

The VOTER

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THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS® OF CENTRAL NEW MEXICO
6739 Academy Rd. NE Suite 124, Albuquerque, NM 87109
lwvcnm.org



LWVCNM Co-Presidents' Message by Karen M. Douglas and Donna Sandoval

The 12/4/22 LWVCNM Holiday Social was a welcome gathering in the home of Co-President Donna Sandoval. 29 members celebrated this opportunity to re-engage in person and exchange both LWV thoughts on the November 2022 Midterm election process and outcome as well as recent events in their personal lives.

The LWVCNM survey on the preferred monthly educational program meeting venue was tested with the 12/4/22 Holiday gathering attendees. 22 members responded with 18 preferring in-person luncheon unit meetings in a hotel (the pre-COVID monthly venue). A broader membership online survey will be sent via a *Topics* email in January with all of the options for a preferred venue presented: in-person only at a hotel with a sit-down luncheon, in-person only at the LWVCNM office conference room with a box luncheon or brown bag option, or continuing with the Zoom-only option. Members responding at the holiday gathering also were receptive to an occasional evening or weekend meeting via Zoom. Results of the survey will be distributed to the membership as soon as they are tabulated. The LWVCNM Board will work on a plan for 2023, carefully considering the results of the member survey. Based on response, a mix of the different venues may also be selected. Until a plan is devised, we will continue with Zoom-only.

LWVCNM members should review the Winter 2023 La Palabra for details on the LWVNM Day at the Legislature Thursday 2/16/23 and evening reception Wednesday 2/15/23. All members are encouraged to participate in this annual event and presentations will again offer insight into legislation introduced during the 2023 60-day NM legislative session

LWVCNM BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Co-Presidents: Karen Douglas &
Donna Sandoval

1st Vice President/ Vote411.org:
Karen Wentworth

2nd Vice President/ Membership:
Elizabeth Shields

3rd Vice President/Program: Jennifer Black

**4th VP Co-Vice Presidents / Development
Committee Chairs:** Betsy Carlson &
Mary Mulvany

Treasurer: Donna Sandoval

Secretary: Ashley Benning

Voter Services Chair: Gina Mahfouz

Voter Guide Distribution: Lani Desaulniers

Sustainability/Climate Change:
Jeanne Logsdon

Office Manager/Webmaster/ Zoom Host:
Starlyn Brown

Advocacy Team/Observer Corps:
Karen Wentworth

The Voter Editor: Michal Mudd

LWVCNM CALENDAR

JANUARY 12 (Thursday) NOON – 1 PM
LWVCNM Monthly Meeting, Zoom ONLY:
“A New Year of Advocacy: The League’s State
Legislative Advisory Agenda” with LWVNM
Advocacy Chair, **Dick Mason** reporting on League
priorities for the upcoming 60-day legislative session
which begins Tue, Jan 17th.

UPCOMING EVENTS

FEBRUARY 9 (Thursday) NOON – 1 PM
LWVCNM Monthly meeting, Zoom ONLY;
Hannah Burling, LWVNM president, will discuss
League legislative priorities and voter education.

FEBRUARY 11 (Saturday) 10 AM – 12 PM
Annual LWVCNM Program Planning Meeting to
discuss the educational and advocacy paths to
pursue in 2023-24. Via ZOOM.

FEBRUARY 15 (Wednesday)
DEADLINE for Nominations for LWVCNM Board
of Directors candidates

APRIL 29 – 30 (Saturday-Sunday) 10 AM- 4 PM
LWVNM State Convention, Los Alamos and virtual.

If you need help with Zoom, please reach out to
Zoom host, Starlyn Brown, sbrown@unm.edu

Please submit your articles for the monthly Voter
by the 15th of each month to:
VoterEditorMichal@gmail.com.

FEBRUARY PROGRAM

The guest speaker for the February meeting is Hannah Burling, the League of Women Voters of New Mexico president. She will speak to us about issues the League is following in the New Mexico legislature and future strategic goals to coordinate statewide projects/initiatives and further develop League chapters around the state. She has also recently put together a 501(c)3 Education Fund non-profit entity for the state. Part of the purpose of that non-profit is to find funding for Voter Education Projects. We will leave time for questions, but it will also be helpful to know if people have ideas about voter education projects they think the state league should undertake.

Save-the-Date!
Annual Program Planning Meeting
February 11, 2023
10 AM—Noon, Zoom Meeting

Login information will be provided later. Please watch upcoming member communications for meeting details and Zoom login information.

Overview

LWVCNM members will meet to discuss the educational and advocacy paths to pursue in 2023-24. **Program Planning** is the primary means by which local Leagues set their priorities for the year and the process by which local Leagues help shape the public policy direction of LWVNM (in odd years) and LWVUS (in even years). National, state and local LWVCNM positions are listed in your Member Handbook. All LWVCNM members are invited to join this excellent way to learn how the League planning process works.

In preparation for the meeting, please scan the local and state positions in your Member Handbook. If you think there are issues missing or need revising, please bring your thoughts (and your Member Handbook!) to the meeting. We will also have a presentation on the *Draft Nuclear Issue Study Proposal* (considering nuclear energy as a greenhouse gas-free alternative power source) by LWVCNM Co-President Karen Douglas.

We look forward to working with our members in the vital League work of Program Planning. Whether you are a new member or a veteran, your input is greatly valued. See you on Saturday, February 11, 2023, from 10 AM to Noon via Zoom.

LWVCNM Topics List Serve Notice

Dear LWVCNM Members –

During this midterm election year LWVCNM became aware of some misperceptions of LWV as a partisan organization. This could limit our influence as the premier educational resource for voters seeking unbiased information.

Since the LWVCNM Topics List Serve is not limited just to members, the LWVCNM Board will screen all Topics List Serve posts effective January 1, 2023, in order to minimize further misunderstanding of LWV intentions and contributions to our community.

Please contact any member of the LWVCNM Board for clarification or additional information. LWVCNM appreciates your patience as we strive to ensure that our nonpartisan nonprofit status is no longer in question.



LWVCNM

Call for Nominations



The Bylaws specify that the following positions on the Board of Directors will be elected at the May 2023 annual meeting:

- Co-Presidents
- Secretary
- First Vice President (responsible for Advocacy and the Voter Guide)
- Fourth Vice President (responsible for Development)
- Board Members (3)

Each position is for a two-year term. The elected individual can serve up to two sequential terms in the same position.

The Board is also seeking members to contribute in the following ways:

- Publicity and Communications, including on Social Media
- Volunteer Co-Ordinator to help link members with organizational needs
- Committee members for the Fundraising, Voter Services, Voter Guide, and other committees

Deadline for nominations: February 15, 2023

Process: Send your nominations to Jeanne Logsdon, jlogsdon@unm.edu.

Self-nominations are encouraged!



Observer Report – Bernalillo County Commission December 2022 Karen Wentworth

Bernalillo County Commission Continues to Operate by Telepathy

The Bernalillo County Commission had a busy agenda for their December 13 meeting. They approved millions of dollars in ARPA funding for water and sewer projects, made several appointments to boards and commissions, approved funding for a new property tax appraiser and five new human resource positions, approved the purchase of art for the Westside Visitors Center, approved the demolition of several nuisance properties, approved a renewed lease agreement for the Albuquerque Sign (*cont.*)

Language Academy, and adopted the Isleta Drain and Trail Master Plan on a consent agenda. There were no questions or comments from the commissioners or the public.

Commissioner Walt Benton introduced an ordinance to slow speeding on major roadways such as Coors, Tramway and Paseo del Norte with speed cameras. The proposed ordinance will likely be voted on next month.

In addition, the commission passed an ordinance to prohibit people standing on roadway medians less than four feet across. This will make panhandling illegal at several major intersections in the county, on the grounds of pedestrian safety concerns.

Bernalillo County also received a clean audit report for 2022, with no major exceptions. The audit has been sent to the NM State auditor.

How or if commissioners work with each other and the county manager continues to be a puzzle. There are no commission committee meetings, except the finance committee. Finance committee meeting tend to be a series of presentations to the commissioners, with little discussion and few questions.

It is not clear how commissioners gather details for what they are voting on. The public briefings are spare and without much detail. It is not clear whether there are private briefings for commissioners, or whether commissioners ever get together publicly or privately to work out proposed ordinances.

The Bernalillo County Commission apparently believes in some transparency. Every contract and proposal is provided to the public in writing as part of the agenda packet. What the public doesn't get is the benefit of hearing elected officials openly discuss public business. We can only guess what they are thinking.



**Observer Corps Report - APS Board of Education meetings,
16 November and 7 December 2022
Laura J. Downing**

The Board of Education meetings all follow a similar structure: presentation of the agenda, a public forum and then the Board Members discuss Board internal business. I “attend” the live stream of the meetings; I don’t attend in person. I report on topics most relevant to LWVCNM policy positions.

Two main issues were raised in the public forum at the 16 November Board meeting: bus drivers (and other staff) raised concerns about safety; and a number of parents, staff, students, alumni and other members of the public weighed in on the KB1 Student and Parent/Guardian Rights and Responsibilities policy that was proposed back in July and has proven to be controversial. The discussion for and against KB1 at the 16 November meeting continued to focus on how the document relates to LGBTQ+ students (and staff). Those in favor of KB1 object to the potential for school counsellors to engage in “gay conversion” therapy and for parents/guardians not to be informed of details of discussions between school counsellors and the students in their care. *(cont.)*

Those presenting views against KB1 have highlighted that student privacy is a right under New Mexico State Law, and that schools have an obligation to protect LGBTQ+ students against discrimination and/or bullying.

Following the public forum, the KB1 policy was approved by a 5-2 vote. All Board members expressed dismay at the hurtful rhetoric expressed at the public forum discussion of the policy. All members affirm that the KB1 policy is a non-discrimination policy, with its first principle being the safety of all members of the APS community. A recent letter to the editors of The Paper provides a particularly sensible overview of the policy that was voted on: <https://abq.news/2022/12/letter-to-the-editor-what-the-recently-approved-board-parent-policy-really-says/>

The 16 November Board of Education meeting also voted (6-1) to approve funding for a pilot Equitable Grading Training project, point VI.A.11 on the 16 November agenda:

<https://meetings.boardbook.org/Public/Agenda/1880?meeting=554929&thin=True>

The project drew a lot of sharp questioning from the Board, who wanted to be assured that the new grading plan would not lower standards or affect the potential educational outcomes of APS graduates. Equitable Grading – or Mastery based grading – is an approach that is gaining favor throughout the US, and also is related to LWVCNM Education position 4.1. It is clearly and briefly explained at the following link: <https://www.gse.harvard.edu/news/ed/19/05/grade-expectations>



The final item at the 16 November meeting was continued discussion of redistricting, Item VII.A on the agenda. Specifically, the point of debate – which continued at the 7 December meeting – is whether the new school districts fairly represent the Hispanic voting age population as counted in the 2020 census. According to the census, 3/7 of the APS school districts should be majority Hispanic, given that Hispanics comprise 49% of the ABQ population. The E maps listed under the agenda item are the ones drawn up by the Redistricting Advisory Committee to the Board. Since they only propose 2/7 districts with majority Hispanic population, alternative maps – G and H – were solicited from another committee. Voting on the redistricting maps was postponed till the 7 December meeting to allow for more public feedback.

The public forum at the 7 December meeting was dominated by concerns about how well Hispanic and other minority groups are represented in the E redistricting maps drawn up by the Advisory Committee. The Board voted on the Redistricting proposals after lengthy discussion about the merits of complaints about underrepresentation of Hispanics. It was conceded that the E maps only feature 2/7 majority Hispanic districts, instead of the 3/7 that apparently are required by law. Other problems highlighted in the discussion were the likelihood of undercounting of voting age residents in certain neighborhoods and speculation about growth in the NE and NW areas of Albuquerque. However, the majority of the Board voted for the E2 map proposed by the original Advisory Committee.

A Look Into the Past

From the Standard By-laws for a Provisional League of Women Voters in a state where no state organization exists:

Article 1 – Name

The name of this organization shall be the Provisional League of Women Voters in Albuquerque. It shall look toward the formation of a League of Women Voters of New Mexico which will be recognized by the League of Women Voters of the United States. The Provisional League of Women Voters of Albuquerque shall become an integral part of the New Mexico League upon the New Mexico League's recognition by the League of Women Voters of the United States. The Provisional League of Albuquerque shall conform to the bylaws of the League of Women Voters of the United States.

Article 2 – Purpose and Policy

Section 1. Purpose. The purpose of the Provisional League of Women Voters of Albuquerque shall be to promote political responsibility through informed and active participation of citizens in government.

Section 2. Policy. The Provisional League of women Voters of Albuquerque may take action on local governmental measures and policies in the public interest in conformity with the Platform of the League of Women Voters of the United States. It shall not support or oppose any political or candidate.



The League of Women Voters of Central New Mexico, a tax-exempt 501 (c) (3) organization is a nonpartisan political organization, that encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues and influences public policy by education and advocacy.

Holiday Open House 2022!

