

LWVCNM Observer's Report

Sandoval County Commission regular meeting

May 8, 2024

Mary Templeton, observer

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

Description of Issues Relevant to the League

Healthcare

The University of New Mexico Hospital (UNMH) completed acquisition of the Sandoval Regional Medical Center (SRMC) at the end of 2023, which became a campus of UNMH in January 2024. UNMH received one-time FEMA funds which they were able to apply to SRMC so that it is currently operating in the black. UNMH committed to a employee retention incentive and wage increase for employees, although labor negotiations are ongoing. Mill levy funding currently goes toward behavioral health services for inmates at the Sandoval County Detention Center (10%), a level 3 trauma center at SRMC (76%) and a behavioral health outpatient program (13%).

As background: LWVCNM supports comprehensive health care, including mental health care, among other services. It believes society has a responsibility to provide comprehensive health care for the indigent and supports mill levies as a means of funding such health care. In addition, LWVNM expects state and local governments to support an adequately funded mental health care system that provides comprehensive services to the acutely, chronically, and seriously mentally ill of all ages.

Additional Comments

Public Comment

Four of nine speakers commented on elections, election machines and voter id. One speaker from the union that represents nurses and technicians at SRMC pointed out that SRMC has a quality rating of only 1.

Commissioner Discussion

The Chair addressed the reasons why Sandoval County does not require voter ids, as well as state practice for certifying election machines.

Sandoval County Commission Website

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