

The VOTER

JULY 2023

VOL 88, NO.7

THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS® OF CENTRAL NEW MEXICO
6739 Academy Rd. NE Suite 124, Albuquerque, NM 87109 lwvcm.org (505) 884-8441

LWVCNM Updates & Happenings Jennifer Black

AN UPDATE: Second Thursday Monthly Educational Program Series

The inaugural hybrid meeting was held on June 8 with fifteen LWVCNM members attending in-person at the League Office Conference Room and eleven members attending via Zoom. In-person attendees were encouraged to bring a brown bag lunch and the Board hosted a Dessert Bar following the program.



A special thanks to Starlyn Brown and Linda Miller for working so diligently to make the hybrid model a technical success and to Liz Shields for coordinating the panel discussion on Civic Engagement featuring APS educator Julie Orelas and Office of Civic Engagement Manager Doug Small.



We will continue to host hybrid meetings in an effort to rebuild our in-person audience in the post-COVID environment, as well as to accommodate our members who prefer to remain on Zoom.

IT'S ALL ABOUT PLANNING

On Saturday, June 10, 10 AM--Noon, sixteen LWVCNM members met via Zoom to outline the educational program year (September 2023-August 2024). In an effort to delve deeper into topics of interest, we will host several two-part programs in the upcoming year and also offer occasional evening programs to better accommodate our working members.

A full summary of the 2023-24 program plan will be presented in the August *Voter*.

AND INTRODUCING...

Along with the June educational meeting and Calendar Planning, June was a lively month, introducing two new LWVCNM offerings:

- a social gathering at the Canteen Brewhouse on June 22, and
- the inaugural meeting of the LWVCNM Book Club on June 27 featuring the Pulitzer Prize winning title, *Evicted* by Matthew Desmond.

Details for both new events will be highlighted in the August *Voter*.

JULY EDUCATIONAL MEETING

Join us for the **Brown Bag LUNCH & LEARN Series**

THURSDAY, July 13, Noon—1 PM

What: NM Prisons: Sentencing & Recidivism

Join our panel for a conversation about the New Mexico correctional system, including inmates' conditions, sentencing, recidivism rates and initiatives for improvement.

When: Thursday, July 13 @ Noon—1 PM

In-Person RSVP appreciated:
lunch@lwvcnm.org or 505-881-8441

Where:

- LWVCNM Conference Room, 6739 Academy Road NE (ample lot parking)
- In-person and via Zoom/Watch for the Topics announcement with Zoom login information.
- Attendees are invited to bring a brown bag lunch
- The LWVCNM Board will host light refreshments after the program

Who: Justin Allen, Douglas Carver, and Trish Lopez

LWV LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS*
OF CENTRAL NEW MEXICO

Thurs, July 13
12:00pm

New Mexico Prisons:
Join us for a conversation about our correctional system, inmate conditions, recidivism rates and fighting for improvement.

Trish Lopez, Moderator
Douglas Carver, NM Sentencing Commission
Justin Allen, Human Rights Defender

RSVP to attend in person or via Zoom:
lunch@lwvcnm.org | (505) 881-8441

Hosted by the League of Women Voters Central New Mexico

Justin Allen is a lifelong NM resident and human rights defender with a focus on transformative justice. His advocacy began as a Peer Educator of harm reduction for Project ECHO at UNM Health Sciences; he also has 12 years of experience as a mentor and educator for the Residential Alcohol and Drug Treatment Program (RDAP) and Therapeutic Communities in several correctional facilities throughout the state. Justin has taught "Decarcerate Yoga" in our community as a harm reduction technique, with the understanding that individual healing is community healing. He is interested in reducing the harm of state violence and has been a community organizer in several local grassroots organizations since 2017. Justin holds a B.A. in American Studies from UNM, with a minor in Peace Studies, and has been working on the restoration of voting rights for formerly incarcerated people for the last 5 years. He is currently working as the Inclusive Democracy Organizer at OLÉ.

Douglas Carver joined the New Mexico Sentencing Commission in 2017 as its Deputy Director. Before this time, he led a nonprofit focused on government ethics and was a staff attorney at the NM Legislature's Legislative Council Service, working principally in the areas of criminal justice and government ethics. He has a B.A. from Yale University, an M.Phil. from Trinity College, Dublin, and a J.D. from the UNM School of Law.

Trish Lopez is a past LWVCNM board member and creator of Teeniors (tech-savvy teens empowering seniors), whose mission is to help older adults feel more confident in our increasingly digital world -- while providing paid, meaningful jobs for youth in New Mexico. Trish's #1 priority is raising her 10-yr old daughter, Kaia. She also chairs the Digital Inclusion group for New Mexico Technology Council and is an advisory member of the New Mexico Local News Fund, supporting independent journalism around the state. A graduate of UNM, her primary interest is bringing people together from different walks of life to create change in our community.



In Appreciation

Contributions to the 75th Anniversary Celebration



It took a village to design and carry out the 75th Anniversary Celebration of the formation of the LWVCNM on May 6, 2023, at the Sheraton Uptown Hotel. A great team of League members volunteered to serve on the organizing committee:

Ashley Benning
Jennifer Black
Janet Blair
Starlyn Brown
Elizabeth (Betsy) Carlson
Lani Desaulniers
Karen Douglas
Jeanne Logsdon, Chair

Gina Mahfouz
Linda McDowell
Linda Miller
Michal Mudd
Mary Mulvany
Donna Sandoval
Elizabeth (Liz) Shields
Karen Wentworth

The Silent Auction was a great success due to the many contributions from the following individuals and organizations:

Albuquerque Airport Courtyard Hotel
Ashley Benning
Casa Rondeña Winery
Edward Ripp: Bookseller
Elizabeth (Betsy) Carlson
Elizabeth (Liz) Shields
Jeanne Logsdon
Jennifer Black
Jewish Community Center
Kei & Molly Textiles
Kathy Cramer
Lani Desaulniers

Linda McDowell
Lowe's Home Improvement
Monica Carlson
New Mexico Jazz Workshop
Patricia Tharp
Paul Crabb
Paula Best, Mixed Media Artist
Ronda Winery
Sheri Brown
Starlyn Brown
Sunshine Flower Shop
Teresa Elder

LWVCNM BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President:
Donna Sandoval

1st Co-Vice Presidents/Vote411.org:
Karen Wentworth & Lani Desaulniers

2nd Vice President/Membership:
Elizabeth Shields

3rd Vice President/Program:
Jennifer Black

4th Co-Vice Presidents/Development:
Betsy Carlson & Mary Mulvany

Treasurer: Donna Sandoval

Secretary: Vivian Skadron

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

Directors
Terry Quinn & Lindsey Ritcher

Volunteer Coordinator
Linda Miller

Program
Karen Douglas

LWVCNM CALENDAR

JULY 13th (Thursday) NOON – 1 PM

**LWVCNM Monthly meeting,
in person & via Zoom**

**TOPIC: Inmates/Sentencing/Recidivism
with Justin Allen, Douglas Carver,
and Trish Lopez**

July 15 (Saturday) 10 a.m. to NOON

**Initial organizational meeting for work on the
Voter Guide for the
2023 Municipal Elections-
at the City of Albuquerque Special
Collections Library's New Mexicana Room.
(423 Central Ave. NE)**

August 10th (Thursday) NOON – 1 PM

**NO MEETING - Summer Break!
See you in September!**

September 14th (Thursday) NOON- 1 PM

**LWVCNM Monthly meeting,
In-person & via Zoom**

**TOPIC: Albuquerque Community Safety
Department: The Right Response at the
Right Time**

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 Michal Mudd at:
VoterEditorMichal@gmail.com.

Time to renew your membership?

If so, please click on the following link and renew your membership using PayPal at
<https://www.lwvcnm.org/join-renew/>

Or you may fill out the membership form at [Join / Renew](#) and mail it with your check to:

League of Women Voters of Central New Mexico
6739 Academy Rd. NE, Suite 124
Albuquerque, NM 87109



ATTENTION!



**Your help is needed to create the
Voter Guide for the 2023 Municipal Elections!**

**The initial organizational meeting for work on this guide
will be held July 15 (Saturday) 10 a.m. to NOON**

**@ the City of Albuquerque Special Collections Library, New Mexicana Room
(423 Central Ave. NE, and Edith)**



APD Forward Update

JULY 2023

Starlyn Brown

The Public Hearing on Independent Monitor's Seventeenth Report (IMR-17) was held June 6, 2023. The Honorable James Browning, U.S. District Judge started the meeting at 8:30am and ended the meeting at 2:35pm.

IMR-17 was based on data from August 1, 2022, through January 31, 2023.

Overall, the report was very positive and noted several areas of improved compliance. Primary compliance 100%, Secondary compliance 100% and Operation compliance 92%. It was noted that compliance with the CASA could be 95% by the end of 2023. When compliance occurs APD will be self-monitoring and report to the independent monitor for two years. At the end of two years, if compliance with the CASA has been maintained the consent decree will end.

External Force Investigation Team 1 (EFIT 1) is winding down and expected to be completed this year. IAFD has 21 civilians and 7 sworn officers. Eight have completed the extensive training to investigate independently, six are in the final phase 4. It was stressed that APD is doing the work. Resources from EFIT 1 will begin working on EFIT 2 to investigate backlog cases.

The Albuquerque Community Safety department is a success. ACS statistics - received over 30,000 calls, 1500 calls per month with about 900 calls a week diverted from APD. They are working to expand

their service hours to 24/7. In comparison to a similar organization in Denver, Colorado, ACS handles three times more calls than the larger city.

Training at the Police Academy was recognized as being very good. New technology systems are being implemented to both capture and analyze data for reporting. It was noted that APD will need to adapt as other organizations offer services. The success of ACS was an example of how other entities providing services can work with APD in the future.

Some Civilian Oversight and Community Engagement (COCE) requirements contained in the CASA were not in compliance. The Southwest Community Policing Council (CPC) was defunct. Karen Schwartz Lead, CPCs Council of Chairs, is trying to find a way to restart it. The Civil Police Oversight Agency (CPOA) was discussed. A new city ordinance implemented by the City Council made changes to the board and agency relationship, redefined roles and responsibilities, and added a Contract Officer. Delays in hiring are impacting the timeliness of investigations. It is hoped that the Contract Officer, followed by a new Executive Director, will both be hired in the next few months.

Judge Browning brought up an editorial that was published in the Albuquerque Journal concerning reducing the amount paid to the Independent Monitor. Both the City of Albuquerque and Dr. Ginger stated that they are in negotiations regarding the payment amount.

Daniel Williams APD Forward Steering Committee stated that there is a hope of sustainability and a fear of complacency going forward. He said there was concern about the misclassifications of use of force, concern about the Force Review Board (FRB) not really reviewing materials, chaos at the CPOA, discipline not being applied due to time bar, and that 92.8% compliance does not necessarily mean citizen interactions match.

Peter Cuba, MacClendon Sub-Class Counsel, expressed frustration that the fatal shootings of Jesus Crosby and Keshawn Thomas were ruled justified. He adamantly disagreed and called them murders. He felt that the stakeholders had not been included in discussions about changes to the CASA. It was later mentioned that the Crosby and Thomas cases have been incorporated into officer training.

Antonio Maestas, Co-Counsel for Community Coalition, expressed that racial disparities were not being adequately addressed. He mentioned that the majority of the 18 officers involved in shootings in 2022 were 2nd year and 3rd year officers. He also felt that the stakeholders had not been included in discussions about changes to the CASA.



Clean Energy Options –

Should LWV include Commercial Nuclear Power?

Karen Douglas

During the June 2022 LWVUS Convention, delegates approved the Climate Emergency Resolution. As commercial nuclear power currently supplies 56% of domestic Greenhouse Gas-free energy, a second resolution introduced by LWVPA promoted a reconsideration of the 1980's era LWVUS Nuclear Issues Position "opposing increased reliance on nuclear fission." LWVUS directed that a state-level study would be required.

July 2022 Zoom meetings included 17 states interested in revisiting this stance and LWVNM, with the existing 21-member Spent Fuel Storage Safety Study Committee including 10 STEM contributors and LWVNM Bylaws permitting Position adoption between state conventions, offered advantages to expeditiously evaluate the issue.

The Nuclear Issues Study Proposal was adopted April 2023 by the LWVNM Convention delegates and needs your perspective to offer a balanced CY23 outcome credible to other states for concurrence during the June 2024 LWVUS Convention. You may have noticed this 5/31/23 LWVNM email announcement appealing for your involvement:

Invitation to Join Nuclear Issues Study

At the LWVNM Convention in April the delegates approved the study proposal to revisit the LWVUS Nuclear Issues position and consider nuclear energy among potential solutions to the climate emergency.

This study is expedited with planned study reports and interviews available for LWVNM membership consideration in November 2023 followed by consensus meetings in December 2023. The current **LWVUS Nuclear Issues Position** appears on pp.97 and 100 of [LWVUS Impact on Issues 2022 - 2024](#).

Efforts to obtain concurrence from other state leagues will occur following LWVNM approval of a position, which will be voted on next winter. The goal is to obtain concurrence by LWVUS during the June 2024 Convention.

Opportunities to participate:

- Perhaps you would like to collaborate with other members involved in **study of one of the four Nuclear Issues tasks**. Task members will review references under the guidance of an expert task leader and prepare a five-page study report with bibliography by 10/30/23. Study tasks include: [Study Tasks](#)

- You may have more interest in **providing references for consideration** in a study task report. Directions to submit reference material may be viewed here [References for consideration](#)
- You may know **experts willing to be interviewed** who could offer valuable perspectives on commercial nuclear energy for member consideration. You may recommend an expert by contacting Karen M. Douglas (douglaskm@alumni.stanford.edu) with the expert's biography and topic.

You are all encouraged to review the four completed study task reports and interview recordings available to all members during November 2023. LWVNM also needs your perspective during one of the December consensus meetings (scheduled evening/weekend to include more members) which will determine the final 2024 LWVNM nuclear issues position.

Please consider adding your valuable perspective to this timely study. LWVNM appreciates your involvement to ensure that LWVUS Positions continue to reflect members' viewpoints.

OBSERVER REPORTS



Observer Corps Report – Albuquerque City Council meeting

15 May/5 June 2023

Mary Mulvany /Janet Kirkpatrick

Middle Rio Grande Housing Collaborative – Update. At the June 5th meeting councilors voted unanimously to place a resolution on the June 21st agenda which, if passed, would approve the Joint Powers Agreement to establish the Middle Rio Grande Housing Collaborative with Bernalillo County.

Outcome of Previous Council Action:

Albuquerque-Bernalillo County Air Quality Control Board (AQCB)

R-23-128. At the May 1 meeting the council approved a resolution declaring a position on AQCB's Petition 2022-3. The petition would change the AQCB's rules to require consideration of health, environmental, and equity impacts when evaluating permit applications. The resolution was sent to the mayor for signature or veto. As explained by city staff at the May 15th council meeting the mayor signed a letter approving the resolution, but the signed resolution was not properly delivered to city council. Because the proper procedure was not followed, it is recorded as not signed by the mayor. The resolution was enacted because it was not vetoed. [R-23-128 Text](#)

May 15/June 5 Discussions and Actions:

ABQ Ride/Transit

At the May 15 meeting council members engaged in discussion of whether the Zero Fares program contributes to crime and safety concerns on the bus. APD Chief Medina shared that during a recent shoplifting sting (Operation Sticky Fingers) one third of the people arrested used the bus to get to and from the stores.

The ABQ Ride director shared that staffing shortages include a 36% vacancy rate for drivers and a 70% vacancy rate for vehicle maintenance positions.

Housing

O-22-54. Amendments to Integrated Development Ordinance (IDO). This ordinance includes proposed zoning changes as part of the Housing Forward Initiative. Changes include allowing duplex and detached accessory dwelling units in R-1 zoned residential areas, allowing only limited kitchens in dwelling units, amending height restrictions, and reducing parking space requirements. Forty-six members of the public spoke in favor of this ordinance and 25 spoke against it. Those in favor spoke of the need to increase affordable housing. Those opposed mentioned the accessory dwelling units (casitas) would ruin the character of neighborhoods and that the proposal was not sufficiently studied. The council voted to postpone the vote on the IDO amendment until the June 21st meeting.

[O-22-54 Text](#)

Change to City Council/City Manager Government Format

P-23-1. Proposition to place on the November 2023 ballot a change to the city's form of government. This would change the current city council/mayor format to a city council/city manager format. Under the city council/city manager format the mayor would sit on the city council and a professional city manager would be appointed by the council. Councilors Grout and Sanchez put forth the proposition. Councilors discussed the advantages and disadvantages of the two systems. Two members of the public spoke in favor of the proposed city council/manager form of government. Four members of the public spoke in favor of retaining the current city council/mayor form of government.

Prof. Tim Krebs from the political science dept at UNM spoke on the disadvantages of the council/city manager form of city government:

1. It puts executive power into the hands of an unelected city manager.
2. Large cities need a strong mayor. Of the cities in the US with populations over 500,000 all but 14 have council/mayor form of government.
3. Council/mayor forms produce more citizen engagement.
4. Minority voters participation falls off with council/manager government.

Proponents of the council/city manager form of city government pointed out that the council/mayor system is less efficient because the city administration does not work collaboratively with the council.

They also pointed out that there is greater continuity with a council/city manager because programs would not be subject to the differing priorities of each mayoral administration. Additionally, senior staff positions would be hired rather than political appointees who depart with the changing administration.

The deadline to get the issue on the ballot is August 29th. The city administration encouraged the council to make a decision prior to the council's July hiatus. [P-23-1 Text](#)



Observer Corps Report – Bernalillo County Commission

JULY 2023

Karen Wentworth

Bernalillo County Commission Mostly Works Smoothly, But Sometimes Detours

The Bernalillo County Commission has approved a property tax exemption for a developer building a mixed-use housing project on 4th Street. The property will have 61 affordable housing units out of a total of 86 apartments and town homes.

The project has been in the works for several months, underscoring how long and difficult it may be to quickly build more housing. The county is focused on low income and extremely low- income housing.

The commission has also approved new contracts for the Bernalillo County Sheriff's Deputies Association, the Bernalillo County Court Deputies Association, and the Firefighters Local 244.

For the most part the BCC works smoothly on issues, but at the May 23 meeting the commission decided to take the unusual move of appointing a commissioner to be a liaison to the County Manager in the hiring and work of a new Deputy County Manager.

That person will handle the distribution of money from the special gross receipts tax to build and maintain a county mental health system. The Bernalillo County Code of Ethics tries to separate elected public officials from the actual day to day running of county affairs in order to maintain a more professional work environment for county employees. But in this case the commission chose to make an exception to the code of ethics.

I wrote a letter protesting the action and requesting the commission to reconsider. The letter was approved by the LWVCNM board. The only response we received to this letter came from Commissioner Eric Olivas, who pointed out that the commission had the legal right to make the appointment.

Olivas is correct. The commission did have the legal right to make the appointment. But as a former state employee I have seen how utterly destructive it is to mix the supervision of professional employees with political interests. The commission had no interest in changing their vote, so all we can do as a League is continue to monitor the situation.



Observer Report - Sandoval County Commission regular meeting

May 24, 2023

Mary Templeton, (by online audio; video is unavailable)

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

Description of Issues Relevant to the League

Gun Safety/Violence Prevention

Commissioner Jones made gun locks for securing firearms freely available to attendees who wanted them, and also brought veteran crisis cards for distribution.

Housing

Two commissioners pledged \$5K each to ABQ FaithWorks Collaborative to assist Sandoval County residents with eviction prevention. The funds will be used to pay back-rent or housing deposits.

Sandoval County Commission voted to issue bonds to cover increased construction costs for a 216-Unit multifamily housing complex (Sandoval Flats).

Additional Comments

Rules of Procedure

The commission posted “rules of procedures for public comment and attendance at commission meetings” on the Commission web page. The Commission Chair read these rules to attendees at the beginning of the meeting, and later paused the meeting due to infringements, such as applause and exceeding time.

Public Comment

The State Representative Kathleen Cates (District 44) attended the meeting in person to express concern over Commissioners spending time on hate speech and personal campaigning during Commission meetings.

Housing

Seniors age 65 years and older are eligible for a property value freeze that prevents their taxes from increasing. This freeze can be requested from the Assessor’s office.

Banning the Feeding of Free Roaming Horses within Sandoval County and Permit Process

Discussion of the public feeding of wild horses and their interaction with traffic has consumed substantial amounts of time at Commission Meetings for the past several months and additional time over the past 10 years. The County has deemed the horses a traffic safety hazard. State law holds the County liable in the event of death or injury if the Commission recognizes a problem and does not address it.

The County proposed an ordinance that makes public feeding of wild horses in Placitas a petty misdemeanor punishable by a fine of up to \$300 and/or up to 90 days in jail beginning September 1, 2023. It also creates a permitting process by which 501c3 organizations may apply to legally feed and water the horses. Many residents feel strongly about continuing to feed the horses, but may form a 501c3 and apply to feed them legally. The commission voted 4-1 to pass the ordinance and the permitting resolution.

Commissioners Discussion

One Commissioner advanced a story that veterans in New York were being evicted from hotels to make room for “illegal immigrants from the unsecure border.” He went on to comment on federal policy.

Sandoval County Commission Website

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



Volunteer Opportunities

Because Democracy is not a Spectator Sport...

We need your skills, your enthusiasm, and your commitment to the myriad of projects always underway. From simple clerical tasks to grass roots advocacy, ongoing or project-by project, we can fit your interests to a volunteer job. Expanding our volunteer base is a top priority of LWVCNM.

How to Find Out More About Volunteering?

It's easy: Contact us at 505-884-8441 or lwvcnmoffice@gmail.com Leave a message with your name/phone number and expressing your interest in finding out more about volunteering. We will contact you to match your interests/skills with a volunteer position, explain tasks involved, review time commitment for various positions, and offer training where needed.

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.

