

LWVCNM Observer's Report

Sandoval County Commission regular meeting

December 13, 2023

Mary Templeton, observer (by video recording)

Present: David Heil (Chair), Michael Meek (Vice Chair, video), Joshua Jones, Jay Block (Katherine Bruch had joined by zoom, but feedback with the new AV system required termination of the zoom session.)

Description of Issues Relevant to the League

High-Speed Internet

The commission approved a motion for Sandoval County to act as fiscal agent on behalf of Jemez Mountains Electric Cooperative, Inc. for the State of New Mexico and Federal Broadband Grant funds received.

As background, LWVNM supports affordable universal high-speed Internet access for New Mexico.

Additional Comments

Public Comment

Eight of sixteen speakers commented on elections that took place across the state in multiple counties during multiple years. One speaker expressed that post-election audit of Sandoval County voting equipment went well. Three speakers advocated for better employee conditions at the County animal shelter and requested an adoption fee waiver for returning veterans who wish to adopt an animal.

One additional reference that came up during comments had to do with a September 13, 2023 Commission vote on a resolution supporting a set of referendums against six state bills passed during the 2023 legislative session. One commissioner refused to vote on the resolution because she did not support the role of the County to weigh in on the matter, and because it expressed support for additional language contrary to the views of most of her constituents. The attendee rallying support for the referendums at past meetings filed a petition for a recall hearing for the commissioner on November 22 with the Thirteenth Judicial District Court (<https://rrobserver.com/recall-petition-filed-against-commissioner-bruch/>). The judge found no probable cause to let the petition progress (<https://rrobserver.com/judge-finds-no-probable-cause-to-let-bruch-recall-petition-to-continue/>).

As background, a resolution is a discretionary official statement of support for a position or action.

Commissioners Discussion

One commissioner wished a Merry Christmas “to all the illegals coming in” and asserted that a record number of immigrants of unknown identity and origin had arrived (<https://sandovalcountynm.new.swagit.com/videos/291364> 2:22:30). He then claimed that the Veterans Administration was instructed to provide healthcare for immigrants, prioritizing this over healthcare for veterans.

Sandoval County Commission Website

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