

the VOTER

MARCH 2023
Volume 54, Issue 10



INSIDE

Calendar & Events	2	Who's Who/Book Club	5
MDWA Winner	3	Dues Schedule	5
Teens Get Registered	4	Board Minutes	6-8
In Memorium	4	Observer Reports	9-12
Women's History Month	4	Treasurer Report	13

Co-Presidents' Messages

Dear LWVSNM Members,

As you know, February 14th was the 103rd anniversary of the League of Women Voters of the United States. Locally we celebrated by presenting the third annual *Making Democracy Work Award* to Otero County Clerk, Robyn Holmes, for the project entitled "Support and Advocacy of Legal Elections." The project is an excellent example of standing up for the values supported in our democracy. You can read more about Ms. Holmes on page 3.



Eileen VanWie

I also celebrated by watching the virtual Birthday Pep Rally hosted by the League of Women Voters of the United States (LWVUS). Since it was also Black History Month, President Deborah Turner noted women from history who had advocated for justice and women's rights, such as Ida B. Wells, Mary Church Terrell, Frances E.W. Harper, and Fannie Lou Hamer.

Leaders of Leagues from Minnesota, Kansas, Alabama, and Washington D.C. shared work they have done to "create a more perfect union/democracy." Several shared their long-term partnerships with other nonpartisan organizations that increase the effectiveness of advocacy. The Alabama

—continued next page

March Meeting Focused on the ERA

The March meeting of the League will feature a listening session on the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA). Celebrate Women's History Month and join us for a facilitated conversation about the future of the ERA. Our engaging and timely talk will be **Sat., March 11, 2023, at 2:00 p.m.**, in person (with treats) or on zoom. We meet in person at 2345 Nevada Ave., the DACC Workforce Center. If you're joining on Zoom, please log in by 1:45 pm.

In preparation for the listening session, please take the time to read a short article from the National Archives about the ERA. Access the article at: <https://education.blogs.archives.gov/2013/12/05/the-equal-rights-amendment/>



The Equal Rights Amendment is a proposed amendment to the United States Constitution designed to guarantee equal legal rights for all American citizens regardless of sex. It seeks to end the legal distinctions between men and women in terms of divorce, property, employment, and other matters. "Equality of rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any state on account of sex." Although never ratified, the ERA remains the most popular Constitutional amendment to date.

—continued page 3

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 &

THE VOTER Editor

Co-Presidents' Messages (cont.)

League's partnership with *People First Alabama* (PFA), a group of people with developmental disabilities, was especially meaningful. Members of PFA share strategies for members to be self-advocates. In partnership with the League, work focuses on removing barriers to voting. The President of the LWV District of Columbia urged Leagues to advocate for D.C. Statehood.

March is Women's History Month and efforts to add the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) to the U.S. Constitution are under way. On Jan. 31, 2023, there was a news conference to announce a joint resolution to affirm ratification of the ERA in both the U.S. House and Senate. A hearing of the Senate Judiciary Committee on how congress can recognize the ratification and add it to the Constitution occurred February 28th. On the same day, the nominee for the U.S. Archivist, Dr. Colleen Shogan, made a second appearance before the Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs committee. Please contact our U.S. Senators advocating the importance of these actions. [Click here for their contact information.](#)

Find some ways to celebrate National Women's History Month. This could be supporting female business owners, reading books by and about women, getting to know local women in politics, learning more of women's history, or writing a thank-you note to a woman who influenced your life.

—With warm regard, Eileen VanWie, Co-President



Dear League Members,

During recent weeks, I have spent many hours online watching legislative committee meetings as well as floor sessions – mostly following bills related to denial of bail, taxes and revenues, and redistricting. It has been enlightening in both good and bad ways – giving me a new appreciation of the challenges of being a legislator. Comparing the effectiveness of the technology used by the City of Las Cruces for City Council meetings with that of the legislature,



Kathy Brook

Las Cruces is considerably more advanced. Hearing speakers at the legislature is sometimes difficult and being able to identify the speaker is often beyond my abilities.

The state League convention is scheduled for April 29-30 in Los Alamos. It's a great opportunity to visit with members of other local Leagues and to learn more about the functions of the state League, including possible break-out sessions on development/fund-raising and communications. If you are interested, please contact Eileen or me to discuss being a delegate or an observer.

Unfortunately, the prospects of some combination of frigid temperatures with high winds, snow, and rain, prevented Eileen and me from traveling to Santa Fe for League Day at the Legislature on February 15-16. We missed the reception with former US Senator Bingaman as the keynote speaker and, since the House was in session, many legislators were absent, as well.



- 1 The next Naturalization Ceremony will be March 10, 10:00 a.m. at the Las Cruces Convention Center; **RSVP by March 3** to JoAnn Standridge at the U.S. District Court so that seating will be reserved for you: (575) 528-1408 or Standridge@nmd.uscourts.gov. Please arrive 20 minutes early.
- 2 Volunteers for the Observer Corps are still needed! Contact [Kathy Brook](#) for information.

Upcoming Calendar Events

MARCH 2023

March: **Women's History Month, Irish American Heritage Month, Red Cross Month**

No LWVSNM Affordable Housing Committee this month

March 6, Mon.: **Short Board Meeting**, Noon, Zoom

March 11, Sat.: **LWVSNM General Meeting (Hybrid)**, 2pm, Doña Ana Community College Workforce Center, 2345 Nevada Ave., in-person and Zoom

March 16: **Local LWV Education Committee**, 5pm, Zoom, contact [Eileen VanWie](#) for invite.

March 17, Friday: **St. Patrick's Day**

March 18, Saturday: Noon, **Legislature Ends**

March 20, Mon.: **Spring Vernal Equinox Day**

March 20, Mon.: **Board Meeting**, 5pm, Zoom

March 21, Tues.: **Shortage of Doctors Discussion**, 3pm, via Zoom; contact [Erika Graf-Webster](#) if you're interested in a possible update to the LWV position on Health Care.

3rd Annual Making Democracy Work Award Bestowed to County Clerk

Otero County Clerk Robyn Holmes of Alamogordo has been selected as the 2023 recipient of the Making Democracy Work Award from LWVSNM. Our league represents the counties of Doña Ana, Otero, Sierra, Grant, Luna, Hidalgo, Lea and Eddy.



“Robyn faced numerous challenges and defended voter rights, justified voting procedures, stood up for her staff, poll workers and poll judges,” said Co-President Eileen VanWie. She stood up for “the values supported in our democracy, which include respecting the rights and fairness of all citizens to vote without intimidation. The League gives her this award to honor her professionalism, honesty, and commitment to election processes.”

“I am humbled to receive this honor and feel privileged to have served the voters of Otero County for all these years,” Holmes said. “Fair elections are the bedrock of our democracy.”

Several LWVSNM Board members plan to present the official award at the Otero County Commission meeting on Thursday, March 9. Several members of the league’s Otero County unit are also expected to attend.

“This award annually honors someone who is civically engaged, and someone who also promotes what the League supports — justice, equity, diversity and inclusion,” added



Robyn Holmes, surrounded by election materials, is currently serving her last term in office and will retire in December 2024, after 39 years of service. Holmes was first elected Otero County Clerk in 2004 and was re-elected four more times. She also served as the deputy clerk for many years.

Co-President Kathy Brook. “It’s particularly significant this year since our organization has branched out with the creation of the Otero unit that has 14 new members from Alamogordo and the surrounding region, including Tularosa, Cloudcroft and High Rolls.

March LWV Meeting (cont. from page 1)

The March meeting will also introduce members to the process used in the New Mexico Listens project, which our organization has been involved with for more than a year. Your conversation will be facilitated by League members trained through the New Mexico Listens project.

New Mexico Listens has been adopted by the State League as an ongoing project. Learn more about NM Listens by watching the video found at the following link <https://vimeo.com/788786850>. Enter the password: **nml**. The video also features local League members who participated in this worthwhile project. (If your time is limited, there is also a slightly shorter version to watch at https://youtu.be/50_xzKilR0.)

—Laura Castille, Vice President



**2023 ANNUAL
MEETING**

Sat. April 15, '23 • 2:00 pm

**DACC Workforce Center, 2345 Nevada Ave.
In-Person & Zoom**

Youth Engagement: Getting Students Registered to Vote

The 2023 high school seniors voter registration drive is underway. League Voter Registration Agents and staff from the County Clerk's office are meeting with Doña Ana County seniors in their high school government classes and are offering them the opportunity to register to vote. League members from the new Otero county unit are considering implementing a similar registration drive.

So far, 143 students registered at Gadsden High School on February 22 and registrations also took place at Gadsden's Alta Vista Early College High School and at Alma d'arte Charter High School in Las Cruces on Feb 24. Las Cruces Public Schools will start its registration drives in early May.

Doña Ana County Clerk Amanda López Askin has facilitated the sessions as her schedule permits. She brings authenticity, humor and gravitas to the events.

—Kathe Kanim
Youth Engagement Director

Celebrating National Women's History Month

March is Women's History Month and 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) have organized a special celebratory event. The theme for a reception and storytelling session is "*Unfinished Business: Women's Power of Persistence.*" The event will recognize the accomplishments and persistence of five local women who will share their stories. The moderator will be El Paso journalist Mónica Ortiz Uribe, who specializes in reporting on the US/Mexico border; she was the co-host of the podcast "*Forgotten: The Women of Juárez.*"

The event will be held on Wednesday, March 8 (International Women's Day) from 5-7 p.m. at the new Arts Council building, 230 S. Water Street. The gathering begins with a meet & mingle from 5-5:30 p.m. and the program begins at 5:30 p.m.

Seating is limited and **reservations are required by Monday, March 6.** RSVP to LWVSNM member and DAAC Gallery Manager Penny Peace at galler@daarts.org

The honorees are: Julie Castillo, Soroptimist Honoree; Yashoda Latkar, DACC Honoree; Rabbi Evette Lutman, AAUW Honoree; and Arlean Murillo, and Claudia Rodriguez, Women's Intercultural Center Honorees.

—Eileen VanWie

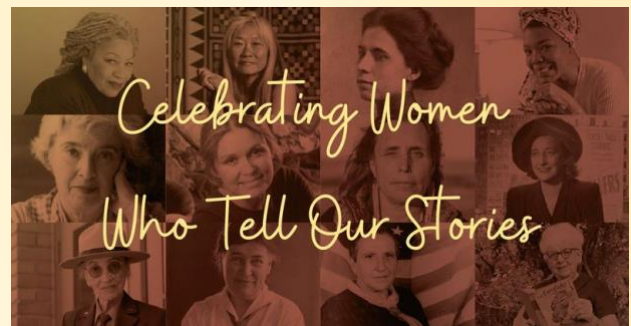
In Memoriam



It is befitting that we recognize the passing of J. Paul Taylor who passed away on Feb. 12, 2023, at his home on the Mesilla plaza. Mr. Taylor, 102, served the village, Las Cruces, Doña Ana County, and New Mexico throughout his long life. He was a wonderful husband, father, teacher, principal, school district administrator, legislator, historian, veteran and friend to hundreds throughout the state he loved. His legacy will continue for generations and his home in Mesilla, built in 1858, will be cherished as one of this state's historic treasures.

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.



The National Women's History Alliance, which spearheaded the movement for March being declared National Women's History Month, announced the national theme for 2023 as "Celebrating Women Who Tell Our Stories."

Take a look at other national events that may interest you: <https://womenshistorymonth.gov/>.

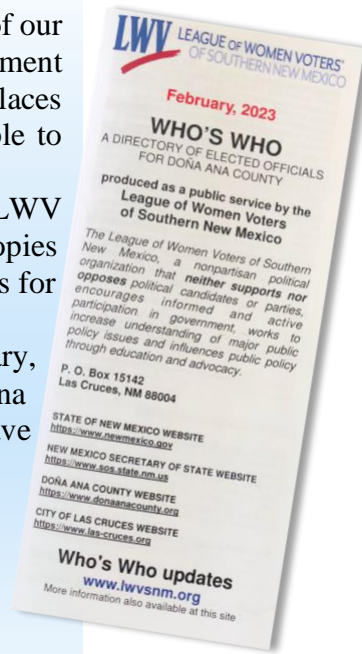
Who's Who Distributed

The most current revised edition of our Who's Who Guide to Government Officials has been distributed to the places where hopefully they will be available to those

who may need them the most. Since LWV could not afford to print very many copies this year, most have been put in places for reference. However, there are some available in Branigan Memorial Library, Las Cruces City Hall and the Doña Ana County Government Center. There have also been copies placed in the Hatch, Anthony and La Union governmental buildings. You can also find Who's Who on our website:

<https://www.lwvsnm.org>

—Dale Yeo, Voter Services Director



When to Pay Dues

We traditionally have had several members who pay their membership dues before the new fiscal year begins. Thank You! However, the Board has agreed that it would be better for our bookkeeping if the 2023/2024 dues be paid no earlier than April 1, 2023. All members will be notified soon as to the dues amount.

Remember, the League's fiscal year runs annually from May 1 through April 30. Therefore, dues are technically not due until May 1. The League Board will send out several reminders about the dues timeline beginning in April.

Conversely, in order to closely monitor the monthly status of our League's budget, membership dues need to be paid by September at the latest.

Thank you for helping us manage our budget as we move closer to the new year.

Books for LWVSNM Book Club – March 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

<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>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>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>

SUMMARY HIGHLIGHTS*
Board Meeting Monday
January 2, 2023

Discussion and Action

1. Programs:

- a. January 14 Program Planning, Hybrid at DACC Workforce Center
January 14 Program Planning Meeting: E. VanWie reminded the Board that training for technology at the new meeting site (DACC Workforce Center) will occur on 1/6/23 at 3:00 p.m.
- b. February 11 – Violence Prevention
Panel on Violence Prevention: L. Castille reported that she sent emails to several individuals or groups including the local representative for the NRA, Sheriff Kim Stewart, and the NM Gun Violence Prevention, etc. regarding participation in a panel discussion and has not received confirmation.
- c. March – Women’s History Month -The following were suggested:
E. VanWie reminded the Board that Penny Peace has proposed a panel discussion to go along with an exhibit by the Doña Ana Arts Council entitled, “Unfinished Business: Women’s Power of Persistence”.
Program on the ERA: a speaker on the ERA where the focus would be on the history and how NM’s ERA could be used.
Unit Meeting: J. Galván Nash recommended a unit meeting to discuss how to make additional progress on existing programs and goals; however, it was noted that the upcoming planning meeting will help with that.
Electrification: a discussion on beneficial electrification in affordable housing.
Action Item: L. Castille asks the Board to send additional suggestions.
- d. April 8 or 15? – Annual Meeting: The April 2023 meeting has been changed to April 15th.

2. Membership

- a. Handbook/Directory (Bylaws, Positions, Policies and Procedures)
Action Item: J. Galván Nash will provide copies of the updated handbook to the Board for review prior to posting.
- b. New Member Orientation: J. Aldrich reported that an evaluation or assessment of the new member orientation is being created.
- c. Member Issue: **Action Item:** Galván Nash will draft a change to the League’s policies and procedures to include procedures for reimbursement of dues.

3. Special Projects – Outreach

- a. New Mexico Listens: E. VanWie reported that the LWVNM President Hannah Burling has asked for a proposal to continue the NM Listens project outreach model (particularly youth outreach). She provided a draft report from the *NM Listens* project to the Board and will send a final version to the New Mexico Humanities Council and LWVSNM members.

4. Update on Website Editing: J. Galván Nash reported that she has updated the website based on the recommendations. She has added a “new activities” button that includes Making Democracy Work Award.

E. VanWie noted that a nomination has been received for the Making Democracy Works Award.

Adjournment: at 1:23 p.m.

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

SUMMARY HIGHLIGHTS*

Board Meeting Monday

January 16, 2023

Discussion and Action

1. Programs

- a. January 14 – Debrief on Program Planning Meeting

Pros: continue hybrid meetings to accommodate those unable to attend in person; the DACC Workforce Center is easily accessible, and technology worked.

For Improvement: state the purpose and importance of the meeting prior to meeting & reiterate at meeting; need for evaluation by attendees.

- b. February 11, 2023 General Meeting: L. Castille reported that she has asked Dr. Bronstein to speak at the League's general meeting about democracy and threats to democracy from a historical perspective.

- c. March 11, 2023 General Meeting– Equal Rights Amendment?

L. Castille reported that she has reached out to the governor's Commission on the Status of Women for a possible speaker. She has also reached out to the Southwest Women's Law Center.

- d. April 15, 2023 – Annual Meeting

K. Brook informed that the League's annual meeting is primarily a business meeting where we elect members of the Board, approve the budget, and approve programs for two years. Additionally, revisions to position descriptions will be shared with the membership.

2. Otero County Unit Report: C. Powell reported that they:

- provided K. Brook and E. VanWie their goals with voter education to be their primary purpose.
- plan to nominate the Otero County Clerk for the Making Democracy Work Award.
- plan to invite interested non-League members to their meetings (they will not have a voting role)
- plan to register high school students to vote, teach civics classes, and observe local government meetings

3. **Making Democracy Work Award** – Update: E. VanWie reported that two applications have been received.

4. **Financial Policy Update** - Two motions were made to revise the Policies and Procedures of the LWVSNM under Reimbursements.

5. **Public Participation on the Affordable Housing Land Bank and Trust Fund Advisory Committee**

A motion was made by L. Castille to approve a letter to the mayor and city council, under the signature of Beth Bardwell, Chair of the LWVSNM Affordable Housing Committee, and seconded by J. Aldrich. The motion carried with one abstention.

6. **Membership**

- a. New Member Orientation: J. Aldrich reported that the new member orientation will occur on January 28, 2023 at 2:00 p.m. via Zoom. Everyone is invited to attend.

- b. Otero County Unit – Appoint Member as a Board Member

K. Brook asked the Otero Unit if they would prefer an appointed position on the Board or attendance at Board meetings as an observer. If an appointed position the member would serve for one year as a voting member.

- c. 2022-2023 Membership Handbook and Directory: J. Galván Nash will email the handbook to members; the booklet will include member contact information. The online version only has member names.

Adjournment: Adjourned at 6:50 p.m.

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

SUMMARY HIGHLIGHTS*
Board Meeting Monday
February 6, 2023

Discussion and Action

1. Otero County Report
T. Kracji reported:
 - discussions were held with K. Kanim about voter registrations at the high school
 - the Otero Unit plans to set up a booth as part of Alamogordo Earth Day celebration
2. Programs:
 - a. February 11 – MDW Award Recognition, Threats to Democracy, NM Listens Video?
MDW Award Recognition: K. Brook reported that the Board voted on three applicants that were submitted for the Making Democracy Work Award, and indicated that Robyn Holmes was the winner. A motion was made by K. Brook to accept the Board vote and dispense the MDW Award; it was seconded by K. Kanim. The motion carried unanimously.
Threats to Democracy NM Listens Video: Dr. Jamie Bronstein of NMSU’s Department of History. Dr. Bronstein will discuss threats to democracy now and throughout history.
 - b. March 11 – Women’s History Month: K. Brook suggested an open member discussion on how our lives are/were/were not affected by the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA).
3. Budget Committee - **Action Items:**
 - K. Brook will email board members and committee chairs asking them to submit the dollar amounts needed for next year’s budget to the Budget Committee.
 - K. Brook will ask Louise Marquez to convene the Budget Committee.
 - T. Kracji was asked to submit Otero County Unit’s expected expenses for the next year.
4. Local Law Enforcement and Crime: E. VanWie reported that Liz Rodriguez Johnson asked the League to send a message to its members encouraging them to attend a city council meeting where the OIR, the city’s audit group for police complaints, will make a semiannual report. Some members of the community are proposing that Las Cruces create a Police Oversight Board.
5. Membership - New Member Orientation Debrief: J. Aldrich reported that 11 members attended the New Member Orientation including three Otero County Unit members.
6. Update LWVNM Board meeting
State Convention, April 29-30, 2023, Los Alamos: K. Brook reported that the League state convention will be held on the aforementioned dates. Any League member can attend the convention, but LWVSNM is allowed three voting delegates. Contact K. Brook or E. VanWie if interested in attendance as a voting delegate.
7. Nominating Committee Update: M. Flynn reported that the Committee is identifying good candidates.

Adjournment: A motion was made by J. Aldrich to adjourn the meeting; it was seconded by K. Kanim. The motion passed unanimously.

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



LAS CRUCES CITY COUNCIL • Regular Meeting

February 6, 2023

Observer: Kathy Brook

Public participation included Steve Fischman speaking in support of SB 165, sponsored by Sen. Carrie Hamblen and focusing on the electric needs of the local community; a report on a Desert Hope resident experiencing alcohol and drug issues; reports on vandalism and theft; and complaints about the condition of existing public restrooms and the plan for installation of hygiene stations.

The city's external auditor provided a report noting that the city provides additional information beyond what is required and was one of 18 governments in the state and one of 3 municipalities to receive an award for its financial reporting.

An appeal was denied concerning the granting of a special use permit for a cannabis dispensary near downtown. The appeal focused on the process. The permit allowed a dispensary within the 300' buffer with single family dwellings. (There is no such buffer for multi-family units.)

LAS CRUCES CITY COUNCIL • Work Session

February 13, 2023

Observer: Kathy Brook

Pedestrian Safety: Las Cruces is above the national average but below the state average of people killed on roadways. About 25% of fatal crashes involve someone walking. The city is working with a consultant on a safe systems approach to the issue. This means safety is viewed as a shared responsibility including users, system planners, and policy makers. Deaths are viewed as preventable rather than inevitable. Safe systems involve designing streets for the desired speed, prioritizing lower speeds, and physical separation of pedestrians from traffic.

Mobile Integrated Healthcare Team: The city's LIGHT program (Lessen Incidence of Grief, Harm, and Trauma) will go live on March 6. It serves those experiencing a crisis within the 911 system (not the 988 system), expanding the emergency response for mental health crises. Councilor Gandara urged communication with Memorial Medical Center concerning closure of the psych unit.

SOUTH CENTRAL SOLID WASTE AUTHORITY • Regular Hybrid Meeting

February 16, 2023, Transfer Station Board Room • 9:00 a.m.

Observer: Johnnie R Aldrich

Priorities: The most important news for us does not come from this Authority meeting, but from a presentation by Brandi Misquez, the SCSWA Recycle Education Coordinator at the Good Samaritan Senior Living Village on Monday, February 13. The lecture about the recycling process included the UPDATE that all clean plastics are now recyclable. One exception: black containers of any kind are not accepted. "All" also does NOT include the so-called "film" plastics like single use plastic bags, bubble wrap, or products like Saran Wrap. However, we no longer need to check the recycle triangle on the bottom of containers for 1 or 2; all clean plastics, except for the black one and "film," are welcome in our blue bins.

Since this was the first regular meeting of the Authority since November, it was a lengthy one. The first order of business was election of the new Chair: City Councilor Becki Graham will serve as Chair.

Director Patrick Peck's Administration Report on his activities, besides the usual tonnage figures, included two items that led to extensive discussion.



SCSWA cont.

The first was the possibility of extending the usefulness of the dirt lot on Hadley Ave. that is now being used just for storing the 40,000 trash and recycling bins. Forty trucks are “on the road every day” and Peck suggested that leasing the lot and building a fleet maintenance facility there would greatly increase efficiency in that part of this multi-million-dollar service in addition to reducing the current cost of moving “crippled” trucks to the present maintenance facility. SCSWA would lease the property for 10 years for \$120,000 annually and the owner has agreed to build a workshop to SCSWA specifications. Authority members gave Peck permission to continue exploration of the details.

A second lengthy discussion occurred when one of the Board members asked about the possibility of curbside recycling in the county outside of city boundaries. Director Peck pointed out that this would help considerably with the problem of illegal dumping, which consumes extensive clean-ups by SCSWA crews. However, the need for additional trucks, dozers, and drivers would add significantly to the operational costs. No decision was made, but Peck will present anticipated specifics about those costs at the next quarterly meeting of the Board.

Some happy financial news: SCSWA will continue service at White Sands Missile Range in the coming year; income will be \$100,000 annually.

DAC - NAACP

February 18, 2023

Observer: Jennifer Kreie

The guest speakers at this meeting were Sheriff Kim Stewart and City Councilor Becky Corran. Sheriff Stewart talked about policing in general and some specific programs in her department.

- Sheriff Stewart described the six pillars of policing.
- She said the policy and procedures manual is available online.
- The Sheriff’s Department is undergoing accreditation by the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies. This is the gold standard for accreditation.
- Sheriff Stewart said the department’s disciplinary actions are posted online, though personal identification data has been removed.
- Department programs that Sheriff Stewart described were:
 - Amigos de DASO Senior Program. A deputy is paired with a qualified senior and the officer contacts that senior at least once a month.
 - Victim Assistance. Recently the department has operated a test run of a “Will you leave right now?” program that offers money for travel, short-term housing, or other assistance that enables a domestic violence victim to get out the situation immediately, at the time the officers are there. The department received a \$30,000 grant in support of this program and renewed funding is expected.
 - Sheriff Stewart said to keep in mind that the County Sheriff’s office serves the unincorporated parts of the county, not within city limits in the county.
- Sheriff Stewart said more needs to be done for crisis intervention training, such as in-person, role-playing practice for officers. Online training isn’t sufficient.
- She said people leaving their guns in vehicles is a big issue. Guns should be secured, not casually stored. There should be a penalty for irresponsible gun ownership (*my paraphrase of what she said*).

Becky Corran is the City Councilor for District #5.

—continued next page



DAC-NAACP cont.

Councilor Corran:

- Short-term there should be discussion about reports, such as the one from OIR scheduled for the 27th of February. Work is being done to get a City Council work session scheduled to address issues citizens' concerns about transparency when a police action has been reviewed.
- Longer-term there should be discussion of policy changes that may be needed for the police department. The ACLU NM has been contacted for information about policing policies this agency thinks have been successful.
- Councilor Corran pointed out that a significant majority of comments made to councilors is about the need for more police presence near local businesses and in the communities. The concern expressed most often is for personal safety from criminal action rather than whether the police response was justified. She said it is important the council hear from people concerned about police policy and extreme measures/overreactions. In other words, people need to attend and speak at city council meetings.
- Mayor Pro-Tem, Kasandra Gandara was at this meeting and she reinforced Councilor Corran's point that people need to attend and to speak at city council meetings. Build a relationship with your city councilor, as well.

LAS CRUCES CITY COUNCIL • Regular Session

February 21, 2023

Observer: Kathy Brook

Public participation topics included lack of a spay and neuter ordinance in Las Cruces, crimes against small businesses, public concern about use of force issues involving police officers, pollution by leaf blowers (especially those in use by the city), closure of the psych facility at Memorial Medical Center.

A major agenda item was approval of \$17 million of the \$23 million of GO bonds approved by city voters last November. The bond issue for affordable housing was delayed to later this year or to 2024 because the housing bonds will be taxable and, according to the city's bond advisors, a better interest rate might be available at the later date. Two percent of the bonds are allocated for public art (with 0.25- .05% available to use in restoring or conserving public art. It may be possible to proceed with housing projects before those bonds are issued -- with reimbursement later after the bonds are issued. (*Observer comment: the rationale for delaying the affordable housing bond issue was not clear. There may also be a better rate on tax-exempt bonds at a later date.*)

Councilor comments: Councilor Graham reported that she and Councilor Bencomo met recently with junior leadership (high school juniors from area schools).



LAS CRUCES BOARD OF EDUCATION • Regular Meeting

February 21, 2023 • 6:00 pm

Observer: Eileen VanWie

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

A welcome was given to Student Advisor Jeorjinah from Organ Mountain High School. The meeting began with the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag in English and Spanish led by third-grade student Leah from Valley View Elementary. There was recognition of students for a variety of awards.

President Tenorio appreciated influential educator J. Paul Taylor, who died recently at 102 years of age. It was later suggested that Mr. Taylor be added to the legacy wall at the LCPS administration building, which the Superintendent said would happen.

Public comment included support for Superintendent Ramos who is under investigation; statements were made about PED making attacks on parents, and “my Board supports me because I’m a safe white guy;” a few speakers prefer Calendar B (traditional) and criticized the Board for not using the survey responses about it and one parent supported Calendar A (balanced); there is a need for more gender-neutral bathrooms in the schools; and statements were made about “sneaky things” the Alamogordo Superintendent did and is now placed on leave; and schools should post ethnic studies classes and Equity Council documents so there would not need to be so many Inspection of Public Records requests.

Discussion of the 2023-2024 and 2024-2025 calendars were on the agenda and created much discussion. The survey could have been worded better. Board members did read through responses to the survey. Results seem to be 50-50 on the two calendars. 70% of faculty approved the balanced calendar. Board members generally thought more time was needed with the balanced calendar to assess how it’s working. A motion to approve school years 2023-2024 and 2024-2025 with the balanced calendar was made and passed on a 5-0 vote.

Several policies were discussed and approved or moved forward to another reading. Staffing throughout the district is now is 96.85% complete. There was an independent financial audit report for the year ending June 30, 2022. Several areas were significantly deficient and will be corrected.

Treasurer's Report

Prepared by Mary Flynn, Treasurer

FEBRUARY 24, 2023

DATE	DETAIL	AMOUNT
	BALANCE FORWARD	\$7,894.60
NEW INCOME		
February 6, 2023	Paypal Deposit	\$128.89
February 20, 2023	Bank Deposit	\$1,500.00
	TOTAL MEMBER INCOME	\$1,628.89
NEW EXPENSES		
February 2,2023	National PMP Payment	\$2,896.00
February 13,2023	Ella Kot (returned dues)	\$35.00
February 15,2023	We Are IT	\$283.99
February 15,2023	USPS - Annual PO Box Fee	\$194.00
February 15,2023	Dale Yeo (Annual Web Hosting Fee)	\$93.88
	TOTAL NEW EXPENSES	\$3,502.87
	TOTAL CASH ON HAND ***	\$6,020.62
COMMITTED FUNDS		
February 24,2023	Spanish Language Voter	\$0.00
February 24,2023	Diversity Fund	\$415.00
February 24,2023	Youth Engagement Fund	\$625.00
February 24,2023	Social Media Fund	\$250.00
February 24,2023	New Mexico Listens Project	\$250.00
February 24,2023	Voter Service	\$0.00
	TOTAL COMMITTED FUNDS	\$1,540.00