

# LWVCNM Observer's Report

Sandoval County Commission special meeting (budget hearing)

April 14, 2023

Mary Templeton, observer (by video)

Present: David Heil (Chair), Michael Meek (Vice chair), Joshua Jones, Katherine Bruch (video), Jay Block (video)

## **Description of Issues Relevant to the League**

### Community Services - Housing

Community Services is requesting an additional Permanent Supportive Housing staff in anticipation of their current manager's pending retirement in three years. While overlapping with the current manager, the position would apply for and manage new HUD grants and build a new partnership Habitat for Humanity in the interim. CS had hired an additional half-time employee using covid funds to help manage HUD grants, but that position's funding will end in June. The county manager has recommended against approving this position this fiscal year in preference for prioritizing current employees and filling other open positions.

### County Clerk – Bureau of Elections

Currently, one person in the Bureau of Elections is doing job of 5 people and the workload is expected to increase in January 2024 with the implementation of Automatic Voter Registration enacted by HB4. Consequently, the Clerk's Office is requesting an additional administrative assistant and a GIS specialist. The Office is also requesting wage increases to help retain and recruit staff – a significant number leave after being trained. Upcoming challenges for existing staff also include supporting an increase in poll workers enacted and funded by SB180, training them (this has expanded from 30 minutes to 4 hours due to the many recent special problems that arise during elections). The County also uploads city election results, except for Rio Rancho, on election nights.

### Detention Center

The Center is requesting salary for a second mental health professional because 85-90% of those they book have some kind of mental health need.

## **Additional Comments**

The County budget priority was stated as being able to pay competitive wages to existing County employees so the County can retain them. It was also mentioned that several months

of work had gone into the budget proposal prior to this meeting. There does not appear to be a link to the budget proposal being discussed.

In contrast to regular commission meetings, the special budget meeting was held during business hours and a link to the draft budget under discussion was not made available through the agenda.

**Sandoval County Commission Website**

<https://www.sandovalcountynm.gov/commission/>