130 the K-12 Plus Program, which would expand and fund the number of instructional hours required for public schools to 1,400 instructional hours per year. “Instructional hours” is defined so that students are developing academic content standards as well as social and emotional learning skills. The bill includes time for educator professional development and learning interventions for students. It doesn't solve the complex needs of schools, but it has potential to make improvements for learning by all involved.



Eileen VanWie

The HB 126 School Graduation Requirements bill has strengths and weaknesses. Giving students more electives helps to personalize their learning experiences, which can hold their interest in learning through graduation. Another strength is the capstone course, which supports “real world” and project-based learning. Weaknesses include the reduction of the number of units for graduation from 24 credits to 22.

The League supports the need for the following courses that are not sufficiently included: civics, health, physical education, world languages, and financial literacy. There is need for more health credits. At a minimum, 9th-12th grade students should take two health courses, one during the 9th or 10th grade and one during the 11th or 12th grade. In addition to the important topics identified in the current one-half credit course, health courses should address violence prevention, social and emotional skills development, cultural and self-understanding, relationships and teamwork skills, conflict resolution, stress management, and healthy lifestyles, all of which are extremely critical in today's family, work, and community spaces. We oppose this bill because of the weaknesses we identified.

In reflecting upon why President Biden has not directed the Acting Archivist to add the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) as the 28th amendment to the U.S.



If you have a little extra time in your schedules, consider offering your help to the ongoing program and committee work: Education, Housing, Branigan Library, and Voter Services. Plus, the Observer Corps needs assistance with monitoring government meetings such as the County Commission. Many meetings are online and even if you can only attend once in a while, volunteering is a big help! Contact [Kathy Brook](#) for any further information.

Upcoming Calendar Events

FEBRUARY 2023

- February: [Black History Month](#) & Youth Mentoring Month in DAC
- Feb. 6:, Mon.: **Short Board Meeting**, 12:00pm, Zoom
- Feb. 7, Tues.: **LWVSNM Affordable Housing Comm.**, 3:30 pm via Zoom. To attend, [contact Beth](#).
- Feb. 8, Wed.: **Otero Unit Meeting**, 5:30 pm; [Contact Cindy Broughton](#) for information about location.
- Feb. 9, Thurs.: **Local LWV Education Committee**, 5pm, Zoom, contact [Eileen VanWie](#) for invite
- Feb. 11, Sat.: **LWVSNM General Meeting (Hybrid)**, 2pm, Doña Ana Community College Workforce Center, 2345 Nevada Ave., in-person and Zoom
- Feb. 14: **Valentine's Day and 103rd Anniversary of the League of Women Voters**
- Feb. 15: [Susan B. Anthony's Birthday](#)
- Feb. 15-16: **League Days at the Legislature**, Santa Fe
- Feb. 20, Mon.: [Presidents' Day Holiday](#)
- Feb. 20, Mon.: **Board Meeting**, 5pm, Zoom
- Feb. 21, 1920: **New Mexico Ratified the 19th Amendment**



2023 ANNUAL MEETING

2:00 pm
Saturday, April 15, '23
DACC Workforce Center
2345 Nevada Ave.

In-Person & Zoom

Planning for the Next Two Years

The annual Program Planning meeting, held on Jan. 14, is a critical part of the LWV's direction for the next two years. LWV members discussed current focus areas (our program) which include housing, education and Branigan Library. Other topics that members believe have wide-spread interest for possible study and action included: threats to Democracy, sustainability and climate change, violence prevention/gun safety, independent re-districting, modernizing the Legislature, among others. Send your thoughts about any program possibilities to either co-president. The program for 2023/24 and 2024/25 will be adopted at the League's annual business meeting in April.



Above: Members Ruth Jaure, Chris Little and Rebecca Courtney listen to reports made at the Program Planning Meeting. Above-Right: Nominating Chair Shirley Armstrong discusses the nominating process. This was the first virtual meeting held at the DACC Workforce Center on Nevada Ave., where the League's hybrid meetings are now being held. Listening via teleconference was Josie Miller, and in person, Eileen VanWie. Several other members were also online.



Among those in attendance were (l to r) Kate Mangelsdorf, Mary Flynn, Johnnie Aldrich, Beth Bardwell, Kathy Brook and Edwina Jaramillo.

Photos by Jo Galván Nash

Nominating Committee Needs You

Your 2023-2024 nominating committee is hard at work to finalize an outstanding slate of officers for the upcoming year (beginning May 1, 2023). If you have an interest in serving on the board in any of the following positions, or have ideas of others who would be good candidates, please contact Shirley Armstrong at 575-650-5851 or shirmike7@gmail.com.

The open positions for 2-year terms, except when noted otherwise, are:

President or Co-President

Treasurer

Membership Directors - 2 openings

Voter Services Directors - 1 opening for 1-year term

Youth Engagement Director – 1 opening

Nominating Committee Chair - 1 year term

Nominating Committee Member - 1 year term

You can also read the Job Position Descriptions [by clicking here](#).

—Shirley Armstrong, Nominating Committee Chair



National Women's History Month to be Celebrated March 8

The National Women's History Month event will be held March 8, 2023, at the Doña Ana Arts Council, 230 South Water Street, in Las Cruces, 5:00-7:00 pm. From 5:30-6:30 a few area women will share their stories based on the theme: *Unfinished Business: Women's Power of Persistence*. This local theme fits with the National Women's History Alliance theme of *Celebrating Women Who Tell Our Stories*, focusing on all forms of media and storytelling (e.g., print, radio, podcasts, news, and more).

The March 8 event, on International Women's Day, is sponsored by the Doña Ana Arts Council and the Southern New Mexico Women's Suffrage Alliance (LWVSNM, DAC-NAACP, AAUW-Las Cruces, Women's Intercultural Center-Anthony, and the Soroptimists International-Las Cruces). A RSVP will be required, since there is limited seating. More information will follow in the media and in the *March Voter*.

In Memoriam



The Las Cruces community lost a valued member on September 4, 2022, with the passing of Margaret Ellen Janes Haltom. Ellen held degrees from TCU in International Affairs and in Government and was a member of the LWV of Las Cruces/Southern New Mexico for at least 14 years (2006-2020). By the time she became a League member, she had managed multiple campaigns for her husband, Las Cruces City Councilor John Haltom. Ellen also had a strong interest in affordable housing for veterans and other vulnerable populations and was a member of the board of the Housing Authority of the City of Las Cruces.

Ellen was born in Texas and moved to Las Cruces in 1970 after her marriage to John. Her children are Amy Haltom of Richmond, CA and Matthew Haltom of Lantana, TX. She served on the board of the Las Cruces Symphony Association, was a fan of the Chicago Cubs, and a season ticket holder for the NMSU basketball team.

LCPS Supports Equity for All

At the last meeting of the LWVSNM Education Committee on January 18, 2023, members of the Las Cruces Public School Equity Council shared what they are doing since forming in 2019 so that each student receives what is needed to develop full academic and social potential to be successful in school. Dr. Roberto Lozano, Associate Superintendent of Equity, Innovation, and Social Justice, facilitates the process. School Board President Teresa Tenorio and Secretary Bob Wofford also shared information about the Equity Council, which is required for all school districts in New Mexico.

Dr. Lozano began by saying the goal is to change mindsets so that equity is involved with everything and everyone. A major accomplishment of the Council was recommending adoption of policy JBC, Equity and Excellence for All Students, which was passed by the School Board in 2021. The policy establishes a framework that promotes learning environments for all students by considering their home culture, language, and identity.

One barrier the district has removed is to eliminate fees and provide transportation so all students may participate in after school activities. There is funding to support students with housing insecurity and homelessness. Broadband is being expanded with federal funding. The LCPS provides two full-time teachers for educational classes with the Cobre Vista program at the County Detention Center; and staff is posted at Mesilla Valley Hospital for students placed there for psychiatric services. School Health Centers are being expanded to more schools. More funding has been received for community schools that provide multiple services for families.

We encouraged the Equity Council representatives to study school budgets and spending for equity purposes and to spend more money on multicultural/ multilingual materials and resources for direct use with students by educators. It is clear that members of the Equity Council are committed to providing learning experiences and environments that meet the interests, needs, and strengths of all students in the LCPS District.

The Education Committee plans to meet on **Thursday, February 9 via Zoom at 5:00 pm** to continue updating the local League Education Position. Unit meetings to discuss proposed changes with members will be scheduled this spring.

—Eileen VanWie
Education Committee Chair

Beneficial Electrification and Affordable Housing

Last year, the National League of Women Voters identified a few key areas where local League action can make a critical difference in curbing global climate change. One key action is increasing energy efficiency in buildings through electrification. See the National League's [Toolkit for Climate Action](#).

With this in mind, the local League Committee on Affordable Housing is looking at amending our current affordable housing position to allow us to support policies that link beneficial electrification to affordable housing.

This article is the Committee's first step to educate League members about "beneficial electrification," a shift to replace direct fossil fuel use in buildings with electricity in a way that reduces overall emissions and energy costs for the end user.

First, some background.

A rapidly warming climate is possibly the most serious and complex challenge we have faced as a species, intensified by the need to act quickly and effectively to address it. While there are many things we can do as individuals and a society to lessen the introduction of greenhouse gases into our atmosphere, an international consensus has emerged over the past two or three years that the only way to change the trajectory of ever higher and more ruinous temperatures, *on time and at scale*, is to electrify everything.

"Electrify everything" refers to how we power the three sectors of our economy that release the most greenhouse gases: transportation, the heating and cooling of buildings, and industry. Implicit in this approach is requiring that the electricity used to power these sectors be generated by zero carbon sources, primarily solar, wind and already-existing nuclear facilities. Also required will be the capacity for 24/7/365 storage and a modernized grid capable of incorporating the two-way distribution of the renewable resources and signals necessary for balancing energy demand throughout the day and night, and across the region as a whole.

The intelligence, will, and effort required to achieve this complete reorganization of our energy sector are overwhelming to contemplate. Even so, much progress has been made. Three years ago, the State of New Mexico passed legislation requiring that our electric utilities produce 40 percent of their electricity from renewable resources by 2025, with 100% zero carbon generation of electricity by 2045. The widescale electrification of transportation is clearly underway, and enormous public and private resources are being invested in charting the electrification of both our building and industrial sectors.

The goal of this vast mobilization is *beneficial electrification*, which refers to replacing the burning of fossil fuels in our economy with cleanly-sourced electricity, addressing climate change while benefitting the end-user economically. With the widespread transition to electric vehicles already underway, local attention has increasingly been drawn to beneficial electrification in our building sector.

Here too advancing technology, government policy, and the market have combined to make new all-electric buildings more comfortable, healthier and more economical for both residential and commercial use. This emerging reality is reflected in Metro Verde's new 2500 home all-electric development breaking ground in Las Cruces this month, and with the recent PowerUP Las Cruces Expo and Training at the Convention Center highlighting new, economical technologies for Las Cruces homes and businesses.

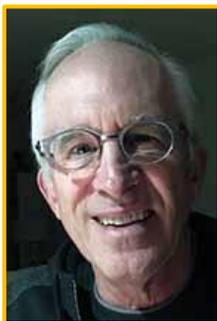
Key to the success of the widespread adoption of beneficial electrification will be the inclusion of people of all income levels in its benefits. This inclusion was strongly emphasized and incentivized in the landmark federal Inflation Reduction Act, but many barriers still need to be overcome to make sure lower income residents aren't left behind in this transition. This is particularly the case as we turn to upgrading current housing stock with high efficiency electric appliances like electric heat pumps that will replace both traditional air conditioners and gas furnaces. Also important will be the installation of adequate insulation and other building envelope upgrades necessary to make these new appliances fully effective and economical.

There are lots of resources available to learn more about "beneficial electrification." The National LWV has a webpage on "[Energy Efficiency in Buildings](#)" and the City of Las Cruces' has a publication by local energy expert, Phil Simpson, titled "It's Time to Transition to Clean Electric Buildings," which is posted on the local League website, <https://www.lwvsnm.org/resources/>.

What's next in the local League's process to consider updating our local position on affordable housing? We plan to share more resources and conduct one or more local Unit meetings with local experts to engage and educate members on the topic of beneficial electrification and the cost-benefit for low-to-moderate income households and the environment.



Beth Bardwell &
Don Kurtz



—Don Kurtz, LWV Housing Committee Member &
Beth Bardwell, LWV Housing Committee Chair

NM Legislature in Action

To watch Legislative Committees in action, go to the Legislative website (<https://www.nmlegis.gov/>) and click “Webcast” on the top menu to select your committee of interest. Previous meetings are also available to view.

Co-President (cont. from p.2)

Constitution, I became curious about the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA). It is in the news now for presidents and vice presidents “mishandling” of classified documents, which apparently has been going on for years. It probably violates the Presidential Records Act of 1978. Congress clearly needs to reform the classification system and practices. However, in 2010, the Brennan Center for Justice wrote an article about the serious “over classification” of documents. This happens for a variety of reasons: to avoid embarrassment, for fear of reprimand, is easier than segregating sensitive parts, and to keep voters in the dark. This secrecy is a threat to our national safety because flow of important information is prevented within different government agencies. Voters have the right to know most of what gets (over) classified. Officials should be required to justify a classification of documents, with consequences for not doing so.

What action can we take? We can contact our U.S. Senators and advocate for bringing the nominee for the U.S. Archivist, Colleen Shogan, to the Senate floor for a vote. Dr. Shogan teaches at Georgetown University, has worked for the Library of Congress, and was the Vice Chair of the Women’s Suffrage Centennial Commission, among other significant experiences. Another action to advocate for with our Senators is removing the time limit from the ERA, so it will be added to the U.S. Constitution.

—With warm regard, Eileen VanWie

Community Support



LWVSNM Co-President Eileen VanWie (left) and Secretary Edwina Jaramillo spent a Saturday lending their time in support of the Hospice Health and Wellness Fair at the Mesilla Valley Mall. They also offered voter registration and the League’s printed materials.

INCREASE THE CHILD INCOME TAX CREDIT

Additional Information Regarding an LWV NM Legislative Priority • HB 144

LWVNM believes that the tax system should be progressive and equitable, taking into consideration relevant differences in annual income. As part of the overall tax package the LWVNM is supporting an increase in the Child Tax Credit. This would make our overall tax system more progressive.

Policies like the Child Tax Credit (CTC) that boost economic opportunity for families are shown to reduce childhood poverty and improve outcomes for kids and their families. What’s more, they allow families to determine how best to spend the money based on their needs, and families spend the credits quickly and locally, benefiting businesses and the economy too. In addition, the CTC will increase racial, gender and income equity.

New Mexico recently enacted a new state-level CTC that will provide benefits to every single child throughout the state. Increasing the credit to an even more meaningful amount will only build on this progress and provide greater economic security to our families.

Some proven benefits include: • Improvements in infant and maternal health • Decreased poverty • Reduced childhood hunger • Better test scores • Higher graduation and college attendance rates.

Temporary expansions in the federal Child Tax Credit helped New Mexico parents meet the basic needs of their families. The credits were used to purchase basic necessities, such as food and housing, and to pay off debt. That temporary expansion was not renewed in the 2022 spending bill. That is even more reason the state must continue to take the lead and ensure all New Mexico families can meet their needs and thrive.

—Hannah Burling and Richard Mason, LWVNM



SUMMARY HIGHLIGHTS*
Board Meeting
Monday, December 5, 2022

Discussion and Action

1. Monthly Programs:
 - a. Debrief December Legislative Conversations and Holiday Social: E. VanWie thanked the event planning subcommittee. Pros: Great food, very nice venue, low cost. Cons: problematic venue for hybrid meetings due to noise from adjacent bar and not much food served. Manager indicates cost would increase to close off bar. If the same venue is used we may want to only have theater seating in adjacent closed room.
 - b. January 14 Program Planning, Hybrid at DACC Workforce Center: The goal of program planning is to elicit suggestions from members concerning topics for study, consensus, and advocacy at the local and state levels during 2023-2024.
 - c. February General Meeting: Several suggestions were proposed including a gun violence and gun prevention panel on this issue.
2. Membership
 - a. Unpaid Members: **Action Item:** J. Galván Nash will update the membership database to remove members who have not paid.
 - b. Life Members and how to honor: K. Brook made a motion to convert Christina Little to a life-time League member, and was seconded by D. Yeo. The motion carried unanimously.
3. Making Democracy Work Award PR
E. Van Wie noted that the criteria for the award has been updated. The award will remain \$250.00.
4. Update on Affordable Housing Land Bank & Trust Fund Committee: J. Galván Nash reported that the city council may be considering eliminating the established Affordable Housing Land Bank and Trust Fund Advisory Committee and instead, rely on the city's Housing Policy Review Committee to address the housing trust fund. The Review Committee currently has 7-members. It is not clear whether the committee would be enlarged to include any other community members, such as a League member, or whether the committee members would have any voting power with regard to recommendations for the City Council. **Action Item:** J. Galván Nash will send a draft letter (for the mayor and city council) to the Board emphasizing transparency, increased dialogue with the public, and more at-large members on the Committee.
5. Items for Next Meeting: The next meeting will be devoted to the website changes. **Action Items:** J. Galván Nash will put the list of all member's names on the LWVSNM website unless member requests otherwise. She also noted that a complete member contact list with emails, addresses and phone numbers will need to be sent via email to members.

Adjournment: at 1:24 p.m.

**Full minutes may be requested from the LWVSNM Board Secretary at marthaj11@verizon.net*

SUMMARY HIGHLIGHTS*
Board Meeting
Monday, December 19, 2022
Zoom Conference Online, 5:00 – 6:30 PM

Discussion and Action

1. Board member position descriptions review

Secretary Position Description: A motion was made by J. Galván Nash to approve the revised secretary position description, and seconded J. Aldrich. The motion carried unanimously. **Nominating Committee**

Position Description: A motion was made by J. Galván Nash to approve the description as revised and seconded by J. Aldrich. The motion carried unanimously.

2. Nomination Committee Work

Elected Board positions serve 2-year terms with certain positions up for re-election in even years and the remaining in odd years. There are five Board positions that are up for election and one of the Voter Services Director to serve a 1-year term (to replace C. Cochrane who is moving out of state), plus two non-Board nominating committee positions.

3. Budget Committee: K. Brook indicated that the Board needs a plan to have the Budget Committee in place by January. She also noted that the Treasurer cannot be the Chair of the Budget Committee (as per the bylaws).

4. Membership

a. Membership Committee: The Board discussed the possibility of electing co-Membership Directors, or the Membership Director could organize a committee for membership activities. **Action Item:** J. Aldrich will draft an article for The Voter asking for volunteers.

b. New Member Orientation – will be held January 28th via Zoom. **Action Items:** J. Aldrich, E. VanWie, and J. Galván Nash will draft a satisfaction survey or assessment for the new member orientation.

c. Otero County Unit – C. Broughton needs confirmation of Otero County members. **Action Item:** E. VanWie will provide her a list of current members. The Board discussed the possibility of appointing someone from Otero as a voting Board member. In the meantime, Cindy Broughton will serve as Otero’s County liaison to the LWVSNM. Tom Krajci will attend the meeting when Cindy is not available. Also discussed was the possibility of putting an Otero County member on the Budget Committee.

d. Member Directory: **Item:** J. Galván Nash will draft the Membership Directory for Board review. It can then be printed individually as 8.5x11” pages and sent to members who request it, otherwise it will be found online. Nineteen members will be purged from the League’s membership list.

5. Voter Services – Publishing *Who’s Who Directory of Elected Officials*

A motion was made by J. Aldrich to approve the expenditure of publishing 300 copies of the *Who’s Who* with ABC Printing for \$225. It was seconded by K. Brook and the motion carried unanimously. The discussion noted that some salaries in the document are not current and a suggestion was made to attach an “as of date” to the salaries.

Adjournment: A motion was made by J. Galván Nash to adjourn and seconded by J. Aldrich. The motion carried. Adjourned at 6:51 p.m.

*Full minutes may be requested from the LWVSNM Board Secretary at marthaj11@verizon.net



LAS CRUCES CITY COUNCIL • Regular Meeting

January 3, 2023

Observer: Kathy Brook

Public participation included a call for harsher penalties for business break-ins and more exploration of costs of moving the Trost building from the Las Cruces Country Club.

Resolutions were approved relating to fast-track permitting for business entities which will be creating at least 40 permanent full-time positions, changing a state statute to provide a funding mechanism for metropolitan redevelopment projects, and establishing a pilot program for installation of hygiene stations throughout the city.

LAS CRUCES CITY COUNCIL • Regular Meeting

January 17, 2023

Observer: Kathy Brook

Public Participation included support for financial assistance for businesses experiencing vandalism and for affected business owners to organize and prevent such crime from being normalized. Another concern was the possibility that city-installed hygiene stations would make it easier to be a drug addict.

The council tabled indefinitely a resolution to support legislative actions recommended by the Coalition of Sustainable Communities in NM. Councilors expressed support for some of the legislation but not all and did not want to proceed with the resolution concerning legislation that had not yet been filed.

A resolution to fund up to \$2,500 per business for storefront repairs necessitated by vandalism was approved. ARPA funds will be used as there has been an increase in commercial burglaries since the beginning of the pandemic. In other business, the council approved a loan of \$2.4 million from the Telshor Facility Fund in support of the 70-unit Three Sisters Apartments near Griggs and Walnut. About a third of the units will be three-bedroom and the apartments will remain affordable for 35 years. The investor has projects in a number of cities in New Mexico and reports taking pride in the security of its facilities.

A community solar project, 40% of whose power generation will serve low- and moderate-income households, was also approved.

NAACP OF DONA ANA COUNTY

January 21, 2023

Observer: Jennifer Kreie

This NAACP chapter meets on the third Saturday at 10:00 AM each month at the Unitarian Universalist Church. There was a brief discussion about the successful Martin Luther King, Jr. Breakfast event on January 16. The event was held at the Las Cruces Convention Center and there were over 200 attendees.

Councilor Johana Bencomo, District 4, was the guest speaker. Rather than just speaking to the group, Councilor Bencomo had a discussion with attendees about the proposed Citizens Police Oversight Committee, a resolution drafted by several community members in response to the recent killings of three citizens by the city police. Here are a few highlights:

- Councilor Bencomo doesn't currently support the proposed the resolution to create a Citizens Police Oversight Committee, but she is happy to meet with individuals to discuss their concerns and she is willing to work toward having a City Council work session for extended discussion between the public and the Council. Council Bencomo said she is working with a few others to come up with a different approach that might address citizens' concerns.

—continued next page



NAACP (cont.)

- Some attendees suggested that a different name might be less contentious than the “Citizens Police Oversight Committee.” One suggestion: Community and Police Safety Review. The goal of the proposed resolution is to have more public input about police behavior in the community, more transparency about police incidents that result in death, and more direct communication between the police and citizens.

A couple of events for February’s Black History Month were announced.

- An Evening of Music: Camerata Del Sol, February 3, 7:00 PM at the Unitarian Universalist Church. The performance will include works from African American composers and poets. Admission is free but donation is requested. Tickets must be reserved.
 - o <https://www.uuchurchlc.org/events/an-evening-of-music-camerata-del-sol/>
- February 3rd there will be a “welcome back” event on the NMSU campus for NMSU students.

LAS CRUCES CITY COUNCIL • Work Session

January 23, 2023

Observer: Kathy Brook

The first topic of discussion was Metropolitan Redevelopment Areas (MRAs). These areas are defined in state statute and are targeted for contributions of public resources to private redevelopment projects (without violating the anti-donation clause of the NM Constitution). There are over 40 MRA districts around New Mexico including the Las Cruces Downtown, the old Albuquerque High School, and the Albuquerque El Vado Motel. Eligibility for the designation depends on a combination of high unemployment, low income, vacant or underutilized property, and housing deficits. The designation could be used in Las Cruces for areas such as West Picacho, El Paseo, and South Solano.

The second topic was a presentation by Municipal Court Judge Joy Goldbaum on the activities of the court. The judge presented some data that had been assembled by her office concerning cases, about two-thirds of which involve traffic violations. Property crimes generally involve trespassing and shoplifting. She also presented information about the costs of indigent representation (about \$181,000 in 2022), which is covered by a panel of attorneys, not by the public defender’s office. Competency was a major topic: whenever it appears that there is an issue of competence, state statute provides that the case will be suspended and transferred to district court. If after a professional evaluation, the person is found not competent, the case goes back to municipal court and is dismissed.

The court is currently engaged in pulling old case files on cannabis-related convictions to identify records for expungement, now that recreational cannabis is legal in New Mexico.



LAS CRUCES BOARD OF EDUCATION • Regular Meeting

January 24, 2023 • 6:00 pm

Observer: Eileen VanWie

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

The Board met at 5:00 pm in a closed session to discuss pending litigation of Ryan Gonzalez v. Las Cruces Public Schools. The Las Cruces High School brass band entertained the audience. Several students, faculty, and crossing guards were recognized.

Public comment included concerns about traffic at Fairacres Elementary, reasons for an increase in Inspection of Public Records Act (IPRA) is that parents want the truth, complaints against the superintendent have been filed, and cultural proficiency leads to white children being shamed.

Student Advisory Council (SAC) member Jeremiah is a sophomore at Arrowhead Park Early College High School. SAC is still doing lunch and leadership meetings with discussion topics. Students appreciate being able to share their ideas. Students are looking forward to spring break; the fall two-week break seemed too long.

Superintendent's Report: The legislative session is in full swing, and things are looking optimistic. LCPS legislative priorities are on the website. A new student fine arts/activities/athletics handbook is being put together. Mr. Wofford suggested they include members of the Equity Council to bring in that perspective.

Naomi Chavez Lopez, Community Schools Coordinator, announced that LCPS received a U.S. five-year grant to strategically support four community schools. With the grant a new community school, Conlee Elementary, will be added. There will then be seven community schools in the district: Lynn Community Middle School (2017), Alameda, MacArthur, Booker T. Washington, and Doña Ana Community Elementary Schools (2021), and Mesilla Park Community Elementary School (2022).

In the Board reports, President Tenorio described the Zoom meeting of Dr. Lozano, Mr. Wofford, and herself with the LWVSNM Education Committee. She said the Committee members asked important questions.

DAC BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS (BOCC) • Regular Meeting

January 24, 2023

Observer: Jo Galván Nash

Susana Chaparro is now the Chairperson of the BOCC. During public input, a District #1 resident paid a compliment to the services provided by the county Sheriff's Department. He also said an increase to the sheriff's budget is needed. Later in the meeting, Sheriff Kim Stewart said the department has improved the collection of data since her arrival. In 2022, 78,677 calls for services were made, the highest number since she's been in office. In 2022, there were also: four officer-involved shootings, six homicides, 2,360+ arrests, and combined traffic/patrol officers gave 29,751 citations.

There was follow-up discussion about the Sheriff's need for a Public Information Officer. Commissioner Manuel Sanchez questioned Stewart as to why she didn't want to reclassify several positions in her budget, like other departments. Stewart said the other existing positions were still needed. The County Manager countered by stating there are currently 21 law enforcement vacancies with the bulk being officers/deputies; there are 15 vacancies in the "civilian" workforce. He also said last year, out of a \$22+ million sheriff's budget, there was over \$2 million that was left unspent. Chaparro said within 30 days, all departments will be able to discuss their budget requests for 2023/24. Vice Chair Chris Schaljo-Hernandez requested a work session on the Sheriff's topic prior to budget discussion.

In other matters, the Commission approved, on a vote of 3-2, a property tax rebate to benefit low-income property owners earning less than \$22,000 (on a sliding scale) for 2023 and 2024. There are about 90,000 parcels (and property taxpayers) in DAC. County residents who qualify could possibly get rebates totaling between \$1.4 and \$7 million, a wide gap that is hard to predict with an exact amount.

Treasurer's Report

Prepared by Mary Flynn, Treasurer

JANUARY 28, 2023

DATE	DETAIL	AMOUNT
	BALANCE FORWARD	\$12,459.39
	NEW INCOME	
September 29, 2023	In kind Donation (Eileen VW)	\$450.00
December 20, 2022	Paypal Deposit (Alterson/Preslar)	\$99.48
December 29, 2022	Paypal Deposit (Broughton for Ashlie Myers)	\$31.36
December 31, 2022	Paypal Deposit (Irving)	\$33.81
January 6, 2023	Bank Deposit (Ellen Roberts Young)	\$80.00
January 6, 2023	Bank Deposit (Wilson/Lilley)	\$90.00
January 20, 2023	Bank Deposit (SK Thomas/Gayle Eads)	\$165.00
January 22, 2023	Paypal Deposit (R Courtney)	\$65.67
	TOTAL MEMBER INCOME	\$1,015.32
	NEW EXPENSES	
September 29,2022	ABC Printing (paid by in-kind from Eileen VW)	\$450.00
December 6,2022	Camino Real Media	\$3,847.40
December 22,2022	Consumer Cellular	\$20.42
January 2,2023	LWV - State PMP	\$1,176.50
January 3,2023	LWV - National PMP	\$2,896.00
January 18,2023	Osteen Media Group	\$283.99
January 22,2023	Consumer Cellular	\$20.52
January 24,2023	Ella Kot (dues refund)	\$35.00
	TOTAL NEW EXPENSES	\$8,729.83
	TOTAL CASH ON HAND	\$4,744.88
	COMMITTED FUNDS	
January 26,2023	Spanish Language Voter	\$0.00
January 26,2023	Diversity Fund	\$415.00
January 26,2023	Youth Engagement Fund	\$625.00
January 26,2023	Social Media Fund	\$500.00
January 26,2023	New Mexico Listens Project	\$250.00
January 26,2023	Voter Service	\$0.00
	TOTAL COMMITTED FUNDS	\$1,790.00

Books for LWVSNM Book Club – February 2023

We read so we know things

BOOK CLUB MEETINGS ARE ON 1ST THURSDAY OF EACH MONTH

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

Selected for Meeting Date or Date Added	Book
Books Selected for Upcoming Meetings	
<p>February 2</p> <p>Moderator: Rorie Measure</p>	<p>Think Again: The Power of Knowing What You Don't Know By Adam Grant</p> <p>Learning requires focus. But, unlearning and relearning requires much more—it requires choosing courage over comfort. In <i>Think Again</i>, Adam Grant weaves together research and storytelling to help us build the intellectual and emotional muscle we need to stay curious enough about the world to actually change it. With bold ideas and rigorous evidence, he investigates how we can embrace the joy of being wrong, bring nuance to charged conversations, and build schools, workplaces, and communities of lifelong learners.</p>
<p>March 2</p> <p>Moderator: Erika Graf-Webster</p>	<p>An Immense World: How Animal Senses Reveal the Hidden Realms Around Us by Ed Yong</p> <p>Yong certainly gave himself a formidable task with this book — getting humans to step outside their “sensory bubble” and consider how nonhuman animals experience the world. But the enormous difficulty of making sense of senses we do not have is a reminder that each one of us has a purchase on only a sliver of reality. Yong is a terrific storyteller, and there are plenty of surprising animal facts to keep this book moving toward its profound conclusion: The breadth of this immense world should make us recognize how small we really are.</p> <p><i>NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER</i> A “thrilling” (<i>The New York Times</i>), “dazzling” (<i>The Wall Street Journal</i>) tour of the radically different ways that animals perceive the world that will fill you with wonder and forever alter your perspective.</p>
<p>April 6</p> <p>Moderator: Dale Yeo</p>	<p>Starry Messenger: Cosmic Perspectives on Civilization by Neil deGrasse Tyson</p> <p>Bringing his cosmic perspective to civilization on Earth, Neil deGrasse Tyson shines new light on the crucial fault lines of our time—war, politics, religion, truth, beauty, gender, and race—in a way that stimulates a deeper sense of unity for us all. In a time when our political and cultural views feel more polarized than ever, Tyson provides a much-needed antidote to so much of what divides us, while making a passionate case for the twin chariots of enlightenment—a cosmic perspective and the rationality of science.</p>