



# UPDATE

Newsletter of the League of Women Voters of Los Alamos

**League of Women Voters of Los Alamos**

**P. O. Box 158, Los Alamos, NM 87544**

[www.lwvlosalamos.org](http://www.lwvlosalamos.org)

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## **Calendar**

- January 8 Legislative Preview, Fuller Lodge, 7 p.m. (6:30 for refreshments)
- January 21 Lunch with a Leader, Ryn Herrmann, Mesa Public Library, 11:45 a.m.
- January 28 Board Meeting, Mesa Public Library, noon
- February 5 LWVNM Legislative Reception, Rio Chama, 414 Old Santa Fe Trail, SF, 5:30 p.m.
- February 6 LWVNM League Day: CELEBRATION OF WOMEN'S RIGHT TO VOTE

## **COME CELEBRATE WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE AT THE STATE LEGISLATURE ON FEBRUARY 6!**

See article on page 3.

## ***Legislative Preview on January 8***

The LWV-AAUW Legislative Preview will be held in Fuller Lodge on Wednesday, January 8, from 7:00 to 9:00 p.m. Come at 6:30 for refreshments and to socialize. Our legislators—Representative Christine Chandler, Senator Richard Martinez, and Senator Roberto Gonzales (recently appointed by Governor Lujan Grisham to replace Carlos Cisneros)—will be speaking. In addition, Amber Wallin, Deputy Director of Voices for Children, will discuss tax reform and

funding. All of the speakers will answer questions from the audience.

The 2020 New Mexico Legislative Session will begin in Santa Fe on January 21 and continue for 30 days, ending on February 20. Since it is a short session with legislation limited to budget matters, issues receiving attention from the governor, bills that were vetoed, memorials, and resolutions, less action is expected than in the 2019 session. However, crucial matters will be addressed.

*Barbara Calef*

## ***Lunch with a Leader: Ryn Herrmann***

On January 21, Ryn Herrmann, director of the Los Alamos Chamber of Commerce, will be the speaker for Lunch with a Leader at Mesa Library. The Chamber of Commerce was started in 1963 and currently has over 300 members. Herrmann has been in the position of director for two years, having served previously as the communications director of the Los Alamos Commerce and Development Corporation (LACDC) as well as the creative district curator.

Herrmann is originally from Spokane, Washington, and has an undergraduate degree in Marketing from Gonzaga University. She and her husband have lived in Los Alamos for more than 20 years and have three children.

*Karyl Ann Armbruster*

## ***LWVNM Legislative Priorities for 2020***

Los Alamos League members gathered at Becky Shankland's home on December 16 to learn about the state League's priorities for the 2020 legislative session from LWVNM Action Chair Dick Mason. He began by reviewing the 2019 session, when many of the bills we had advocated for were passed, including the enabling legislation for the State Ethics Commission, expansion of the period for voter registration, and an increase in funding for public education. The bills we supported that did not pass included decriminalization of abortion; accessing the permanent fund for early childhood programs; and the solar development tax credit.

For the upcoming session, our priorities include tax reform and funding to make our tax system fairer and to diversify the revenue streams that finance our government. House Bill 6, which

would have made the tax system more progressive, was gutted by the Senate Finance Committee. We expect that the House will attempt to restore the parts of that bill; we need to advocate for the Senate to support the proposed changes. In addition, we need to assure that any other changes to the tax code make the system more progressive. However, Mason warned that little tax reform is expected to pass this session.

We will once again support the new solar market development tax credit, which passed in the Senate in 2019 but died on the House floor. We will support efforts to provide continued funding for early childhood education either as a new permanent fund or as an extension of the existing education fund. (If the Early Childhood Permanent Fund is passed, there will be no withdrawals until the 4<sup>th</sup> year. The legislation would allocate \$300 million each year to build it up.) Of course, we would support decriminalization of abortion, but it is unlikely to be included in the governor's message because it would again fail in the Senate.

The League's principal focus during the next session will be on reforming the redistricting process in New Mexico. We want to make the process fairer and more transparent. Mason noted that the Supreme Court decision to leave redistricting to the states has been energizing; many groups have joined the effort. He commented that the problem in New Mexico is more about incumbency protection than partisan politics.

House Speaker Brian Egolf has agreed to support the creation of a redistricting task force composed of legislators, members of the public, representatives from the Office of the Secretary of State and the administration. A task force would be able to discuss all of the issues of concern.

*Barbara Calef*

## **Come Celebrate LWV's 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary and Women's Vote Centennial at the NM Capitol!**

On Thursday, February 6, 2020, we'll be celebrating both the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the League of Women Voters and New Mexico's ratification of the 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment to the Constitution, acknowledging women's right to vote. League members Senator Nancy Rodriguez of Santa Fe and Rep. Joanne Ferrary of Las Cruces are sponsoring legislative memorials recognizing the League's history and accomplishments in their respective chambers that morning. We will have 12 display tables for our Leagues and our partners in the West Hall starting at 8 am and then break around 12:30 pm for some fun, speakers, and refreshments. LWVNM President Hannah Burling will MC the event and introduce LWVUS Executive Director Virginia Kase who is coming to Santa Fe from Washington, D.C., for this momentous occasion. Governor Lujan Grisham will deliver proclamations about the dual celebration, and some legislators will also speak. In addition to comments from League leaders, representatives from our partner organizations will make brief comments about our shared goals related to "Empowering voters. Strengthening democracy."

*Note: February 14, 2020, is the League's actual 100th anniversary, but too many activities are scheduled at NM Legislature on that day. The short session ends on February 21, the centennial of Governor Larrazolo's document indicating New Mexico's approval of the ratification of the 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment. February 6 was selected in order to have the time before the frenzy of the final days of law-making and biennial budget negotiations. On Valentine's Day, Leagues across the country will be celebrating the significance of our birthday with a nationwide Day of Action, called "Women Power the Vote." Stay tuned for ways we can uplift our collective power to uplift our democratic values and principles.*

*Meredith Machen*

Please use your creativity to help us recognize this important democratic milestone with flair. Consider impersonating a real or imagined suffragist or woman leader. Come in suffrage garb or wear white, purple, or yellow and

encourage others to do the same. Wear a placard with the name of the person you are impersonating along with a quotation or brief historical tidbit. \*

For more ideas or information, contact Meredith Machen, History Committee Chair/ Centennial Organizer at [projects@lwvnm.org](mailto:projects@lwvnm.org), 505-577-6337. Thanks for making this occasion memorable, meaningful, and fun.

\*For information and inspiration, see the *Online Biographical Dictionary of the Woman Suffrage Movement in the United States*:

<https://documents.alexanderstreet.com/VOTESforWOMEN> Search on name or state.

*Meredith Machen*

## **Voter Services Update**

At the December 3 meeting the LWVLA Board decided to commit to compiling a voter guide annually in response to frequent requests prior to the November 2019 local election. Because there are so many candidates for the primary this year, we will try to produce a voter guide this spring as well. However, this increased effort will require

many volunteers to help share the burden. Lynn Jones, our director of voter services, will write up a list of the tasks involved and we hope to receive many offers of assistance from our League members.

## **Observer Corps Reports**

### **County Council**

**November 12**

The County Council chose Kristina Ortiz from a slate of four candidates to replace deceased Senator Cisneros. Her name was forwarded to Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham. Three other counties also submitted recommendations to the governor. Two of the four counties chose Kristina Ortiz (Santa Fe and Los Alamos), and two chose Roberto Gonzales (Rio Arriba and Taos).

The Council approved \$100K to upgrade the existing BMX track on North Mesa. The upgrades will make it a BMX sanctioned track so that formal meets can be held in Los Alamos.

Council chose not to spend \$100K of the original \$500K allocated to establish a mountain bike flow trail on Pajarito Mountain. The \$100K would have been used to pursue a bronze-level ride center status for Los Alamos. Several councilors felt that the process for allocating CIP funds was being bypassed. The councilors instead approved a motion to recommend the money be requested at budget time.

Council approved the termination of Community Services Department Director Brian Brogan. This was mainly a formality because the Los Alamos County Charter requires the Council to approve such a decision by the County Manager.



*Lynn Jones (second from right) working at the polls.*

Councilor David Izraelevitz commented that the charter should be changed; the Council should not need to approve such an action. He felt that the County Manager should be able to fire an “at will” employee if he/she feels it is appropriate.

*Lynn Jones*

**November 26**

The Council approved increases in the potable/non-potable water rates and bulk delivery rates of 5% through September 30, 2020, followed by an increase of 4.25% from that date until September 30, 2021, and thereafter an increase of 4% for the third year. The Council further approved increases of 6%, 3%, and 2% over the same three-year timeframe for the wastewater flat rate charge. The justification for the increased rates for both water and wastewater was the need to replace/improve the aging infrastructure associated with both services over a 20-year period.

Well, pipe, and pump replacements are planned for water supply. The county has 24 miles of line older than 1960 that will be replaced. Funding is also needed for the new White Rock wastewater



treatment plant and to replace 11 of 27 lift stations.

While it is hoped that the increases will cover all of the needed updates, there may be additional costs due to problems with some county wells. During public comment, fifteen-year county resident, Andrew Phelps, noted gross underinvestment in the County's utilities.

Updated library policies were approved, including one that would alter the manner in which the League reserves the library meeting room(s) for its meetings. Room reservations will be available on a three- or six-month basis rather than annually as in the past to avoid giving preference to any group or organization.

Other matters discussed were:

- the recommendations of the Animal Shelter Advisory Committee that supervision of the Animal Shelter be transferred from the Police Department to the Community Development Department in order to create a more animal-centric facility. The proposed change will require the hiring of additional personnel;
- a motion to address the vagueness of the section of Chapter 18 regarding the Community Development Advisory Board and its implementation. The motion provided for the hiring of a consultant to propose language in the code consistent with that used by other municipalities;
- a change in the county development code in the Wilderness-2 zoning to permit a tap room at Pajarito Mountain.

Among the liaison reports, Councilor Sheehey pointed out that because we have an interest in the San Juan Generating Station, litigation and potential legislation amending the Energy

Transition Act could affect Los Alamos if that generating station is not closed.

*Addie Jacobson*

### **December 3**

The December 3 Council meeting had multiple detailed presentations. The first presentation was a survey of lands available for new housing. With the 1000 to 1400 new hires per year for the next five years, LANL wants Los Alamos to build 3200 new housing units, including apartments, townhomes, and single- family homes.

The County hired a consultant, Sites Southwest, LLC, to develop a housing-market needs-analysis with a summary of all undeveloped/ underdeveloped public and private land as well as long-vacant homes and businesses. The consultant concluded that, because the available land is limited, all public lands—County, public schools, DOE—need to be considered, including the County-owned parks and golf course. The report is not necessarily what's on the table, but what's out there. The County reiterated that this survey represents possibilities, not decisions.

Council concerns included:

- How to have a public discussion of highest and best use of public lands,
- Building up rather than out,
- Finding all available unused land, focusing on unused commercial space (e.g., the abandoned business area in White Rock),
- Updating the development plan,
- Putting energy into high density,
- Remembering to provide more choice for housing, and
- Ensuring the public has input on the final plan.

For the complete report, please see: <http://losalamos.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=4270241&GUID=CDBF3A5E-857E-4765-A2A3-95344B57F2C7&Options=&Search=>

**The Splash Pad Water Issue:** The only action item on the agenda was whether to use recirculated (non-potable) or fresh water in the new White Rock splash pad. After much discussion, the Council voted to build a flow-through system that can be repurposed for non-potable water later if the technology improves.

**Trash, Recycling, Food Waste, and County Composting:** Angelica Gurule presented a comprehensive overview requiring no action. A few highlights are:

- Contamination has been reduced since the County moved the White Rock recycling to the White Rock Overlook Convenience Center.
- The reduction in use of paper newspapers has significantly reduced paper waste.
- LANL no longer separates cardboard even though clean, corrugated cardboard is the County's most valuable recyclable commodity. This non-separation by the biggest player in town is a financial loss.
- Electronic recycling is the most expensive: it costs \$20 to recycle a television, \$9 for a monitor. China is only accepting high quality, practically perfect materials, and few other places are accepting electronic waste. This significantly increases the costs of processing, but it offers a potentially enormous industry for America.
- The reason dumping/recycling of hazardous household waste is available only a few hours a week at the Transfer Station is because people dump "really bad hazardous waste if the recycle point is unattended." Refrigerants are among the worst.

- The biggest opportunity for waste reduction is food waste.

For the complete report, please see: <http://losalamos.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=4266520&GUID=D02C4226-8EA1-4D15-BFA3-82BEA58AC782&Options=&Search=>

### **Report in Response to the Plastics Petition:**

Councilor Sheehey consulted the County attorney and learned that the County could ban single-use plastic shopping bags, but to tax bags would require a vote. The LAHS Eco-Club told him that they were willing to go door-to-door to educate people about a referendum to get out the yes vote. The Eco-Club proposes a ten-cent fee on bags. The Smiths Manager, Isaac Chavez, who has worked at Smiths in Santa Fe, informed the councilor that this ban and the fee-for-bags hasn't been a big problem for the bottom-line of stores there. Kroger stores are committed to eliminating these bags with the 2025 goal of zero waste.

Sheehey also remarked on the need for a food-composting program to help restaurants save some of the money they spend on disposing of food waste.

The Council proposed that the subcommittee come back with specific recommendations for action.

*Jody Benson*

### **December 17**

Items of interest to League members:

- Most public comment was focused on the lack of obstetrical/gynecological care at Los Alamos Medical Center. (10 speakers)
- Julia Ying, a Volunteer Climate Reality leader from the Climate Reality Project,

informed the Council of two coalitions--the County Climate Coalition and the Coalition of Sustainable Communities of NM--which the County could join.

- Prashant Jain and Cortni Nuklos spoke of issues with the Community Development Department regarding their attempt to open the business UnQuarked and the necessity to file requests under the Inspection of Public Records Act to obtain communications of the Community Development Department and third parties about the business.

**Trails:** There was a presentation by Eric Peterson, Open Space Specialist, concerning the Trails System Update and the various plans involving the trails and open space in the county. Phase 3 of the Canyon Rim Trail is from Knecht Street to 20th Street. The location of the trail apparently has not been finalized. From 20th Street west, the trail would be very costly because of the terrain and the necessity to obtain easements from private owners along the rim. (I got the impression that this section of the trail probably will not be built.)

#### **Other trail items:**

- The underpass under NM502 to allow users to access the Canyon Rim Trail from the Entrada businesses is funded and construction will be undertaken in 2020.
- The County is seeking a silver or bronze Ride Center designation from the International Mountain Bike Association for our trails. Council has budgeted \$500,000 for a flow trail; \$50,000 has been allocated.
- The Urban Trail from Trinity & 20th Street to the Aquatic Center is funded in the 2020-2022 budget years.
- A Trails Working Group meets once a month; participants include LANL, Bandelier, LA County, and others.

- There is an Equine and Livestock sub-committee involved with the trails.
- LANL in spring 2020 will be collaborating with the County on maintenance of some trails.
- N3B has adopted the School Canyon Trail to maintain.

**Community Development:** The Council was presented with a draft RFP to address preparation of a Downtown Master Plan and updating of Chapter 16 of the County Code. The winning consulting firm will be paid \$150,000 upon achieving the “deliverables” of Phase I of the project, and an additional \$150,000 upon achieving the “deliverables” of Phase II of the project. An additional RFP to have a consultant address Chapter 18 of the County Code would pay \$50,000.

During public comment Aaron Walker, Chair of the Community Development Advisory Board, requested more collaboration with the CDAB by the consultant prior to reporting to Council than is required by the draft RFP.

Paraphrasing Community Development Director Paul Andrus and Ryan Foster, Principal Planner, the 2016 Comprehensive Plan was a policy document with ideals and is not sufficient to guide staff and developers. The Downtown Master Plan was never adopted by Council. It contains a number of high-level concepts that, in the experience of the Community Development Department, won't be realized. There is no downtown vision for White Rock or the Hill. Chapter 16 of the County Code is not adequate to realize the goals of the Comprehensive Plan. Hiring consultants will free county staff to perform day to day services.

**Carbon-Free Power Project:** Public Utilities has come back to Council for additional funding

in the amount of \$52,500, with a 20% contingency of \$10,500.00, for continued participation in the Carbon-Free Power Project involving a nuclear energy project which is still in the planning stages and for which the county has not made a final commitment to participate.

**Legislative Priorities:** Items that are supported in the County Legislative Agenda and priorities for the 2020 NM legislative session:

- Legislation that provides sufficient funding for New Mexico public schools.
- Restoration of full-service Public Health Offices throughout the state, including in Los Alamos.
- Full and/or increased funding for projects to reduce risk of wildfire as authorized under the Forest and Watershed Restoration Act.
- Legislation supporting Los Alamos County's application for capital outlay funding to develop sufficient community recreation space.
- 2020 Census general funding request.
- Legislative priorities of NMAC (now New Mexico Counties) and the New Mexico Municipal League.

### **Councilor Reports**

- Chair Scott has a meeting scheduled on 12/19/19 with the CEO of LAMC concerning obstetrical/gynecological care in the community.
- A request for the transfer of 3,000 acres southwest of White Rock from DOE for housing, retail, industrial, recreation has been submitted to the DOE by the County.
- A plan for "workforce" housing on Los Alamos Public Schools property on North Mesa adjacent to the Middle School is being discussed/finalized.

*Addie Jacobson*

## **Board of Public Utilities**

A special meeting for the Board of Public Utilities was scheduled for December 6 in Council Chambers. Members of the Board voted to authorize \$63,000 to continue participation in the Carbon Free Power Project (CFPP) through March 2020. The Los Alamos County Council subsequently authorized the payment at their December 17 meeting. The CFPP is a next-generation nuclear power plant that will utilize small modular reactor technology. It is to be constructed at the Idaho National Laboratory (INL) and is expected to be operational by 2027. Los Alamos County is participating in this project along with 35 other members of the Utah Associated Municipal Power Systems (UAMPS).

The monthly scheduled Board of Public Utilities meeting was held on December 18. DPU staff recommended changing General Rule GR13.05 as it relates to disconnection of services for non-payment. The change allows the DPU during colder winter months to disconnect water services, rather than electric services for non-payment. This will allow customers to maintain heat in their homes. The BPU members approved the rule change.

Also at the December 18<sup>th</sup> meeting, board members recommended an ordinance and a resolution to remove the requirement for the annual five percent profit transfer from DPU to the County's general fund. Members also recommended a resolution to increase the franchise fee that DPU pays to the County from two to three percent. The Council will consider this ordinance and the two resolutions at the January 7, 2020, Council meeting.

*Julie Williams-Hill*



## ***Zero Waste Guidelines Now Online***

The Environmental Services Division of Los Alamos County provides a very complete table showing residents how to dispose of unwanted items at: [https://www.losalamosnm.us/government/departments/public\\_works/environmental\\_services\\_division/how\\_do\\_i\\_dispose\\_of\\_my](https://www.losalamosnm.us/government/departments/public_works/environmental_services_division/how_do_i_dispose_of_my)

## ***Complete Count Committee Established for 2020 Census***

The Los Alamos Complete Count Committee was appointed by the County Council on October 29. They met first on November 6 to discuss the upcoming 2020 census and how to ensure that everyone in Los Alamos County is counted. A census to be taken every ten years is mandated by our Constitution. We are to count everyone living in the United States; no other restrictions or parameters are defined. Approximately \$675 billion is distributed to the states based on the numbers reported. The numbers are used in many ways, not the least being for allocating congressional representatives and redistricting.

April 1, 2020, is Census Day, when the reporting will begin. Anyone living in a house, apartment, trailer, assisted living, or nursing home on April 1 should be counted. This includes infants, live-in foreign exchange students, au-pairs, people living with you temporarily, etc. No residency, citizenship, or language requirements exist.

Postcards inviting people to report online will start to be mailed in mid-March. There is an option to call in your information; eleven languages are offered. If no response is received by the Census by mid-May, paper census forms will be mailed to the addresses. All data is to be

collected by July 2020. The Census must report its findings to Congress by December 2020.

We spent much of the meeting discussing how to reach populations which are historically underreported, such as seniors, non-English speakers, single parent households, renters, et al. We will be contacting agencies/individuals who are involved with these populations to encourage participation. If New Mexico is undercounted by only one percent, we could lose \$780 million. Each person represents \$3700-\$3800 to the state.

Paige Best (co-chair of the NM Census effort) gave us this URL for all information about the census: [Icountnm.gov](http://Icountnm.gov).

Most of the second meeting, on December 11, was devoted to training by the state representative, who provided an overview and details of the census timeline, important facts about what undercounted groups are affected by not reporting their numbers and what kinds of media will be involved.

The pueblos and the Navajo Nation are already on board and willing to get their members counted. Groups like renters, single-parent families, older Americans and non-English speakers need to be contacted and educated about how important their input is. In New Mexico, the largest language needs are English and Spanish. The census also provides twelve non-English languages online and 59 languages in an online video.

There are only nine questions on the form (regardless of format), but they must be answered by each member in the household (or a representative). So, a one-person household may be able to answer the questions in 10-15 minutes, but a multi-person household would take longer.

Media in LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram, as well as #2020Census will give information to the public. A site called Response Outreach Area Mapper (ROAM) will track response data after March 12, 2020.

All members of the League of Women Voters should be talking to their various groups to encourage full participation. People who are afraid to participate due to fear that their individual information will be shared should know that individual information is not retained by the Census Bureau. Whereas most banks utilize 12 layers of security to protect your data, the Census Bureau has 16 layers!

*Ann LePage*

## ***November Lunch with a Leader: Liz Martineau and Leslie Linke***

Liz Martineau, Executive Director of the LA Historical Society (LAHS), explained that her job is to preserve our history. “We’re your museum, we are here to tell your stories,” she said. The museum is located in the Historic District, which stretches from Ashley Pond to Oppenheimer House and is visited by 30,000 people a year.

The LAHS collection includes 10,000 objects and 40,000 documents and pictures. They are housed in Archives in the Municipal Building. Half of the LAHS staff works at the Archives, organizing the materials. Inundated with papers and objects, they are developing procedures for collecting and building an education collection consisting of multiples of materials, objects that the public can touch and see to “feel the history.”

LAHS also owns the Hans Bethe House; the Oppenheimer House is in a trust for them. They receive about 25% of their funding from the

County, 25% from sales, and the rest from donations. They are under contract with the County to manage the museum and the collection.

Martineau said that community collaboration is important to her, so she is partnering with many groups to tell their stories. The stories will be displayed on panels and translated into foreign languages by English language learners, helping to build a stronger community. She is also trying to engage younger audiences, developing a teen docent program and planting a victory garden to interest small children. She is planning a fall lecture series with all women speakers in honor of the centennial of the 19<sup>th</sup> amendment. She also intends to create an exhibit to commemorate the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Cerro Grande Fire with a message about our resiliency in the face of adversity.

In response to a question about exhibits that had been removed from the museum, Martineau said the archives are not searchable; LAHS needs an online database. The current computer system is outdated.

Leslie Linke is the chair of the Los Alamos Historic Preservation Advisory Board (HPB). As the name implies, the board is advisory to the County Council. Linke said that while LAHS tells stories, the HPB focuses on buildings. The two groups have different missions, but they collaborate. For instance, when the HPB made recommendations to the Council for the Fuller Lodge Implementation Plan, they prioritized suggestions by the LAHS. One project is to furnish a room in the Lodge to look like a hotel room from the 40s.

Another project is the Women’s Army Corps (WAC) dormitory, which currently serves as the Christian Science Church, but was recently purchased by the County. LAHS is doing

research into the history. The structure, built during the Manhattan Project, needs to be brought up to code. No decision has been made regarding its ultimate use.

Linke said that the HPB would like to save the Boy Scout Building on Canyon Road, which was built in 1947. The lot has been sold, but the structure could be moved to the west side of Ashley Pond and serve as a visitor center. It's beautiful inside, she said. She noted that as a Certified Local Government, the county can apply for grants to maintain historic properties.

*Barbara Calef*

## ***December Lunch with a Leader: State Representative Christine Chandler***

Christine Chandler spoke to a full house on December 10. She began by describing how different the concerns are in the rural parts of her district. Whereas the issues for Los Alamos revolve around the Lab and diversifying the economy, in the rural areas her constituents are more concerned with infrastructure and family problems.

Discussing the upcoming session, Chandler said she is learning how to “get on the call.” She would like the governor to support the Family Medical Leave Bill that she introduced in the last session. “It will happen eventually,” she said. Chandler went on to say that the list of messages from

the governor will be limited this time because the administration is still working to implement the bills that were passed in 2019. In many government agencies, there is a 20-30% vacancy rate!

Chandler is also sponsoring a bill to require disclosure of information about total cost, average debt, and placement rate by post-secondary schools. The legislation would require the information to be posted on the institutions’ websites. Also, she is working with Sen. Rue on a bill to increase transparency in the government by requiring information disclosure for state legal settlements.

The governor usually issues messages after the session begins (January 21 in 2020). Chandler said that the Early Childhood Trust Fund will be on the call. Lujan Grisham will also support the NM Opportunity Scholarship, higher education, and community solar. Cannabis is likely to be on the call as well.



*Representative Christine Chandler. Image courtesy of the NM House of Representatives.*

The latest revenue projections were announced on December 9. “You would think we would be dancing on the tables, but we’re not,” Chandler said. The latest projection is an \$800 million surplus, down from \$1 billion in August. “I think it’s going to be a tough session – lots of people vying for the money.” Chandler supports investing in funds for the reserves and in infrastructure.

Chandler is committed to tax reform. She supports more progressive tax rates, but is skeptical that they will be improved during the next session. The recent increase

will affect 3% of New Mexicans, raising \$40 million. She also wants to re-visit credits and exemptions. (The most costly exemption is the food tax!)

Chandler concluded that, after a year as a legislator, what she finds most surprising is the variety and amount of material to absorb. She is learning whom she can trust to provide good information.

*Barbara Calef*



*Vicky the Voter takes time off after the election*

*Photo by Becky Shankland*

## **LWVLA Board of Directors 2019-2020**

### Officers:

- Co-presidents: Barbara Calef and Rebecca Shankland
- 1st Vice-President: Ellen Mills
- 2nd Vice-President: Leslie Wallstrom
- Treasurer: Kathleen Taylor
- Secretary: Rebecca Chaiken

### Directors:

- Reservations: Amy Birnbaum
- Lunch with a Leader: Karyl Ann Armbruster
- Voter Services: Lynn Jones
- Board of Public Utilities Observer: Julie Williams-Hill
- Publicity: Jody Benson
- Director at Large: Akkana Peck
- Fundraising: Rosmarie Frederickson

### Off-board Directors:

- Arrangements: Wendy Swanson
- Membership: Rebecca Shankland
- Webmaster: Julie Williams-Hill
- County Council Observers: LWVLA Board
- Newsletter Editor: JoAnn Lysne
- Nominating Committee Chair: Ellen Mills
- 2nd Nominating Committee Member: *not filled*

If you would like to join the League, fill out and submit the membership form on page 13.



## LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF LOS ALAMOS MEMBERSHIP FORM

Mail to: LWV Los Alamos  
P.O. Box 158  
Los Alamos, NM 87544

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Phone(s): \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Check here to receive our local newsletter Update as an electronic file, saving us postage

\_\_\_\_\_ OR Check here if you prefer the newsletter mailed in hard copy.

\_\_\_\_\_ Check here to receive occasional friendly reminders of upcoming events by e-mail.

**Membership Categories: all checks for memberships and contributions should be payable to LWV-Los Alamos and all are now tax-deductible. Let us know if you'd like a tax-deductible statement.**

\_\_\_\_\_ Single membership: \$45

\_\_\_\_\_ Household membership (two+ people at the same address): \$65

\_\_\_\_\_ Single Sustaining membership: \$75

\_\_\_\_\_ Household Sustaining membership (two+ people at the same address): \$95

\_\_\_\_\_ Student membership: \$0 (must be 16 or over)

\_\_\_\_\_ Contribution to support League work: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

### **Interests and Ways to Help the League** (check as many as apply)

#### Topics of Interest

- \_\_\_\_\_ Affordable Housing
- \_\_\_\_\_ Local Government
- \_\_\_\_\_ Education
- \_\_\_\_\_ Elections, Voting Rights
- \_\_\_\_\_ Water Issues
- \_\_\_\_\_ Land Use
- \_\_\_\_\_ Health Care
- \_\_\_\_\_ Money in Politics
- \_\_\_\_\_ Sustainability
- \_\_\_\_\_ Living Wage
- \_\_\_\_\_ Public Transportation
- \_\_\_\_\_ Environment
- \_\_\_\_\_ Other topics (please suggest):  
\_\_\_\_\_

#### Ways to Help with League Activities

- \_\_\_\_\_ Set up Refreshments at Forums
- \_\_\_\_\_ Observer Corps (County Council, DPU, etc.)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Nominating Committee
- \_\_\_\_\_ Voter Guides Committee
- \_\_\_\_\_ Voter Registration
- \_\_\_\_\_ Publicity
- \_\_\_\_\_ Website, Social Media
- \_\_\_\_\_ Newsletter
- \_\_\_\_\_ Membership
- \_\_\_\_\_ Fund-raising
- \_\_\_\_\_ Budget Committee for LWV
- \_\_\_\_\_ Lunch with a Leader (assistance)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Fund-raising Committee for LWV
- \_\_\_\_\_ Participate in board meetings or join board



***The League of Women Voters, a nonpartisan political organization, encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy***

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