

Bernalillo County Commission Observer Report
May 2026
Karen Wentworth – Observer

Bernalillo County Deals with Wide Variety of Issues

Barbara Baca, District 1; Frank Baca, District 2; Adriann Barboa, District 3; Walt Benson, District 4; Eric Olivas, District 5

All commissioners were present for the three meetings covered in this report.

University of New Mexico Hospital, which is funded through property taxes in the county reports quarterly to the commission. Highlights for this quarter include

- 700,000 visits over the past 8 months
- Total uncompensated (charity) care is \$79,479,814 over the past 8 months
- Average emergency room wait time – more than 7 hours

UNMH is the only Level 1 Trauma Center in the state. It is a publicly funded hospital, and as such must accept the most complex medical problems from all corners of the state. That also means Bernalillo County taxpayers shoulder a heavy financial burden to fund the hospital. Last fiscal year, UNMH received more than \$224 million dollars from the special mill levy on property.

Our position: LWVCNM 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.

County commissioners are also strongly supportive of renewable energy, but the sun doesn't always shine and the wind doesn't always blow. In April, commissioners approved a lease of county owned property to Oso Negro LLC for a large battery storage facility in the Ladera Business Park on Albuquerque's west side. They agreed to issue an Industrial Revenue Bond to help finance construction and buy equipment for the project of up to \$175 million. IRB's do not come from county funds.

Our position: Neither the state or the Central New Mexico chapter has a position that directly addresses energy policy.

The Commission has approved a tax exemption of \$10,130,000 for the Film Yards LLC. The exemption will allow the company to build a welcome center and community training facility as well as digital production stages to assist with movie production. The purpose is to bring new life to the San Jose neighborhood. It will house local companies who can provide services to the film industry. This is a studio complex on 19 acres near I-25 and the Sunport.

Our position: There is no relevant Central New Mexico League policy. LWVNM position on economic development supports: economic growth more than population growth, good jobs with good wages, quality of life, consistency with protection of the environment and national

resources, particularly water; and capitalizing on what is already here, such as existing businesses, technologies and people.