

**League of Women Voters of Central New Mexico (“LWVCNM”)
Local Advocacy Committee (“LAC”)**

Observer Corps Guidelines

The League of Women LWVCNM Observer Corps (“OC”) is comprised of League members who serve as observers to public meetings of interest to the League and its members. The OC has several core functions.

- Observing general operations, conduct of meetings, and adherence to open meetings laws.
- Identifying issues that are relevant to League positions, and those that might merit League comment or advocacy. (Issues for which there is no relevant local, state or national position may be flagged for additional study.)
- Demonstrating that the community is watching government processes, since the Observer represents the public.
- Communicating information to League members.

The LAC provides encouragement and support for the OC. The Observers attend meetings of local political entities (e.g., Bernalillo County Commission, APD Forward) and identify issues of importance related to League priorities and positions. OC written reports are important because they communicate to our membership what is happening in local political entities. We cannot advocate if we are not aware of issues that are or are not being addressed. OC reports can be the catalyst for the issues that the LWVCNM chooses to advocate for or against. In order to make this communication process more efficient and effective, the LAC has developed the following guidelines.

The Observer Report

The report that you generate from your observations of the political entity should follow the attached template (Karen Wentworth’s report on the Bernalillo County Commission meeting). The essential elements of the report are:

1. Identification of the political entity (elected or appointed group or coalition)
2. Date of the meeting.
3. Bullet points listing the important issues discussed.
4. Narrative description of the discussion/decision reached for issues identified by the OC as relevant to League priorities or positions. This should not be a verbatim recitation of the discussion, rather a synopsis sufficient to give the reader an understanding of the issue(s) involved.

5. A link to the observed entity's website, where the minutes of the meeting can be found.
6. (Optional) A listing of the League (National, State, and/or Local) positions directly related to the issue(s) discussed.

Submission of the Report

Observer reports are submitted via email to the editor of the *Voter* (currently Anne Pierce-Jones).

Deadline for the *Voter* – the 15th of each month

The editor of the *Voter* will (depending on available space, number of reports submitted, etc.) determine if the entire report will be printed in the *Voter* or only the title and bullet points of the report with a link to the full report.

Link to Advocacy

Observers typically will work on their own observing public bodies and report back to LWVCNM. Occasionally, an issue will arise that the observer believes should require action. In those instances, please see the Advocacy Guidelines (attached) which details the ways to proceed.