

the VOTER

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Co-Presidents' Messages

Dear League Members,

During March, I monitored legislative committee meetings and helped the County Clerk's Office register voters at Santa Teresa HS. It was a special treat to attend an Otero County Commission meeting to honor Robyn Holmes, the county clerk, who dealt with assorted challenges in administering recent elections (see page 3). I also joined an ad hoc group of local members discussing the decline in the number of physicians in our local area and sat in on a state League meeting with LWVUS about election standards of the International Standards Organization (ISO). Other activities included the monthly book club, which welcomes more members on the first Thursday of the month.



Kathy Brook

The League offers many ways (great and small) for members to engage with other League members and the broader community to empower voters and strengthen democracy. At the same time, we can better inform ourselves about the challenges ahead. As we conclude the 2023-2024 League year, I extend my thanks for all that you do. Special thanks to those who have been working on the Budget Committee (Louise Marquez, Jo Galván Nash, Mary Flynn and Tom Krajci) and the Nominating Committee (Shirley Armstrong, Mary Flynn, Ruth Jaure, and Johnnie Aldrich).

I'm looking forward to seeing everyone at the Annual Meeting on April 15.

—Kathy Brook
Co-President

Co-Presidents' messages continued next page

Annual Business Meeting: April 15

The Saturday, April 15 meeting of the LWVSNM is an important one — it's the Annual Business Meeting. Important decisions will be made and all members are encouraged to attend, either in-person or via Zoom. The meeting begins at 2:00 p.m. at the DACC Workforce Center, 2345 Nevada Ave. (If you're logging in, please do so by 1:50 p.m.) Snacks will be served; please bring your own beverage.

Among the business items will be election of the 2023/24 officers and board of directors. We have had four great years under the leadership of Kathy Brook and Eileen VanWie. Now, your vote will be counted for a slate of candidates who will continue the many activities that the League supports.

Prior to the meeting, all League members will receive an electronic copy of the annual meeting packet of materials to review in advance. Please take a few minutes to go through the documents and prepare any questions you may want to address. In your packet, you'll read about the proposed program of work for the coming year, and the continuation or addition of new League positions.

A 23/24 budget has also been developed for consideration, and there will surely be discussion about the addition of an Otero County LWV unit which continues to grow. And traditionally, there is always a spot on the agenda when members will provide ideas and input on next fiscal year's activities and how LWVSNM can continue to serve its members.

Finally, although the Zoom will be available for those who want to participate by teleconference, we would love to have many **in-person** attendees. Reconnecting after Covid has been refreshing and getting to know our new members face-to-face has reinvigorated our commitment to strengthening democracy.

Contact a co-president if you have questions about the meeting: [Eileen](#) or [Kathy](#). See you there!

Co-Presidents' Messages (cont.)

Hello League Members,

It has been an honor to be part of a team with the League of Women Voters of Southern New Mexico (LWVSNM) as a Co-President for the last four years. Besides valuing the partnership with Kathy Brook, the Board, and other members, teams have worked tirelessly to address our mission to empower voters and strengthen democracy.

The services we provide to the Public generally seem to be appreciated, which makes the work worthwhile. Thank you to all members who have actively supported our mission and our justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion (JEDI) principles the last four years. Now it is time for a new Board to bring diverse ideas for the future.



Eileen VanWie

I plan to remain active with the LWVSNM. One of my favorite quotations comes from Gloria Steinem when she gets asked when she's going to "pass the torch." She responds, "I'm going to keep the torch and light other torches. And if we all come together, we'll shine a bright light."

—With warm regards,
Eileen, Co-President

Textbook Adoption

It's important to the League that students have a current and accurate set of social studies textbooks and instructional materials. LCPS is currently undergoing a textbook adoption and your input is important. [Click here](#) to get more information about the adoption. You have until April 5 to review the materials under consideration.

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 – Voter Services Director
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



If you've thought about getting involved in an LWV Committee, now is a great time. Beginning with the new fiscal year, May 1, please volunteer a few hours a month by joining a committee or the Observer Corp. Just email a chairperson and they will add you to their email list when sending out meeting dates. Most are held via Zoom.

Current committees and chairs: Education ([Eileen VanWie](#)); Affordable Housing ([Beth Bardwell](#)); Library Services ([Kathy Brook](#), who needs a new chair); Youth Engagement ([Eileen](#) or [Josie Miller](#)); Voter Services ([Dale Yeo](#)) and the Observer Corp ([Kathy](#)).

Other committees will be announced after the Annual Meeting elections. **THANK YOU!**



Upcoming Calendar Events

APRIL 2023

Keep America Beautiful, Black Women's History, Earth, and National Donate Life Months

April 3, Mon.: **Short Board Meeting**, Noon, Zoom

April 4, Tues.: **LWV Housing Committee**, 3:30, Zoom, contact [Beth Bardwell](#) to join or attend

April 5: **Passover** Begins at Sunset

April 6, Thurs.: **Local LWV Education Committee**, 5pm, Zoom, contact [Eileen VanWie](#) for link

April 7: **Good Friday**

April 9: **Easter Sunday**

April 15, Sat.: **LWVSNM Annual Business Meeting (Hybrid)**, 2pm, Doña Ana Community College Workforce Center, 2345 Nevada Ave., in-person and Zoom

April 17, Mon.: **LWVSNM Joint Meeting of current and new Board**), 5 pm, Zoom

April 18, Tues.: **Federal Taxes Due!**

April 21: **Ramadan ends**

April 28-30: **LWVNM State Conference**, Los Alamos

March Activities and Civic Outreach

LEAGUE'S DEMOCRACY AWARD WINNER PRESENTATION

On March 9, 2023, four members of the LWVSNM Board attended the Otero County Commission Meeting where the League's 3rd annual Making Democracy Work Award winner was recognized. The 2023 award went to Otero County Clerk Robyn Holmes who will retire from the county in December after more than 30 years of service. She was given a \$250 award and a certificate by LWVSNM in front of the three-member commission. Following the meeting, she was honored with a reception with many co-workers, friends and LWV members including members from the Otero County unit. *PHOTOS, L to R:* In front of the Commissioners, Robyn shows the certificate presented by Co-presidents Kathy Brook and Eileen VanWie. At the reception, Edwina Jaramillo is among those who congratulated the honoree who faced many challenges during the 2022 elections. Not pictured was PR Director Jo Galván Nash, Claudia Powell, and Nadia Sikes.



WOMEN'S STORIES SHARED THROUGH WOMEN'S HISTORY EVENT

International Women's Day, March 8, was celebrated by the Doña Ana Arts Council and the non-partisan Southern NM Women's Suffrage Alliance, which includes members of the League of Women Voters SNM, AAUW-LC, DAC-NAACP, Soroptimist International, and the Women's Intercultural Center in Anthony. The special event featured story-telling by five local women who were recognized for their accomplishments and persistence. *"Unfinished Business: Women's Power of Persistence."* was well attended by several LWVSNM members. *PHOTOS, L to R:* Journalist Mónica Ortiz Uribe moderated the discussion with honorees Julie Castillo, Yashoda Latkar, Rabbi Evette Lutman, and Arlean Murillo. Not pictured was Claudia Rodriguez. In the next photo, the planning committee members from the SNM Suffrage Alliance are Penny Peace, Liz Rodriguez-Johnson, Eileen VanWie, Marsha Hokkanen, and Jessica Kurtz.



In Memoriam



Barbara Goedecke, a life member of the League of Women Voters, passed away January 22, 2023. She was a member of LWV of Greater Las Cruces from its earliest days and followed League and government matters closely. From 1987 to 1989, Barbara served as president of the local League. Among her most recent contributions was her participation in writing *Our First Half Century*, in recognition of the 50th anniversary of what is now LWV of Southern New Mexico.



Barbara Goedecke

In her annual report as president in April 1989, Barbara reported that the membership was very small (probably about 30 people) and that only about a third were active. This meant that there was little that could be accomplished beyond Voter Service and Voter information. As president, she invited members to her house to collate 1,000 candidate information sheets for voters

along with 500 copies of analyses of constitutional amendments. She noted that LWV was doing voter registration monthly and had been allowed into the schools to register high school students when the political parties and Southwest Voter Registration Project had not been admitted. In addition, copies of *Who's Who* were being distributed to the social studies departments of the Las Cruces and Gadsden schools.

Barbara took on many tasks over the decades of her involvement. In the June 2000 *Voter*, Barbara reported "The Scoop on Triad" as the Las Cruces community grappled with the challenges faced by Memorial General Hospital (then still owned by the city and county and soon to be bought by Triad). Barbara was listed in the report as chair of the LWVNM Health Care Committee. In 2008-2009 and 2013-2015 she was the chair of the local Action Committee and at some point, she served on the state Action Committee, researching bills online. The spring 2012 *La Palabra* reported that Barbara was one of the League members who spoke to the state's Redistricting Committee in summer 2011.

Barbara's consistent contributions and dedication to the League are a significant loss to the community.

—Kathy Brook

Dues Period Now Open

April is when the window opens to pay the annual LWVSNM membership dues. All dues collected from now until mid-summer will maintain a full year's membership from May 1, 2023, through April 30, 2024.

In order to keep individual members' expenses to a minimum, the 2023/24 dues will remain at \$65 a year; \$32.50 for a second member who lives in the same household. Dues for any currently enrolled student, 16 and older, is free. If you opt to pay dues through the LWVSNM website, please consider adding a minimum donation of \$2.50 to your payment. This will cover the charges the organization incurs for electronic payments.

When you receive a copy of the proposed 2023/24 budget in the Annual Meeting packet, you will see the many costs that LWV faces for its valuable community work. For example, the printing costs for our popular Voters' Guides continue to rise, and we want to maintain our Who's Who Directory for the public. These are just samples of how your membership dues are used.

As in the past, dues can be paid several ways:

1. Send a check made payable to LWVSNM and mail to: P.O. Box 15142, Las Cruces, NM 88004.
2. Online at <https://www.lwvsnm.org/join/> use your credit card or PayPal.
3. Give cash/check to any Board Member during an upcoming meeting.

Members are asked to fill out the membership form on the last page of this newsletter. We want to have your current contact information. Plus, based on your responses, the Board will be discussing the various topics you want to explore and the skills you can offer.

In addition to paying your dues, talk with your friends, neighbors and family about joining the League. Oh, and don't forget, your dues are tax-deductible! You'll receive a letter acknowledging your donation from the LWV Treasurer.

On March 29, the NM Secretary of State talked about NM's elections with the US Senate Committee on Rules and Administration. [Read about it.](#)

LET'S MEET LWVSNM MEMBER ... *Josie Miller*

My name is Josefina Miller (Josie), and I am a native Las Cruces. I earned bachelor's and master's degrees from New Mexico State University, both with an emphasis in education. Currently, I am the Content Specialist for Middle School English Language Arts for the Las Cruces Public Schools (LCPS) district. Through my work with LCPS, the Civic Engagement Project (consisting of teachers from LCPS, members of the LWVSNM, and the Doña Ana County Clerk's office) was established and began in 2017.

The overall mission of our work is to ensure that the team "develop[s] a sustainable community-supported civic engagement project that cultivates and activates an informed citizenry." From this collaboration, the Civic Engagement Project team hosted two events – Celebrating Democracy in Doña Ana County and Know Your Local Government. In the Celebrating Democracy in Doña Ana County event, students registered to vote, voted on the same day voter registration, and got a tour of the government building to have a better understanding of the functions of our county.



For the Know Your Local Government event, students worked with a team to solve real-world issues here in Las Cruces.

In 2020, I was invited to join the League of Women Voters of Southern New Mexico. Honored, I have participated for two years.

During the last year, I was part of the New Mexico Listens project. The focus of this work was to get an understanding of how citizens of Las Cruces felt about local issues and to encourage civic engagement.

Currently, I am also serving as the historian for the League. For the next year, I am interested in serving as co-chair for youth engagement, under the direction of Eileen VanWie. As an educator and citizen of Las Cruces, I feel a strong responsibility to prepare civically minded students who will contribute to democracy, and I feel that my work with the League helps me strengthen this personal mission.

—*Josie*

SNM's Presence at State League

Watch your email for the [spring issue of *La Palabra*](#), the newsletter of LWVNM. It is likely that you will receive it about the same time as the April *Voter*. (If you don't find it, let Kathy Brook know at kathybrook@comcast.net.) Included will be information about the upcoming LWVNM convention, April 28-30, in Los Alamos.

Delegates will be voting on a slate of board members, state program, and the state budget. We are excited to report that three members of LWVSNM are among the nominees for the state board: Kathy Brook for co-president (along with Hannah Burling from LWVSFC), Kim Sorensen for treasurer, and Edwina Jaramillo for voter services director. Kathy has been LWVSNM's co-president for the last four years, Kim is a past president of our League, and Edwina is currently serving as the League's secretary.

Since presidents/co-presidents of local Leagues also serve on the state board, attending meetings in person or via Zoom, LWVSNM potentially will have a much greater presence with the state League than during the past couple of years. Because of the distance from the other local Leagues, this should improve our connectedness and awareness of state-level issues and what the other Leagues are doing.



Clockwise: Kathy Brook, Kim Sorensen, and Edwina Jaramillo



SUMMARY HIGHLIGHTS*

Board Meeting

Monday, February 20, 2023

Discussion and Action

1. Programs

- a. February 11, 2023 General Meeting with Jamie Bronstein Debrief: E. VanWie reported that Jamie Bronstein's presentation was an excellent organization of threats to democracy.

Action Items: 1) E. VanWie will provide the Board notes from the presentation;

2) L. Castille will request the PowerPoint presentation from Ms. Bronstein; 3) J. Galván Nash will post the PowerPoint presentation on the League website.

- b. March 11, 2023 General Meeting - Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) and NM Listens Videotape: An article from the National Archives on the ERA will be discussed at the general meeting and a NM Listens Videotape will be shown, both to be provided to members prior to the meeting where both will be discussed in small groups. **Action Items:** E. VanWie will email the article and video to members. J. Galván Nash will put the information in *The Voter* to alert members.

2. Budget Expenses

- a. Mailing Who's Who to Legislators: A motion was made by D. Yeo to mail to local elected officials (approximately 40) a copy of the Who's Who along with a letter of appreciation. The motion was seconded by L. Castille. The motion carried unanimously.

- b. Suffrage expense - \$100

E. VanWie reported that the Doña Ana Arts Council and the Women's Suffrage Alliance (of which LWV is a member) will hold a Women's History Month event entitled, "Unfinished Business: Women's Power of Persistence" to be held on International Women's Day, March 8th at the Doña Ana Arts Council. The event will be moderated by El Paso reporter, Mónica Ortiz Uribe. A motion was made by E. VanWie to spend \$100 toward expenses for the aforementioned event. The motion was seconded by M. Flynn, and the motion carried unanimously.

3. Report from January 21, 2023 LWVNM Board Meeting

- a. NM Listens: E. VanWie reported that the state League unanimously approved continuing the NM Listens project. There are plans at the state League to fundraise for project expenses.
- b. International Electoral Standardization: E. VanWie shared that the State Board discussed auditing electoral processes of the International Electoral Standardization. Local Leagues may want to compare them to local processes. LWVCNM Co-President Karen Douglass, who brought the potential project forward, was advised by the State Board to seek information from the NM Secretary of State about the standards.

4. Other

Making Democracy Work (MDW) Award De-briefing: K. Brook recommended changing the structure of the Award to allow Board members to nominate individuals (with any board member who submits a nomination being ineligible to participate in the selection of the awardee). Also discussed were changes to other criteria for the Award.

Adjournment: A motion was made by J. Aldrich to adjourn and seconded by J. Galván Nash. The motion carried unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 6:40 p.m.

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

SUMMARY HIGHLIGHTS*

Board Meeting

Monday, March 6, 2023, Noon, Via Zoom

Discussion and Action

1. Otero County Unit (OCU) Report

T. Kracji and C. Powell reported that the OCU:

- voter registration plans at the Alamogordo High School have been put on hold due to a lawsuit filed against the superintendent; they expect the situation to be resolved late summer, when they will continue with registration plans.
- is looking forward to the LWVSNM presentation of the Making Democracy Work Award (MDWA) to Robyn Holmes on March 9, 2023 in Alamogordo.
- plans to introduce themselves to the Alamogordo community on Earth Day, April 29th.
- has created a League OCU Facebook page where the MDW Award to Robyn Holmes is shown.

2. Observers and six Delegates to LWVNM Convention in Los Alamos April 29-30: K. Brook reported that the annual state League convention will be held on April 29-30, 2023 with an evening reception on April 28th in Los Alamos. The LWVSNM is allowed six delegates.

3. General Meeting Programs

- a. **March 11, 2023 General Meeting – Women’s History Month:** the general meeting will focus on the ERA with a facilitated discussion at a 2:00 p.m. hybrid meeting with the in-person meeting at 2345 Nevada Ave., the DACC Workforce Center. In preparation for the meeting, members are asked to read a short article from the National Archives about the ERA. Access the article at: <https://education.blogs.archives.gov/2013/12/05/theequal-rights-amendment/>.
- b. **April 15, 2023 General Meeting – Annual Meeting, Work on Packet:** The Board will meet on March 13, 2023 at 5:00 p.m. to discuss what goes in the meeting packet and to discuss proposed program topics, etc. Reports will be required from all Board members, the Otero Unit and Committee Chairs for the annual meeting.
- c. **May 13, 2023 General Meeting:** K. Brook asked the Board for topic suggestions.

4. Budget Committee: L. Marquez shared the Budget Committee’s early proposed 2023/24 budget for the coming year with the Board. The discussion will be continued at a separate meeting to take place on March 11, 2023 at 10:00 a.m. The Board is asked to submit questions and/or suggestions on the budget at that time. The Budget Committee will meet after the aforementioned Board meeting to finalize the budget.

5. Local Program Recommendations by the Board: The LWVSNM’s program planning meeting held in January, and a list of current and possible state and local programs, as well as shortage of doctors and affordable housing (including electrification) could be issues/programs that the local League could take up in the upcoming year.

6. State Nominations: E. Jaramillo reported that the LWVNM nominating committee has put forth a slate of candidates for positions that are coming up for election. The Membership Director has not received a candidate. She asked the Board to submit nominees who they think might want to serve including self-nominations.

7. Voter Services Update

D. Yeo reported that T. Kracji will be assisting her with the Voter Services position and she will teach him to do VOTE411 for Otero County. She also noted that he will not be filling Catherine Cochrane’s place, i.e., the Co-Director position remains vacant.

Adjournment: at 1:08 p.m.

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

SUMMARY HIGHLIGHTS*

Board Meeting

Monday, March 20, 2023

Discussion and Action

1. Otero County Unit (OCU) Report: T. Kracji reported that: one member is interested in the Observer Corps and OCU added three new members in the last 30 days. C. Powell reported that she is transferring funds to the League's 501c(3) account. She also indicated that they will require funds for banners, etc. for their Earth Day activities. **Action Item:** M. Flynn will provide C. Powell the League's bank routing number and will also send the League's reimbursement form.
2. Collaborating with CAFé: D. Yeo, J. Galván, and E. VanWie reported that:
 - several Board members met with Daniel Sanchez of CAFé, a faith-based organization that has evolved into a non-partisan non-profit organization;
 - CAFé has received a huge grant from the Kellogg Foundation to survey Hispanic voters, and to support CAFé's efforts to get out the vote; survey results are not yet available;
 - CAFé will contact the League for the next meeting with the CEO.**Action Item:** K. Brook will put together ideas of ways to collaborate with CAFé by the next Board meeting.
3. General Meeting Programs
 - a. **March 11, 2023 General Meeting – Debrief:** We will continue experimenting with the AV system.
 - b. **April 15, 2023 – Annual Meeting**
 - i. Nominating Committee: M. Flynn presented the slate of officers to the Board.
 - ii. Proposed Program 2023-2024: The Board reviewed K. Brook's write-up of the 3/13/23 Board meeting on program planning. The Board will present the program proposal at the annual meeting where LWVSNM will:
 - continue to advocate for modernization of the legislature and gun violence prevention
 - explore the physician shortage
 - update positions on 1) Education, 2) Affordable housing, especially with respect to the issue of electrification, 3) Library position.A motion was made by E. VanWie to approve the 2023-2024 program proposal; it was seconded by K. Kanim. The motion carried unanimously.
 - iii. Approve Budget: The 2023-2024 proposed budget was reviewed and several changes were made. A motion was made by E. VanWie to add \$240 to the proposed budget for a phone expense; it was seconded by D. Yeo. There were two nays and five ayes; the motion carried. A motion to approve the budget as amended was made by E. VanWie and seconded by J. Galván Nash. The motion carried unanimously.
 - c. **May 13, 2023 and June 10, 2023 General Meetings:** L. Castille reported that she reached out to Nuestra Tierra, a conservation group, regarding climate change and its effects on different population groups for a possible April Earth Day meeting. Other suggestions were to talk about the program topics approved at the upcoming annual meeting, corresponding positions statements, and to brainstorm in small groups.
4. Delegates to LWVNM Convention – April 28-30, 2023 in Los Alamos: K. Brook will attend as a state delegate. The League will pay the registration fee of the voting delegates

Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 6:40 p.m.

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



NAACP of Doña Ana County

March 18, 2023

Observer: Jennifer Kreie

This month's guest speaker was Las Cruces Mayor Ken Miyagishima. He spoke briefly about Project L.I.G.H.T. (Lessen the Incidents of Grief, Harm, and Trauma), which will respond to certain emergency calls with a firefighter and mental health professional team. The mayor mentioned that March 28th will be his last State of the City address at City Hall as he is not running for re-election. His current term ends December 31, 2023.

The mayor then opened the floor to questions and discussions about concerns about the police department. There was discussion for about 90 minutes. Here are a few highlights.

- OIR is the professional organization that currently reviews police procedures and complaints. They give a bi-annual report (written and in-person). An OIR report was presented to the city council at the end of February. The current contract between the city and OIR expires in May. Currently, the OIR group does not look at use-of-force incidents. The mayor said the city is looking at renegotiating the contract to include use-of-force incidents, which several citizens support. Near the end of the discussion, Peter Goodman and Earl Nissen volunteered to get information about a contract OIR has with the Anaheim City Council in California, which includes review of use-of-force incidents.
- Mayor Miyagishima also mentioned that when there's a shooting by a city police officer, the department doesn't handle this itself. It is reviewed by the Doña Ana County Sheriff's Department and the county District Attorney.
- Several people spoke about their concerns about transparency, communication, and trust between city citizens and the city police department. The mayor encouraged people to speak to their city councilor. The point was made that speaking separately to councilors and the mayor is a piecemeal approach to addressing concerns about transparency and trust.
- Several people asked the mayor, again, for a work session of the city council where citizens could express their concerns and opinions and each city councilor could speak to the public about their views on a citizens' police review board.
- Toward building communication and trust, the mayor encouraged people to attend police community outreach events, such as "Cops Night Out" and "Coffee with Cops."

Eileen VanWie, Co-President of LWVSNM, told the group there is currently a period for public review of social studies textbooks for the Las Cruces Public Schools. She encouraged everyone to participate and review books. She said the League of Women Voters advocates for multi-cultural resources. (See this website for more information: <https://www.lcps.net/o/lcps/page/social-studies-hqim-adoption-review-process-22-23>) Materials and reviews are available online. The deadline for completing reviews is April 5.

There was a brief discussion of NMSU's decision to remove Dr. Bobbie Green as the interim Director of Black Programs and the impact on students.



LAS CRUCES CITY COUNCIL • Work Session

February 27, 2023

Observer: Kathy Brook

The main topic of the session was the third semi-annual audit of the Las Cruces Police Department by OIR Group. The scope of the audit was cases initiated, investigated, and closed from June 1, 2022, through November 30, 2022. The goal was to determine if cases were complete, objective, and thorough and actions in response were appropriate. Sixteen internal affairs cases were examined – 11 arising from citizen complaints and 5 from internal investigations. Use of force was investigated where it was part of a complaint and there were two such cases. Use of force, in general, is not part of the scope of work.

OIR found that investigations and actions were appropriate with continued room for improvements. The auditors reported seeing improvement already in the quality of investigations and commitment to ongoing training and there were fewer timeliness concerns. Work by the department is ongoing to create a disciplinary matrix, a project that takes some time. Overall, the police force was found to be professional but with some exceptions. Recommendations included continued training on professional communication and code of conduct (including the use of profanity), and use of force considerations (including force to the head and use of restraining wraps with pregnant persons). The department should make the public aware of delays which may prevent completion of an investigation and explain findings more completely (for example, the distinction between allegations which are “unfounded” and those which are “not sustainable” because they could not be proven).

In the discussion, it was noted that in Anaheim, OIR is reporting to the civilian oversight board, an option that Las Cruces might consider.

LAS CRUCES CITY COUNCIL • Regular Meeting

March 6, 2023

Observer: Kathy Brook

Public comment included remarks from Peter Goodman about police accountability and questions about how the conversation would proceed. The mayor suggested a meeting with him and others concerning how OIR might work with a citizen’s oversight group.

The council approved a pilot program for an affordable home ownership revolving loan fund to facilitate development of affordable single-family housing. The city would use \$500,000 from the trust fund to lend at 1% interest to Tierra del Sol Housing Corporation. The loans would be for construction and would be repaid at closing from the client’s permanent mortgage funding. The homes would remain affordable for 5-15 years. Down payment assistance generally comes from the NM Mortgage Finance Authority.

The council also approved new guidelines relating to street naming and renaming. In particular, there is provision for preventing inappropriate street names in the future and eliminating existing inappropriate names.



LAS CRUCES CITY COUNCIL • Work Session

March 13, 2023

Observer: Kathy Brook

The meeting began with a presentation by Timothy Cappell of the LC Sister Cities program concerning “Celebrating Sister Rivers: Past, Present, Future” planned for March – October 2023. This is an urban exchange network project between Nienberg, Germany, and Las Cruces and is a component of adult education in Germany.

Presentations were made on Metro Narcotics, Mesilla Valley Regional Dispatch Authority, South Central Solid Waste Authority, and the Las Cruces Fire Department. Several of these reports included references to the challenges of maintaining full staffing and supply chain issues.

There was also a report from Natalie Green on Housing and Neighborhood Services (HNS), now located in the City Manager’s Office. HNS sees its goal as working with other departments, organizations, and the community as a whole on important social issues. Reference was made to a pipeline of projects that is moving forward in advance of the sale of affordable housing GO bonds. The current goal is an increase of 1,000 affordable housing units within the next four years.

Observer comment: It is still unclear to me why the decision was made to delay the affordable housing bonds – references have been made to the fact that the bonds are taxable, a process involving the advisory committee for the trust fund, and a desire that the tax-exempt bonds get the best rate. Councilor Bencomo said that the Housing Policy Review Committee was moving forward with restructuring the advisory committee.

LAS CRUCES CITY COUNCIL • Regular Meeting

March 20, 2023

Observer: Kathy Brook

Public participation topics included civilian oversight of the police, domestic violence, traffic calming on Lohman/Amador, political hypocrisy and arrogance of progressives, decision on renaming Squaw Mountain Drive, and designation of Metropolitan Redevelopment Areas.

Actions by the council included approval of a HOME investments partnership between the city and Tierra del Sol Housing Corporation in the Metro Verde Planned Unit Development. This project involves 10 single-family dwelling units that will be sold to households earning less than 80% of area median income (currently this would be households earning less than approximately \$45,000).

Other actions were approval of designation of El Paseo and Solano and West Picacho as Metropolitan Redevelopment Areas; a predevelopment agreement relating to development, design and pursuit of federal funding to extend Mesa Drive from Hwy 70 to Lohman, and Local Economic Development (LEDA) funds for 828 Productions Film Studio.

LAS CRUCES BOARD OF EDUCATION • Regular Meeting

March 28, 2023 • 6:00 pm

Observers: Jo Galván Nash and Eileen VanWie

Members Present: President Teresa Tenorio, VP Pam Cort, Carol Cooper and Superintendent Ralph Ramos

The LCPS Board of Education selected an interim superintendent to replace Ralph Ramos who is retiring April 9, 2023. Chief of Staff Sherley O’Brien was appointed for the temporary assignment from April 8 to August 15, 2023.

—continued next page



O'Brien has many years of experience with LCPS as a Human Resources director, assistant principal and teacher. She will earn a salary of \$172,500 as the interim and will resume her job as Chief of Staff upon completion.

The Board also began the process of searching for a permanent superintendent. They will begin to look for a search consultant and will allow stakeholders throughout the district to help with the hiring process (parents, staff, business people, etc.) They hope to hire a superintendent within a 140-day time period.

Separate from this issue is the collection of applications by community residents who wish to be considered for the open Board seat vacated with the recent resignation of member Ray Jaramillo. The applicant must live in school district #1 and must be a registered voter, 18 years of age or older. [Click here](#) for more information on the open Board position. The deadline to apply is April 12, 2023.

Public comment included the themes of providing updated training for LCPS employees to care for students with diabetes, questioning why the school district thinks new social studies textbooks are needed, criticizing Board members and the Superintendent, and thanking the Superintendent. Eileen encouraged the Board to name 2023 as the year of bilingual multicultural education to honor the 50th anniversary of the New Mexico Bilingual Multicultural Education Act of 1973 and to expand resources for such programs.

There are efforts to expand alternative education opportunities. Most students at Rio Grande Preparatory Institute are working on credit recovery. Current programs of study are in restaurants & food services and mass communications programs. It will be adding new programs in construction trades and hotel management during the 2023-2024 academic year.

Three policy updates received a "first reading," including IHBE Bilingual Instruction and Policy IKF which will be updated to reflect the 2023 passage of HB 126 Graduation Requirements, reducing the number of required credits by the PED to 22, down from 24. The title of Policy IHBE Bilingual Instruction will be changed to Bilingual Education and English Language Acquisition. It will also include a Language Master Plan and refer to "emerging bilingual students," which implies any student working to become bilingual.

DONA ANA COUNTY COMMISSION • Regular Meeting

March 28, 2023

Observer: Jo Galván Nash

Members Present: Chairwoman Susana Chaparro, Christopher Schaljo-Hernandez, Diana Murillo, Shannon Reynolds, Manuel Sanchez, and County Manager Fernando Macias

County Sheriff Kim Stewart, during public input, described a problem with reclassifying some of her department job descriptions. A month ago, she requested a Sex Offender Registration Coordinator position. There are currently 400 registered offenders in this county. Currently, a detective is overseeing that responsibility and she wants that officer to focus on investigations. For a new position, the competitive rate is \$19.10-\$30.54 per hour, and she said there are only 13 positions in the entire county that earns that amount. She said HR denied the request and would only approve a lower-paying rate. She said by statute, they must maintain oversight of sex offenders with an applicant who is qualified and is trainable. She wants the County Commission to resolve the problem.

Commissioner Reynolds said it is a serious issue to maintain oversight of offenders in the county. Commissioner Sanchez inquired as to why the higher rate was denied by HR. The Sheriff said the only rationale given was that in order to have "equitability" the lower rate was approved. It is approximately \$2.00 per hour difference between the amount requested and the amount approved. Sanchez would like to have further discussion on the matter, and on the reclassification process within the county.

Meanwhile, County Manager Fernando Macias was recognized for his work, past and present, by the New Mexico House of Representatives. NM Representative Raymundo Lara presented Macias with a certificate recognizing his "civic spirit and dedication to the employees and residents of Doña Ana County."

Treasurer's Report

Prepared by Mary Flynn, Treasurer

MARCH 2023

DATE	DETAIL	AMOUNT
	BALANCE FORWARD	\$6,020.62
NEW INCOME		
March 24, 2023	Bank Deposit	\$65.00
	TOTAL INCOME	\$65.00
NEW EXPENSES		
March 1, 2023	Consumer Cellular	\$20.52
March 6, 2023	Jo Galvan Nash (for supplies)	\$22.68
March 7, 2023	ABC Printing (Who's Who)	\$205.00
	TOTAL NEW EXPENSES	\$248.20
	TOTAL CASH ON HAND	\$5,837.42
COMMITTED FUNDS		
March 24, 2023	Spanish Language Voter	\$0.00
March 24, 2023	Diversity Fund	\$415.00
March 24, 2023	Youth Engagement Fund	\$625.00
March 24, 2023	Social Media Fund	\$250.00
March 24, 2023	New Mexico Listens Project	\$500.00
March 24, 2023	Voter Service	\$0.00
	TOTAL COMMITTED FUNDS	\$1,790.00

LWVSNM BOOK CLUB – APRIL 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

Books Selected for Upcoming Meetings	
April 6 Moderator: Dale Yeo	Starry Messenger: Cosmic Perspectives on Civilization by Neil deGrasse Tyson 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. When our political and cultural views feel more polarized than ever, Tyson provides a passionate case for the twin chariots of enlightenment—a cosmic perspective and the rationality of science.
May 4 Moderator: NOTE: To be divided into sections	The Climate Book: The Facts and the Solutions by Greta Thunberg You might think it's an impossible task: secure a safe future for life on Earth, at a scale and speed never seen, against all the odds. There is hope - but only if we listen to the science before it's too late. In <i>this book</i> , Greta Thunberg has gathered the wisdom of over one hundred experts - geophysicists, oceanographers and meteorologists; engineers, economists and mathematicians; historians, philosophers and indigenous leaders - to equip us all with the knowledge we need to combat climate disaster.



MEMBERSHIP FORM

Send this 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 ☐ Election/Voting-Related

FOR OFFICE ONLY

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