



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

Volume 73, Number 11
March 2021

Co-Presidents: Barbara Calef [bfcalf\(AT\)gmail\(DOT\)com](mailto:bfcalf@gmail.com) and
Rebecca Shankland [rebecca.shankland\(AT\)gmail\(DOT\)com](mailto:rebecca.shankland(AT)gmail(DOT)com)
Newsletter: JoAnn Lysne [j.lysne\(AT\)runbox\(DOT\)com](mailto:j.lysne(AT)runbox(DOT)com)

Calendar

| | |
|----------|---|
| March 18 | Lunch with a Leader, Richard Skolnik, Nick Boukas, Zoom, 12 noon |
| March 20 | Legislative Session ends |
| March 25 | Board Meeting, Zoom, noon |
| April 15 | Annual Meeting: Lunch with a Leader, Rep. Christine Chandler; LWVLA annual business meeting, Zoom, noon-2:30 p.m. |
| April 22 | Board Meeting, Zoom, noon |

CALL TO ANNUAL MEETING

April 15, 2021 via Zoom

(Please have this newsletter handy for the Annual Meeting.)

Lunch with a Leader: Two Expert Views of the Current Pandemic from Nick Boukas and Richard Skolnik

As the Covid-19 pandemic grinds on, our Lunch with a Leader will feature two public health experts, Nick Boukas and Richard Skolnik, with insights into this timely topic. We will meet on Thursday (the new day for this event), March 18, at 12 noon, by Zoom.

Nick Boukas, MPA, is the Northeast Regional Director for the Public Health Division at the New Mexico Department of Health. Originally from New York, he has served in leadership positions in state and local public health agencies in both Colorado and Washington states. Prior to his role with NMDOH, he served as the Director of Pandemic and Catastrophic Emergencies for a public health membership association in Washington DC. His portfolio included pandemic influenza planning, disaster management, cybersecurity, and health equity. He has co-authored papers on community resiliency, crisis management and crisis communications.

Many of you will recall Richard Skolnik from his last presentation when he discussed health efforts focused on improving equity, maternal and child health, and the control of communicable diseases. He has over 40 years of experience in international development and global health issues; he spent 25 years at the World Bank. Then he was the Vice President for International Programs and the Director of the Center for Global Health at George Washington University, where he taught undergraduate global health courses. He served as the Executive Director of the Harvard Program for AIDS and was deeply involved in the establishment of STOP TB. In addition, he worked with the Results for Development Institute (R4D), focusing on reviews of the financing of HIV. He served on the editorial advisory body for the 3rd edition of *Disease Control Priorities in the Developing World (DCP3)* and the 3rd edition of *Millions Saved*.

Karyl Ann Armbruster

Co-President's Message: Three Cheers for the League!!!

April is our Annual Meeting, where we take stock of (no, not our brokerage accounts) where we are and where we need to be.

Where we are can be seen by reading our amazing positions. They will not receive any writing awards for brilliant use of metaphor, but they are solid, direct, clear statements of public policy ideas that we have labored and debated on over the years. They are in fact a description of the model community we'd like to be. So, read them and think—is this my idea, too? Then tell your councilors what you believe.

Now for my three cheers!

***Our County Council and BPU observers!**

Not so many years ago, we realized that we weren't getting all the news we needed on topics relevant to our positions—or on items pertinent to Good Government Gurus like League members. Eventually, we decided to cover these meetings ourselves.

So, these cheers go to all of you who take turns covering County Council meetings: Lynn Jones (who originally did it all by herself), Jody Benson, Rebecca Chaiken, Leslie Wallstrom, Rosmarie Frederickson, Akkana Peck, Addie Jacobson, Ellen Mills, Julie Williams-Hill, Barbara Calef, and any from earlier that I missed. We also thank our new member Maire O'Neill, who often covers special topics for her *LA Reporter*.

Secret message about Julie Williams-Hill: how many League members know that she is our Webmaster AND our BPU reporter AND an employee of the Department of Public Utilities AND has been working on the County's effort to distribute the Covid-19 vaccine?

It's too bad the whole community doesn't get to read our superb reports from all these aspects of County government.

****Awards to the most indispensable behind-the-scenes operators: JoAnn Lysne** has set up every single one of our uncountable Zoom meetings since we were forbidden to gather in person. She knows whether we are meeting as a small group with pictures or as a Webinar where we attend anonymously with no pictures. Whatever it is, you never see her, but she's there, manipulating us like the puppets on her string. She even knows when we might be hacked. And she formats the newsletter in what seems like no time at all.

Karyl Ann Armbruster is visible when she introduces the Lunch with a Leader with humor and charm. But behind the scenes she is writing, calling, texting to get the right people at the right time.

And there's no way to count how we depend on **Barbara Calef** to keep us inspired and working sensibly. Did I really mean no way to count? Yes, I did, so I'll move on to the third cheer.

***LWVNM. Unless you read *La Palabra* carefully, you don't know the extraordinary lobbying that our volunteer Dick Mason and his committee do for the state's good government. The Action Committee includes members from all four local Leagues; they work hard deciding what issues are most important for us to lobby on each year. This year we even hired our very own advocate—a hard-working and personable Kathleen Burke—to lobby for our crucial actions on redistricting. These issues are not yet decided as we go to print. Redistricting comes before the legislature only once every ten years, but it shapes the weight of political participation from around the state. Next time you hear about how evil lobbyists are, think of her and bite your tongue.

The state League also worked hard as a group under Meredith Machen's and Eileen Van Wie's leadership to update our LWVNM education position, especially to include early childhood education and the need to support diversity. If you participated in the consensus meeting, you will know how many fundamental issues show up in how we choose to educate our kids.

So, hurrah for all the good deeds done in our name and think of all the astonishing things your membership is supporting. Write your check with passion and gratitude. And the three cheers are truly for all our members.

Becky Shankland

Annual Fund Drive Begins

Normally the LWVLA fund drive party is a social occasion, but this year the fund drive will be conducted remotely, like all of our other activities. During the week of March 8 Ellen Mills will distribute the materials to volunteers, who will annotate the fund drive letter, stuff the envelopes, attach labels and stamps and put them in the mail. We are hoping to return to the traditional fund drive party in 2022.

Welcome, New Members!

Pat Cruz writes:

I moved to Los Alamos in 1986 from New York, a liberal-minded woman. In 2008 I became more interested in politics and realized the need to be more involved. Because I worked full time and was helping raise my grandson, I was not able to get as involved as I would have liked. But, in 2018 I retired and knew that I must get involved, "Tag, you're it...democracy is not a spectator sport" (Thom Hartmann). I have had the privilege to call thru the phone banking system. I was so uplifted to talk with others about the campaign; I was not alone. Sharing positive posts, going to parades, writing post cards with/for Rebecca Chaiken and Cam Counters has brightened my days. Again, I am not alone. This is so important. I am looking forward to meeting everyone face to face soon. Until then, ZOOM we must.

Richard Skolnik is a new member whom most of you will recognize from his excellent talk on world health issues at an earlier Lunch with a Leader and from his informative letters to the editor in the *Los Alamos Daily Post*. Now you will get another chance to hear from him on Thursday, March 18, at another Lunch with a Leader focused on the current pandemic.

League Dues Are Due in April!

Reminder: Our tradition is to renew our memberships at our April Annual Meeting. Since the meeting will be held online this year, we ask you to use the enclosed envelope for your membership form (last page of this *Update*) and check. Alternatively, you can renew your membership online at: <https://my.lwv.org/new-mexico/los-alamos>.

Education Consensus Meeting

On February 22 LWVLA members met with Meredith Machen and Eileen VanWie, leaders of the LWVNM Education Study Committee, to discuss the consensus questions presented by the committee for the purpose of updating the state League's education position. We had a lively discussion as have the other three local Leagues. The LWVNM Board will review the resulting revisions to the position at their meeting on March 6.



At the education consensus meeting. Screenshot by Barbara Calef.

Observer Corps Reports

County Council

January 26

On the agenda for the January 26 Council meeting was County Emergency Manager Beverly Simpson, who reported about the vaccination rates achieved thus far in the County. The vaccines are being delivered to those in the category 1A, which includes health care workers, first responders, etc., and to those in 1B, which includes both those 75 years old or older and those with immunocompromised conditions (co-morbidities). The senior centers in Los Alamos and White Rock have held vaccination clinics and intend to hold additional ones. Simpson is working with the NM Department of Health to set up weekly inoculation clinics. Testing for COVID is now taking place at Overlook Park in White Rock every Tuesday and Thursday, from 10:00 am to 2:00 pm.

Other actions included passing several ordinances, including:

- Ordinance No. 703 – Authorized the construction of a 1-million-gallon effluent water storage tank to be built in Pueblo Canyon to irrigate the Golf Course, the North Mesa ballfields, and expand the County’s usage of effluent water. This required a \$540,000 grant and a \$360,000 loan from the NM Finance Authority.
- Ordinance No. 702 – Authorized a personal income tax rebate for eligible low-income taxpayers in Los Alamos County for tax years 2021, 2022, 2023, and 2024.

The Council also authorized a bid of \$2.9 million to construct an underpass from the north side of Entrada Drive to the south side of the Canyon

Rim Trailhead, underneath the main hill road. This followed a detailed analysis by Public Works Director Anne Laurent.

The Council discussed the charter for the newly formed Los Alamos Resiliency, Energy, and Sustainability Task Force, whose goal is to reduce the County’s greenhouse emissions to zero. After a few revisions to the charter, the Council voted on the membership of this committee. New members are: Susan Barns, Elizabeth Daly, Robert Gibson, Suzie Havemann, Kelly Leonard, Charles Keller, Roy Micholetti, and Steve Tobin. (Two of these are LWVLA members.)

A discussion ensued regarding whether a recruiting firm should be hired to help find a replacement for County Manager Harry Burgess, who is retiring in the spring. The councilors believe that the Human Resources staff is well qualified to conduct this search, but the Council voted in favor of retaining a recruiting firm to assist with the selection process.

Leslie Wallstrom

February 2

The majority of the meeting was the presentation by the city planners hired by the County to develop plan proposals. The plans were divided into proposals for White Rock and proposals for Los Alamos townsite.

The overall project goals included:

- Implementing the Comprehensive Plan and Master Downtown Plan
- Building Efficiency and Cross References into the Building Code
- Enhancing the Clarity of the Code

Significant input from the community, especially the teen age group, was received as reported by the city planners. The community is interested in green space and gathering places, particularly in White Rock. The planners also discussed the possibility of increasing the density of the town site with buildings up to four floors high and the possibility of building a parking garage.

I recommend that anyone interested in more detail regarding the proposals listen to the meeting and review the slide show that was part of the presentation. There is significant detail in the mapped-out plans that may require study and review.

Ellen Mills

February 16

Los Alamos County Emergency Manager Beverley Simpson reported on the number of vaccinations attained in different populations in Los Alamos County. Nambe Drug has been actively participating in the vaccinations. In addition, Trinity Urgent Care, Medical Associates of Northern New Mexico, High Mesa Dental Arts, and Smith's Pharmacy are expected to be participating soon. The participation of other providers does not increase the vaccine allocation for Los Alamos.

Danny Katzman, N3B contractor, reported on two cleanup projects, namely the hexavalent chromium plume and the RDX plume. The chromium plume, which originated from chromium used as a corrosion inhibitor at a LANL power plant, is in the interim stage of cleanup with wells pumping contaminated plume water up from the regional aquifer, treating the water, and returning it to the aquifer. This has pulled back the contaminated water outline that was approaching San Ildefonso Pueblo. Research for alternative ways to treat the plume do not appear viable. The current interim

treatment will likely be expanded to be the final solution to cleaning up the plume. The RDX plume from previous high explosive work at LANL is under control, is not threatening any water wells, and is not expected to be a problem going forward; and so long-term monitoring is recommended.

Steve Cummins, Deputy Utilities Manager, gave an update on the Carbon Free Power Project, mainly to bring the new councilors up to date. Anne Laurent, Public Works Director, gave a report on the current status of the proposed purchase of the CB Fox building and the Reel Deal Theater. The county is in the due diligence stage where they are examining the building structures, electrical and plumbing systems, parking availability, and possible uses of the properties. Numerous examples of possible uses were illustrated.

Lynn Jones

February 23

There were several important issues considered at this Council meeting. One was the appointment of three new members to the Transportation Board. The candidates were Georgia Strickfaden, Catherine Erwin-Renfro and Natalie Morgan. The appointment question was moved from the Consent Agenda to the regular meeting agenda. There was objection from some councilors because all three of the candidates were in favor of "road diet" ideas and the one remaining member of the board also believes that is a good way to handle the traffic, bikes, and pedestrians safely. The appointment of these nominees would make everyone on the board represent one point of view. Some of the councilors expressed the opinion that there needs to be a diversity of views. However, the board would cease to exist if there was only one member. Councilor Reagor was encouraged to recruit more members for the board who do not

share “road diet” ideas. The vote to appoint these nominees passed.

DPU Deputy Director Bob Westervelt reported about the money needed to finish the project at Otowi Well #4 and for Otowi Well # 2 Pump House. The NM Finance Authority had offered very favorable terms to borrow the money for these projects. The \$2,772,612 would be available at 1% interest. The councilors agreed that such a big project is difficult to finance from reserves and voted unanimously to agree to the Loan and Subsidy Agreement.

The Council discussed a resolution introduced by Chair Ryti and Councilor Reagor for Council to oppose House Bill 4, the Civil Rights Act. The resolution concludes by saying that, regardless of the outcome of the legislation, the Council urges the Legislature to dedicate adequate resources to:

1. behavioral health prevention and treatment in our communities, so as to provide much-needed services while addressing the root cause of many law enforcement claims against local governments; and
2. improve the operations of the New Mexico Law Enforcement Academy.

The bill would put a \$2,000,000 cap on how much each lawsuit could be awarded. That seemed to be a major concern for the Council. The motion to support the resolution passed unanimously.

Councilor Reagor’s resolution calling on the governor to stop the lockdown of businesses and schools in order to avert further damage to the social and mental health of the Los Alamos Community was considered next. The discussion centered around unequal effects of the pandemic on rich and poor populations of the County. Imposing these restrictions is also an infringement on personal freedoms and is

prohibited by the Constitution, according to the resolution. Council members agreed that additional assistance should be provided to the more disadvantaged population in this pandemic. The Council voted to support the governor and the motion failed.

Rosmarie Frederickson

Board of Public Utilities

The Board of Public Utilities met virtually on Wednesday, February 24. Utilities Manager Philo Shelton reported that the contractor for the Advanced Metering Infrastructure project will be mobilizing in March to begin attaching communication modules to water meters in White Rock. This will allow the department to read meters remotely. Upgrades for the natural gas and electric meters will follow shortly. He also reported that New Mexico was affected by the disruptions in Texas in that the price for natural gas was greatly increased. DPU customers will see an increase in the cost of gas beginning in April.

A public hearing was held to clarify language in Rule E-5 as it pertains to customers with rooftop solar. The board voted to adopt the new Rule. The department presented its proposed budget for fiscal year 2022. The FY22 expenditure budget overall as presented is \$21,530,836 higher than the FY22 projection presented last year. That is primarily due to the re-budgeting of several projects in FY22 that were not completed in FY21 due to work restrictions related to COVID. Also, some additional projects were scheduled due to the availability of very favorable financing options; and there are projected increases in costs of purchased commodities (electricity and gas). The department will return in March for the board to approve the FY22 budget. The budget will then go to the Council for consideration and adoption. Lastly, an update on the condition, reliability and

financial health of the water utility was presented to the board.

Julie Williams-Hill

February Lunch with a Leader: Jennifer Guy

Los Alamos Public Schools (LAPS) Assistant Superintendent Jennifer Guy's talk was titled, "Today's Teaching and Learning in the Los Alamos Public Schools." Much of her slide show focused on the steps the school district has taken to avoid exposing staff or students to the COVID virus, guided by the CDC and the PED. The entire staff has been tested every month. They have learned about immunology and vaccinations and been trained in COVID-safe practices. Of the school district's 650 employees, 39% had been vaccinated by February 16. The district also issues a weekly report with data about students on campus and the amount of PPE available.

Some students, those with IEP goals (individual education plans), returned to campus on August 13. Others, in grades K-8, were offered the opportunity to sign up for the Los Alamos Online Academy, which involved a commitment to full-time online education for the whole school year. It was expected that 50 students would sign up, but 392 enrolled. The program is showing great success, Guy said, even for the younger students. Some aspects of it will be retained after the pandemic. Guy noted that the students are learning a new way of interacting. The primary platform for online instruction is Google Meet. LAPS made sure that all of the students had access. Google Classroom provides presentation tools and instructional strategies. LAPS offers a stipend for teachers to complete Google certification. They have also purchased products to monitor data for how long the students are logged on and whether they are actively engaged.



Jennifer Guy speaks at the February LWL. Screenshot by Barbara Calef.

On October 19 elementary school students transitioned from in-person small groups to hybrid learning. They went to classes two days a week and the rest of the time met online. However, the hybrid model did not work for all students. Some kids have struggled, others have thrived.

On January 26 the Los Alamos School Board voted to move to "extended in-person learning" for secondary students. On Monday, February 22, teachers were to return to campus and provide orientation for 7th and 9th grade students who are new to the middle and high school. On March 1 Los Alamos High School and Los Alamos Middle School students were to move into what is being called Remote+, where they would be learning remotely from home in the morning and then would have the option of going to school for in-person services and some small group activities in cohorts in the afternoons.

In preparation for re-opening the schools to students, all seven LAPS schools have passed the required safety inspections, which were conducted by the Los Alamos Fire Department. Some of the modifications include blocking off the water fountains (water bottle filling stations are available), installing 43 new air filtration

systems for classrooms, marking off 6-foot intervals for social distancing. and assuring that the campus of each school will be secure during instructional hours, with only one point of access. In addition, dismissal plans and fire drill procedures have been revamped to maintain social distancing.

Unlike many other school districts, none of the LAPS students are missing. However, about 170 families have withdrawn their children. Enrollment is down about 210 students, but is up at the middle school.

Looking ahead, Guy said that next year every elementary school will include pre-K classes.

She said that enrollment is expected to increase, as it has done in every recent year until 2020. The current schools can accommodate the increase. The school system continues to expand; an extra 15 days of instruction will be offered for K-6. Saturday school is being offered and the summer school has grown every year.

Guy concluded that this was the year that education changed; it will never be the same again in this country and around the world.

Barbara Calef

.....

Annual Meeting

Following Lunch with a Leader on April 15, we will hold our Annual Meeting via Zoom. It will begin at 1 p.m. and end by 2:30. During the Annual Meeting we will review our positions, decide on the program for the following year, approve the budget, and elect a new board. Please mark your calendars!

Agenda

1:00 p.m. Business Meeting begins
Minutes of the 2019 Meeting (see June 2019 Update)
President's Report
Membership Report
Treasurer's Report
Bylaws Change
Adoption of Local Program (positions, plans for action)
Adoption of the FY 2021-22 Budget
Election of Officers and Directors

Please have this newsletter handy for the meeting! And mail your dues in the enclosed envelope. Dues are now completely tax-deductible.

Dues for Fiscal Year 2020-2021, which begins May 1, will be accepted at any time, but at the Annual meeting is convenient for the treasurer and the membership chair. Please fill out the membership form in this newsletter, even if you are already a member, or online at <https://my.lwv.org/new-mexico/los-alamos/contribution-form>

LWVLA Bylaws Change

League policy requires consistency in the first three articles of the bylaws of all Leagues. Therefore, LWVLA is making the following changes adopted at the 2020 LWVUS Convention.

ARTICLE III. PURPOSE AND ~~[POLICY]~~ POLICIES

Section 1. PURPOSE

The purpose for which LWV/LA is organized is to promote political responsibility through informed and active participation in government.

LWV/LA is organized and operated exclusively for charitable purposes under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, or the corresponding section of any future federal tax code. Notwithstanding any other provision of these Articles, LWV/LA shall not carry on any other activities not permitted to be carried on by a corporation exempt from Federal Income Tax under such provisions of the Internal Revenue Code. No substantial part of the activities of LWV/LA shall be attempting to influence legislation.

Section 2. ~~[POLICY]~~ POLICIES

1. LWV/LA may take action on local governmental measures and policies in the public interest in conformity with the principles of the League of Women Voters of the United States. It shall not support or oppose any political party or any candidate.
2. Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Policy. The League is fully committed to ensure compliance - in principle and in practice - with LWVUS' Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Policy.

LWV Los Alamos Positions

At the Annual Meeting members will be asked to re-adopt our local League positions.

SUSTAINABILITY (Adopted 1995; Revised 1997, 2004, 2008, 2015) The League of Women Voters of Los Alamos endorses the concept of a sustainable society as a preamble for all of its current and new positions. We define a sustainable society as one that satisfies its own needs without jeopardizing the prospects of future generations. We aspire to make our society more sustainable by preserving and respecting its interdependence with the natural world. A sustainable society protects nature. Our society should offer all individuals a clean environment including pure water, unpolluted air, and sufficient sources of renewable energy to provide for their physical needs. Our society should distribute scarce resources equitably so that conflicts over them are minimized. Every working person should be paid a living wage.

PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION (Adopted 1965; Revised 1991, 2004, 2008, 2012, 2013)

The League of Women Voters of Los Alamos believes that public transportation is an essential element of a sustainable society in so far as it conserves natural resources and decreases pollution. Public transportation is also important economically and socially as an alternative to the current norm of one

commuter per car. Public transportation can benefit all citizens including workers, students, the elderly, and persons with disabilities. Public transportation should be affordable, convenient and reliable. The County should extend the existing County system and continue to subsidize and support the expansion of the regional system.

In order to sustain clean air and healthy ways of living, an emphasis should be placed on developing infrastructure to encourage pedestrians and cyclists. Land use decisions should support this emphasis by promoting higher density mixed-use development.

ENVIRONMENT (Adopted 2012, Revised 2014, 2017)

The League of Women Voters of Los Alamos believes that our natural environment is integral to our community's unique sense of place and to our well-being and prosperity.

- We support protection of this environment, including the canyons and other open space, vistas, wildlife habitat, and dark skies.
- To improve ecosystem health and community livability, we support wherever possible “Green Infrastructure.” EPA defines this as “... an array of products, technologies, and practices that use natural systems – or engineered systems that mimic natural processes – to enhance overall environmental quality.... Green Infrastructure techniques use soils and vegetation to infiltrate, evapotranspire, and/or recycle storm water runoff.”

Further Guidelines

The LWVLA supports the implementation of the Open Space Management Plan, which develops a system of designated open space to protect scenic vistas and memorable landscapes; recreational, natural and cultural resources; and significant wildlife corridors and habitats.

- We support adoption of a Rendija Canyon master plan that reserves the transfer land for recreational uses only.
- We support adoption of a storm water management plan that employs green infrastructure strategies, such as infiltration planters, vegetated swales, tree boxes, and rain gardens.
- We support adding green spaces in the downtown with landscaped road edges, medians, parking lots, and pocket parks.
- We support limiting the use of herbicides in open space areas, as well as along roadsides where mowing and planting native grasses can be as effective.
- We support a policy of zero increase in run-off beyond the natural rate for commercial and private property.
- We support implementation of all the policies in the Protect the Environment section of the LAC Comprehensive Plan adopted by the Council in 2005.
- We support implementation of the goals in the Open Space section of the LAC Comprehensive Plan adopted by the Council in 2016.

Execution of the actions suggested in Further Guidelines will improve the quality of our air and water.

SUSTAINABLE WATER (Adopted 2009; Revised 2012, 2014, 2017)

The League of Women Voters of Los Alamos (LWVLA) believes that the goal of our county should be to use no more water than can be produced from our aquifer without depleting it. In order to achieve this goal, decisions about growth must consider water use. Even with the current population in Los Alamos, conservation is essential.

For the sake of the public welfare, the County should be guided in all decisions by the following policies:

- Encourage conservation and efficiency of use.
- Preserve riparian ecosystems and wetlands.
- Preserve public lands, water, and open space.

Further Guidelines

To reduce per capita consumption, we support:

- economic incentives,
- codification of standards for all new construction,
- encouraging conservation practices for existing homes.

We support the County's efforts to apply water efficiency standards in new construction, to reduce leaks, and to irrigate the parks with wastewater effluent. The Department of Public Utilities (DPU) should educate consumers about best irrigation practices, including how to use gray water, and should provide economic incentives to conserve. We support the inclined block rate ordinance.

Residential conservation and vigilance on the part of the DPU will not suffice to achieve sustainability. The LWVLA advocates:

- requiring growth or development to be compatible with the availability of water for the indefinite future without requiring the diversion of the San Juan-Chama water;
- careful monitoring and continuing study of the aquifer;
- increased efforts by the County to participate in and assure that regional and state plans are sustainable;
- engaging the public in the water budget process.

The LWVLA recommends that the County continue to maintain its quota of San Juan-Chama water until a decision is made to build the infrastructure needed to utilize it, and that any plans for use of the water be designed to minimize the impact on White Rock Canyon.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING (Adopted 1996; Revised 2003, 2008)

The League of Women Voters of Los Alamos supports the development and rehabilitation of affordable housing in the county. LWV Los Alamos believes that affordable housing units should be integrated into neighborhoods throughout Los Alamos County. New developments should have a mix of market-rate and affordable units.

We acknowledge that some type of subsidy by the county is required to achieve affordable prices.

Effective methods to keep these units affordable when they are resold must be in place if we are to retain a stock of affordable housing. For instance, land provided as a subsidy could be retained in a trust.

FULLER LODGE (Adopted 1992, Revised 2004)

The League of Women Voters of Los Alamos believes that Fuller Lodge should be used primarily for civic and cultural activities. Activities not open to the general public should be charged at a rate comparable to that charged by local businesses for equivalent space. Activities open to the general public should be charged at a lower rate.

The County should continue to be responsible for the maintenance, restoration, and protection of the Lodge.

MEDICALLY INDIGENT FUND (Adopted 1988; Revised 2004, 2008, 2017)

The League of Women Voters of Los Alamos supports the County ordinance establishing the Indigent Health Care Fund, which funds the county's Health Care Assistance Program through designated GRT monies. Desirable features of such an ordinance include:

- A limit for the amount of reimbursement.
- Provisions for changes in this limit because of changing medical costs or demands on the fund.
- Possible reimbursement of costs beyond hospital and ambulance services.
- Consideration of for-profit health care providers, but with non-profit facilities given first consideration.

LAND USE AND TRANSPORTATION: RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOODS

(Adopted Oct. 31, 2013)

LWVLA supports the development of residential neighborhoods that are sustainable and livable. To achieve those goals, we believe that new and redeveloped neighborhoods should be designed to minimize sprawl and impact on the natural environment. Neighborhoods should support a diverse population with inviting streets and public spaces as well as access to public transportation.

Further Guidelines:

1. Where to build (efficient use of land that minimizes sprawl)
 - Neighborhoods near the downtown should be compact.
 - New development should not consume or fragment important natural habitats or wildlife corridors; it should be avoided on steep slopes or in canyons.
 - Redevelopment of "brownfields" and infill are preferred over new development in pristine landscapes. However, existing small neighborhood parks should be maintained or enhanced to reflect the unique character of the neighborhood.
 - Neighborhoods should be situated along available public transit lines and within easy access of daily activities.
2. What to build (neighborhood pattern/design)
 - Cluster homes to make transit more viable and to create walkable neighborhoods.
 - Design streets and pathways for safe and pleasant walking/biking within neighborhood.
 - Include a range of housing types/sizes to support diverse neighborhood population; include a mix of affordable housing within each neighborhood.

- Encourage ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) designs in individual homes to accommodate all ages and abilities.
- Encourage the preservation of the positive character/architecture unique to each neighborhood.
- The developer should include quality parks, trails, and public spaces within each neighborhood; the option of allowing payment in lieu of parks provision should be restricted.

3. How to build (how to manage environmental impacts)

- Reduce storm water runoff and eliminate pollution sources.
- Emphasize energy and water efficiency of streets and buildings; plan orientation of buildings to optimize solar gain.
- Reuse older buildings to reduce energy and resource use as appropriate.
- Encourage building materials that support high indoor air quality and are sourced sustainably.
- Encourage appropriate landscaping based on native and xeric plants; create a streetscape with shade trees appropriate for our climate.
- Minimize light pollution.

EDUCATION (Adopted 2015)

The League of Women Voters of Los Alamos believes that a strong, collaborative relationship between K-12 education leaders and citizens must exist in order for the school district to successfully deliver education services meeting community standards. This belief is consistent with the League of Women Voters expectations for the relationship between citizens and all government entities.

As an elected body, the School Board should actively solicit and weigh heavily community input when making strategic planning and funding decisions. In order for citizens to provide educated and meaningful feedback, they need to be involved in the strategic planning process and have access to information about the district's direction, the issues it faces, and its financial situation.

The strategic plan describes how the School Board addresses the needs of the children, including but not limited to academic goals, class size, enrichment programs (i.e., art, music, and athletics), vocational training, special education, and counseling. The strategic plan also discusses the facilities plans, enrollment trends, current financial budget, 5-year financial forecast, community involvement plan, and public communication plan.

In order for the School Board to solicit and incorporate community input into their strategic planning and annual budgeting processes, communication mechanisms need to be created and maintained as an essential part of the board's business activities. Examples of communication mechanisms that achieve this objective are: community surveys; a formal strategic planning process that incorporates citizen input; an Open Forum-type online feedback service; Facebook and other social media; and smaller district meetings between school board members and constituents.

In order for the community to learn about and participate in strategic planning and funding decisions, the School Board needs to routinely provide relevant information to the public as a normal part of the board's business activities. That information would include: issues, options and data provided in advance of decision-making deadlines; reporting on decisions made; and access to key policy documents like budgets and the strategic plan. The LAPS website should be the board's primary communication vehicle. To be effective, it needs to have the following characteristics: easily found, accessible 24x7,

and possessing a robust search capability. Examples of other communication mechanisms that can be utilized include: broadcasting board meetings on PAC 8; sending email newsletters to subscribers; using smart phone apps to share information with community members; and using local media to communicate open issues and final decisions. The information presented should be in a format that is understandable to the typical citizen, and be timely and relevant to the issues.

DIGITAL PRIVACY (Adopted 2021)

County government should place a high priority on the privacy of citizens when selecting and using software, digital platforms, digital services, and when contracting for digital work, particularly when these platforms are used to interact with residents. These expectations also extend to those working as sub-contractors for the County.

The County should clearly identify third-party digital services and platforms at the point of use along with links to the privacy and user agreements for the software. However, just linking to a privacy agreement isn't enough; County government should make every effort to use services that don't compromise citizens' privacy.

If a digital platform is known to be intrusive, an alternative, less-intrusive method of receiving the same information or accessing the service should be provided. In this context, for example, most social media are considered to be digitally intrusive and do not qualify as alternatives.

Program Planning for 2021-2022

The annual program planning meeting was held via Zoom like all of our other meetings this year.

The digital privacy study has led to a new position for approval by League members. It has been approved by the board. The Digital Privacy Committee will continue to meet to investigate topics of interest such as identity theft. If you are interested in participating, please contact JoAnn Lysne or Akkana Peck.

The alternative to landfills study is still pending and will resume after the legislative session ends. Related issues including capturing methane in composting, alternatives to recycling, improving access to recycling information on the County website. Educating the public as well as ourselves on these issues will be part of our program for the upcoming year.

No additional studies have been proposed for LWVLA.

There is an ongoing state League study of judicial selection. There were suggestions for additional positions through concurrence to address cybersecurity and pit production. Further investigation will be required.

Proposed Budget for FY21-FY22 Coming Soon!

LWVLA Nominations for 2021-2022

The Nominations Committee, chaired by Ellen Mills and including Leslie Wallstrom and JoAnn Lysne, presents the following slate of nominees for 2021-2022:

Officers:

| | |
|---------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Co-Presidents: | Barbara Calef and Rebecca Shankland |
| 1st Vice-President: | <i>not filled</i> |
| 2nd Vice-President: | Ellen Mills |
| Treasurer: | Rosmarie Frederickson |
| Secretary: | Rebecca Chaiken |

Directors:

| | |
|-----------------------------|----------------------|
| Lunch with a Leader: | Karyl Ann Armbruster |
| Publicity: | Jody Benson |
| Reservations: | Amy Birnbaum |
| Director at Large: | Addie Jacobson |
| Voter Services: | Lynn Jones |
| Director at Large: | Felicia Orth |
| Director at Large: | Akkana Peck |
| Webmaster and BPU Observer: | Julie Williams-Hill |

.....

LWVLA Board of Directors 2020-2021

Officers:

- Co-President: Barbara Calef
- Co-President: Rebecca Shankland
- 1st Vice-President: *Unfilled*
- 2nd Vice-President: Ellen Mills
- Secretary: Rebecca Chaiken
- Treasurer: Rosmarie Frederickson

Directors:

- Reservations: Amy Birnbaum
- Lunch with a Leader: Karyl Ann Armbruster
- Voter Services: Lynn Jones
- BPU Observer: Julie Williams-Hill
- Publicity: Jody Benson and Leslie Wallstrom
- Director at Large: Akkana Peck
- Fundraising: Ellen Mills

Off-board Directors:

- Arrangements: Wendy Swanson
- Membership: Rebecca Shankland
- Webmaster: Julie Williams-Hill
- Special Projects: Addie Jacobson
- Newsletter Editor: JoAnn Lysne
- County Council Observers: LWVLA Board
- Nominations: Ellen Mills, Leslie Wallstrom, and JoAnn Lysne

If you would like to join the League, fill out and submit the membership form on page 17, or visit www.lwvlosalamos.org.

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): \$70

____ 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, BPU, 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

| <i>In This Issue</i> | <i>Page</i> |
|--|-------------|
| Calendar | 1 |
| Lunch with a Leader: | 1 |
| Co-President's Message: Three Cheers for the League!!! | 2 |
| Annual Fund Drive Begins | 3 |
| Welcome, New Members! | 3 |
| League Dues Are Due in April! | 4 |
| Education Consensus Meeting | 4 |
| Observer Corps Reports | 5 |
| County Council | 5 |
| Board of Public Utilities | 7 |
| February Lunch with a Leader: Jennifer Guy | 8 |
| Annual Meeting | 9 |
| LWVLA Board of Directors 2020-2021 | 16 |