

LWVCNM Observer's Report

Sandoval County Commission regular meeting

November 8, 2023

Mary Templeton, observer (by video recording)

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

Description of Issues Relevant to the League

Voter Representation

Sandoval County is home to 10 Pueblos and 2 tribal nations (Navajo and Jicarilla Apache) and has the second largest number of tribal communities and land holdings in the country. The Sandoval County Tribal Liaison Program was initially created to provide voting and election education services to native American communities that include voter registration and translation services. In addition, liaisons also meet with tribal leaders and residents to address important issues, such as substance abuse, government contracts, economic development, education, emergency services, missing indigenous people, tourism, housing, utilities, and transportation.

As background, LWVUS supports electoral systems that enhance representation for all voters.

County Legislative Priorities for which the LWV also has Advocacy Positions

The full list of state legislative priorities for Sandoval County, should these topics arise in the 2024 legislative session, may be found at

<https://sandovalcountynm.new.swagit.com/videos/280633>, agenda item 11.C. Items for which the LWV also has advocacy positions include:

- Per Board of County Commissioners Resolution 6.22.22.10, legislation that calls for improvements in voter processes including: Photo ID, Efficient Removal of Inactive Voters, Prohibiting the Use of Unsupervised Ballot Drop Boxes, Absentee Ballot Chain of Custody, and Post-election Audits
- Legislation to provide funding and statutory support for mental health resources and crisis intervention teams
- Legislation and funding to increase the availability of services for behavioral health and substance abuse
- Legislation and funding efforts to provide an increased level of training for government employees to deal with individuals in behavioral health crises

- Legislation that provides additional training and funding for public safety personnel in the areas of crisis intervention, dealing with individuals suffering from mental illness or substance abuse issues, dealing with individuals in behavioral health crises

With respect to voting processes, I was unable to locate and read Board of County Commissioners Resolution 6.22.22.10 for details.

Additional Comments

Public Comment

Thirteen of nineteen speakers commented on elections. Some included praise for the 2023 election process, the County Clerk, and Deputy County Clerk.

Commissioners Discussion

One commissioner labeled US representatives who did not vote in favor of censoring a fellow congressperson as “a bunch of Jew-hating elected officials” (<https://sandovalcountynm.new.swagit.com/videos/280633> 1:59:50-2:01:08). Details were published in the Rio Rancho Observer (<https://rrobsolver.com/commissioner-block-calls-out-jew-hating-elected-officials/>).

Sandoval County Commission Website

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